

T H E R O E R I C H - S O N S

In the Roerich family there were two sons called G e o r g e and S v e t o s l a v. The elder one, George, followed his father in the field of archaeological and ethnological research and had distinguished himself as an outstanding oriental scholar, especially in respect of Tibet, and as a philologist. The younger one, Svetoslav, followed his father as an artist and continued his important artistic work. George R o e r i c h died on 21st May 1960 in Moscow where he was honoured with a state funeral. Still before, following the last will of his father, he handed over to the Soviet Government precious paintings of Prof. Roerich as a gift to the Russian people.

A few months ago, S v e t o s l a v R o e r i c h, celebrated in full vigour his 60th Birthday in India where numerous honours were bestowed on him. So, on the occasion of the Dasara on 16th October 1964, he received from the Government, at a function in Mysore, two awards for his service in the field of Art and Culture and for Public Service.

In his art, Svetoslav R o e r i c h represents a fine synthesis of East and West, and follows, without losing his own brilliant individuality, the high artistic tradition built by his illustrious father, Prof. Nicholas R o e r i c h. Though he was a pupil of his father in the true sense of the word, he was also his close collaborator in all his world-wide activities and organisations for the promotion of art and culture.

Svetoslav R o e r i c h paints both in tempera and oils and, like his father, on a wide range of themes. He combines high technical skill with a remarkable creative imagination revealing a deep insight in spiritual and religious correlations. Like the paintings of Nicholas R o e r i c h which already distinguish themselves by an extraordinary colourfulness, so also the paintings of Svetoslav R o e r i c h are real poems in colour and much sought-after by the leading galleries of the world.

Already years ago, Dr. S. R a d h a k r i s h n a n, President of India, and the late Prime Minister, J. N e h r u, hailed Svetoslav R o e r i c h as a Great Artist. Speaking of the Art of Svetoslav R o e r i c h, Dr. Radhakrishnan said: -
"--His portraits are not mere representations but catch the spirit of the human face divine. His landscapes are poems of colour---".

The late Jawaharlal Nehru inaugurating an exhibition of paintings of Svetoslav R o e r i c h at New Delhi, some years ago, said: - "--- We have here in this exhibition something very remarkable and something not only beautiful, but lasting which will leave a powerful effect on the mind of those who see it ---"

Describing his Art, Dr. Humayung Kabir said: - "--Svetoslav R o e r i c h's powerful art transcends national, historical and geographical boundaries and provides a focus of unity for mankind--"

In a Birthday message to Svetoslav R o e r i c h, Mysore's Chief Minister, Mr. S. N i j a l i n g a p p a, says that the recognition being accorded to the artist is "overdue",

A congratulatory message has also been issued by Mr. R.M.Patil, Home Minister, who refers to the "Valuable and Meritorious Service" rendered by Dr. Roerich in the field of painting.

India, the country of the most developed oriental art and wisdom, is experiencing great economic difficulties to be solved by western initiative and aid, yet in the field of art and culture, because of the ancient religious and spiritual tradition, the flood of the occidental nihilism has not overflowed its shores so far, though tried to reach them. May, therefore, this homeland of true art and this refuge of great cultural treasures be safe from art decadence also in future, so that this country may in peace concentrate all energy on solving its population and food problems and thus be able to further even more the new efforts of the dynamic and esoteric naturalism introduced by the great pioneers of art, Prof. Nicholas and Dr. Svetoslav R o e r i c h and whose influence in saving culture is now being felt also in the Occident.

(LEOBRAND)

Svetoslav R o e r i c h studied at Columbia University in the USA. He married the famed screen artiste, D e v i k a R a n i, who accompanied him on his long travels through Asia, America and Europe.

Svetoslav R o e r i c h became renowned when still very young. At the age of only 21 years he already received high awards, including the Philadelphia Sesquicentennial. Invited by the late Soviet Premier, Mr. Nikita K h r u s h c h e v, he held exhibitions at the Fine Arts Museum, Moscow, and the Hermitage Museum, Leningrad, in 1960. Nearly half a million people visited the exhibitions in six weeks.

Svetoslav R o e r i c h was Director of the International Art Centre, New York, and was actively associated with the conclusion of the International Pact (Roerich-Peace-Pact), initiated by his father in 1929. He was also Vice-President of the Roerich Museum, the Master Institute of United Arts and the Himalayan Research Institute founded by the Roerich family, and is connected with a number of organisations in India and abroad.

Svetoslav R o e r i c h lives in Bangalore and the Kulu Valley in the Himalayas where he works unceasingly on his Art and conducts his researches. He was awarded "PADMA BHUSHAN" by the Government of India in 1961 for his outstanding achievements in the fields of Art and Culture. He is a nominee of the Government of India on the Central Lalit Kala Akademi, the National Academy of Art.

As a proof that also in the Sovietunion the work of the R o e r i c h s has meanwhile found recognition, may serve the fact that, recently, two hitherto uncharted glaciers in the Kirghiz Alatau in the basin of the Alamedin River were named after Nicholas and Svetoslav R o e r i c h.