

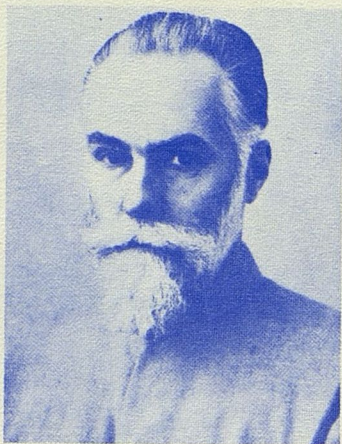
Slides Lecture -
Introduction

T H E A R T
OF NICHOLAS AND SVETOSLAV R O E R I C H -
A WORLD OF BEAUTY

by Anna Poblocki
Hamburg



Prof. Nicholas R o e r i c h
(1874 - 1947)
Portrait by his son, Svetoslav Roerich



Dr. Svetoslav R o e r i c h
(born 1904)

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Slides Lecture
I n t r o d u c t i o n

Both Nicholas Roerich and his son, Svetoslav Roerich, have glorified India throughout the world in their great art of fascinating beauty and grandeur. To India and all she stands for they were drawn from their early youth. Born in Russia, they lived in Europe, America and Asia. India, their second home, welcomed the Roerich family in 1923.

After their famous Expedition across Central Asia, the Roerichs settled in the beautiful Kulu Valley, in the Himalayas. Broad cultural activities connected them with all parts of the world. Nicholas Roerich, a towering personality and certainly the most prominent creator of culture of this century, died at Kulu in 1947, leaving to posterity a vast cultural heritage of immeasurable value. His son, Svetoslav Roerich, married to the famed and distinguished artist Devika Rani, lives in Bangalore and at Kulu.

As an artist Nicholas Roerich painted over seven thousand paintings. To India and her Sacred Jewel -the Himalayas- he dedicated thousands of his canvases, many books and essays. While on an expedition to Mongolia he concluded one of his articles on India thus -

" O Bharata, all beautiful, let me send thee my heartfelt admiration for all the greatness and inspiration which fill thy ancient cities and temples, thy meadows, deobans, thy sacred rivers, and the Himalayas."

Nicholas Roerich was the true leader of World Culture, a universal genius with a universal vision, belonging to all times and nations. He was a man with a universal message and a world-wide mission to bring the higher back again into our life, to help man recover, to promote his higher evolution. Roerich's voice was the voice of the Eternal, of Truth, Beauty and Culture.

In India, this great Artist and Seer was revered as a veritable Rishi. He was called Gurudev, the 'Master of the Mountains' and the 'Bard of the Himalayas'. His paintings reveal the spirit of the Cosmos, they are filled with wisdom, joy, and the promise of a great future.

Opening a Roerich exhibition in Delhi, Mr. NEHRU, the late Prime Minister and friend of the Roerich family, said - "When I think of Nicholas Roerich I am astounded at the scope and abundance of his activities and creative genius. A great artist, a great scholar and writer, archaeologist and explorer, he touched and lighted up so many aspects of human endeavour. The very quantity is stupendous - thousands of paintings and each of them a great work of art. When you look at these paintings, so many of them of the Himalayas, you seem to catch the spirit of those great mountains which have towered over the Indian plain and been our sentinels for ages past. They remind us of so much of our history, our thought, our cultural and spiritual heritage so much not merely of the India of the past but of something that is permanent and eternal about India, that we cannot help feeling a great sense of indebtedness to Nicholas Roerich who has enshrined that spirit in these magnificent canvases."

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Among the numberless admirers of the beauty of his art and its spiritual power, there are eminent Art Critics, Statemen and Poets. One of them, Theodore Heline, wrote in his article 'Nicholas Roerich - The Voice of an Epoch' -

" Roerich's works spring like a new, fresh creation direct from some higher source. No one can miss their dazzling splendour, their tremendous power, their air of triumphant freedom and the exaltation of the spiritual atmosphere they radiate. They are charged with cosmic energies and divine meanings. They compel not only admiration but reverence."

Svetoslav Roerich, the son of Nicholas, is a creative genius after the grand manner of his father, also his individual uniqueness in art is as great as his father's. He handles with ease all subjects and always opens new light-bearing creative horizons. His paintings revealing the soul of things are great works of art expressing truth and beauty, and the divine is always present.

Svetoslav Roerich fills his art creations with sublime life full of joy and that is why they are such a great delight to the eye and heart. His portraits vindicate man, proclaiming the lofty beauty of man and his labour. All visitors of his exhibitions are enchanted by the splendour of colour, the overwhelming beauty of the paintings and their dynamic expressiveness. Really marvellous are the views of India, the life of her people, her glorious ancient culture. And, as an art connoisseur put it, 'His canvases are virtually glowing and emanating light.'

Many eminent leaders of India and other countries have paid rich tributes to Svetoslav Roerich. The late President of India, Dr. RADHAKRISHNAN, said of Svetoslav Roerich's art - "His portraits are not mere representations but catch the spirit of the human face divine. His landscapes are poems of colour."

Opening an exhibition of paintings of Svetoslav Roerich in Delhi, the late Indian Prime Minister, Mr. NEHRU, a close friend of the Artist, called the exhibition 'A Feast of Beauty'. Also well-known art critics and visitors were grateful to the Artist for the 'Feast of Triumphant Beauty, Light and Humanness.'

Exhibitions of paintings of Nicholas and Svetoslav Roerich attract millions of people in India, the Soviet Union, the United States of America and, in 1978, also in Bulgaria, this because beauty and truth appeal strongly to every cultural man and to people's heart.

Moreover, Art Exhibitions of the Roerichs carry with them a glorious message from India. They raise the esteem and love for India and her people in a most beautiful, highly cultural way. In his book 'Altai-Himalaya' Nicholas Roerich praises India as follows -

" We know thy fragrant essence, India. We know the depths and fineness of thy thoughts. We know the great Aum, which leads to the inexpressible heights. India, we know thy ancient wisdom."

- Paintings for touring Exhibitions which fascinate large masses of people and art critics in various countries, are selected by Svetoslav Roerich in India.

In the domains of art and science all four members of the Roerich family have made gigantic and unique contributions to world culture paving for mankind new paths into a bright future. Madame Helena Roerich (1879-1955), an inwardly illumined philosopher and writer, has brought to humanity for the New Era the Teaching of the Living Ethics AGNI YOGA, the Teaching of Spiritual Fire or Light. Dr. George Roerich (1902-1960) was a most eminent oriental scholar and leading expert on Tibet.

Even though the high values of the original paintings can hardly be reproduced by our photo technique, the about 100 colour slides to be shown will impart an insight into the grand creative work of the Masters Nicholas Roerich and Svetoslav Roerich, these teachers, prophets and pioneers of tomorrow. Their inspiring art bears a timeless, immortal character and heralds the approach of a new great era of art which will serve the higher evolution of man.

" The pledge of happiness for humanity lies in beauty. Art is to create beauty. Everyone will enjoy true art. The evolution of the New Era rests on the cornerstone of knowledge and beauty." (Nicholas Roerich).

Anna Poblocki

