

ROERICH

Nicholas Roerich perceived the vehement appeal of the cosmic synthesis, he studied psychologically the conditions of men, in his paintings he interposed manifestations of new forces: those of the geniuses of the Gods, of the elements.

The landscapes became amplified, the small subjects were replaced by great legendary spectacles. A mighty stroke carried the atmosphere of the summits into a society which had been pre-occupying itself with pettiness. The sense of the superhuman proclaimed itself through these picturesque means. Against realism Nicholas Roerich contrasted the marvelous.

Impressionism hardly disturbed Nicholas Roerich. Other problems than those of the disassociation of the colors, other settings than those of vibrations, engaged his activity. If he conceives an impressionism, it is not that of colors. "Light is the principal feature of painting" proclaimed Manet; considering the innumerable works of Roerich, one may conclude that the cosmic synthesis is the principal feature. "It is but one eye" said Cezanne of his friend, Manet; it is especially the creation we say of the Russian painter. A supreme synthesis manages the destinies of his beings, his rule of the relief of objects, the accidents of locality.

When Nicholas Roerich gave to the "Mir" his allegiance, and was elected its first President, he did not hear himself slandered nor did he follow the discipline of any doctrine keeping to his own style. His work, completely different from the works of

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his companions, reflects the decorative sense observed by the artists of the guild. The construction of his paintings, his means of hewing his rocks, of assembling his mountains, of placing the stalactites in his grottos, of thus designing enchantment, reveals to us the painter's superb inner talent. His expression is broad. The motifs harmonies in flat tints, present themselves at times majestically peaceful yet powerful--recalling certain compositions of Puvis de Chavannes; at times, tormented, mysterious--making one think then of the fantasmagories of Redon. The beings of the world which he presents seem hearkening to some astounding proclamation; these are illumined and still figures, prostrated and radiant, aspiring, toward a divine focus. In the paintings they suggest the appearance of some kind of awe-inspiring genius; but the charm emanates especially from the whole atmosphere.

These works emanate through fantastic imagination. In order to accomplish his cycle of Asia, Nicholas Roerich organized an expedition, he explored regions yet unknown; through Mongolia, the Gobi, he reached Tibet, and after many privations at the peril of his life, he reached altitudes to 21,000 feet. From these travels he brought back the secret of the Orient, remembrances of a mighty spectacle, a Wagnerian vista of cosmogony.

Nicholas Roerich exercises his universal faculties of ~~scholar, of psychologist, of painter, and poet~~ scholar, of psychologist, of painter, and of poet, to announce to the world a new era of unification, where all things shall arrange themselves harmoniously, where peace is made manifest in beauty. And in the name of this very principle, his radiant colors harmonize in his paintings with constructiveness, with creativeness, with cosmic synthesis.

Louis Vauxcelles