The New Year (a poem)  
The Art of the Roerichs 
Songs of Soldiers’ Wives 
A Fragment of the New World 
Children’s Literature 

Balloon Dhangra. 
Sheikh Ahmed. 
Devendra Satyarthi. 
Norah Richards. 
Hladia Porter.
THE
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THE ART OF THE ROERICHGS


Sometime Professor of Design and Painting at Central School of Arts and Crafts, London.

Shambala Diak, “The Message from Shambala”, one of the paintings of Professor Nicholas Roerich, portrays a messenger sending a message attached to the arrow across an abyss to a mountain monastery which is just touched by the rising monarch of the day—the sun. This exquisite scene depicts most eloquently the inevitable tranquillity and bliss of the Tibetan Morn. One feels that Professor Nicholas Roerich has expressed convincingly the Great Conception of the East—Shambala. This symbol is known everywhere under different names. It conceals a Great Truth. Many deride it, for they understand not its meaning. Great Shambala is a Mighty Heavenly Domain linked with the earthly one. In this link the two worlds are united. “Like a diamond glows the light on the Tower of Shambala. He is there—Rigden-Jyebo, indefatigable, ever vigilant in the cause of mankind”. It is believed that spiritual energies emanate from here in all directions.

The other picture, Santana, shows a Sadhu meditating over the source of life. He is painted against the background of beautiful Himalayan mountains in a posture of meditation. Professor Nicholas Roerich is not only a great painter but also a philosopher and an eminent educationalist. His educational system can be explained in the
light of his general philosophy and his racial and environmental background which moulded his character and thought. Professor Nicholas Roerich comes from an ancient and distinguished Russian family. He belongs to the "Rurikovich" the descendants of the doughty warrior chieftain Rurik of Novgorod, who in the 9th century founded the first Russian dynasty. On his maternal side there are strong traces of Mongolian ancestry. This provides him with that foundation of heredity which, in art as well as in everything else, is so vitally essential.

Professor Nicholas Roerich has undertaken the stupendous task of bringing about the understanding between the East and the West which Rudyard Kipling deemed impossible and also the task of realizing peace and enlightenment throughout the world, through Beauty and Knowledge. To realize this objective, he has started cultural institutions in various countries which are endeavouring to spread greater art appreciation among the general masses in the most constructive manner. In the city of New York he has raised that colossal Cathedral of Art, the Roerich Museum which is commonly known as The Master Institute. Here along with other activities, the Institute has undertaken the education of the younger generation on the principles evolved by Professor Roerich. This institution co-operates with the New York public schools, libraries and other educational centres to promote aesthetic appreciation through such cultural and artistic activities as exhibitions, lectures, concerts, artistic excursions, scholarships and by printing literature on important subjects. In the collective spirit of twenty-five countries which collaborate with him in his aspirations, he foresees the dawn of a New Era in which Art will play an important rôle. It was the desire to be in tune with the Infinite which impelled him to take up his abode at Naggar in the Kulu Valley. Very much like the aspirant for spiritual experience, Professor Roerich is trying to depict through his work and convey unto others that enchantment of the Himalayas which only nearness and understanding can reveal. Under his brush the Himalayas have unfolded that inner charm which had been an age-long mystery. This is because these silent giants, these guardians of Mother India have found in this sage-artist a supremely sympathetic interpreter of their spirit.

Mr. Svetoslav Roerich was born in 1904 at St. Petersburg, Russia. Up to the outbreak of the Russian Revolution of 1917, he received his training in his native land and later on in Sweden, Paris and England. This sojourn of the family in various countries provided him with the opportunity of studying the modes and manners of different people...
Professor Nicholas Roerich.
Santana by N. Roerich.

Shambala Diak (Trivandrum Museum) by N. Roerich.
and nationalities. This broadened his vision and developed his aesthetic appreciation. It is because of this early experience that he is in a position to portray the various ethnic characters with confidence and reveal through physiognomy, attitude, gestures and costume, their individuality and personality.

In his brilliant kaleidoscope of the Indian crowd, architecture and mountains, he has revealed their inner soul with sympathy and understanding. One feels that he is not at all tempted by the facile charm of the exotic and the picturesque, for he believes that men and things are worthy to be painted for their own sake. Before coming to India, Svetoslav Roerich specialized in portraiture. The life-size portrait of his father which now hangs in the Roerich Museum, New York, shows Professor Nicholas Roerich in Chinese attire. This work executed in the Chinese fashion reveals Mr. Svetoslav Roerich to be a most sensitive draughtsman and a subtle colourist. In the words of W.B. Mic-Cormic of the New York American, it is “an extraordinary and moving piece of realism”. His portraits of Mrs. Asghari Monzoor Qadir, Miss R.B. and Professor Nicholas Roerich, which were on exhibition in the Lahore Museum, are convincing in expression and portray the characters with striking truth for they are the result of a powerful synthesis.

Besides being an artist, Mr. Svetoslav Roerich is a keen student of folklore, plant-biology and medicine. He has travelled extensively in all corners of India, parts of Asia and Europe, in search of old manuscripts and paintings of which he has a very fine collection. The old books in his collection, date back to the earliest days of printing and are considered a great bibliographical rarity.

True appreciation is the result of understanding, so I feel that I am not in a position to present an appreciation of his various other activities. As far as art is concerned I can safely say that the colossal amount of work which he has produced, certainly deserves admiration, for it is the result of untiring and titanic energy. Though heredity does play an important rôle in the making of an artist, yet I feel that, besides his rich heritage of artistic talent, his individual achievements are so distinctive and personal that he will be placed among the pioneers in the domain of art.
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