

To the first portrait by Sviatoslav Rogich of his Father.

TO A PORTRAIT OF NICHOLAS ROERICH

There are valleys of moonlight and shadows
beneath lids half closed
in a sleep of starlight.

In a house where the mild wind stirs
flowers in a vase,
he opens lean hands
to evoke memories from shells that were once
on the shore of an inland sea.

The blueness is eternal, filled with
the colors of many rainbows

that came into mountain torrents...
and arms tensed as tree limbs in beating sunlight
lift in a gesture toward
the whirling bodies of broken suns.

There are valleys of daylight rich with grain,
and there old men toil until
the night becomes filled
with the songs of insects...

The flowers are sleeping...
the wind has died down, and in its place
is the scent of petals
covered with cool darkness.