

THE SVETOSLAV ROERICH EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS,
NEW DELHI, - JANUARY 20, 1960

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THE SVETOSLAV ROERICH EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS
NEW DELHI
January 20, 1960

at
THE ALL INDIA FINE ARTS & CRAFTS SOCIETY

INTRODUCTION

By

DR. P. V. RAJAMANNAR,
Chief Justice, Madras
CHAIRMAN, SANGEET NATAK AKADEMI
(National Academy of Music, Dance, Drama and Film)

This is the most, and probably first, comprehensive exhibition of the work of Svetoslav Roerich. His paintings adorn public galleries and private collections all over the world - Europe, United States and India. But here we have gathered together in one place more than a hundred of his paintings covering a period of over two decades up to the present day.

Svetoslav is a true cosmopolitan. Born in Petrograd, of a distinguished lineage, educated in Russia, Sweden, England and the United States, and married to a most talented and distinguished daughter of India, Shrimati Devika Rani, he and his art represent a fine synthesis of the East and the West, of the North and the South.

Though Svetoslav followed in the foot-steps of his renowned father, Gurudev Nicholas Roerich whom he considers as his greatest Teacher and whose close collaborator he was both in his artistic and cultural activities, he is a great artist in his own right and his artistic genius is distinct from that of his father. Eminent art critics have described Svetoslav's art as more human and less mystic than his father's. But comparative estimates are more often than not misleading. I, for one, find the mystic element equally present in his work.

Svetoslav's paintings cover a vast range and thematically fall into five main divisions - Portraits, Landscapes, Genre (Scenes from life), Religious and imaginative creations. Svetoslav paints in tempera and oils and in both he excels. The development of his technique from different aspects is manifest from the paintings exhibited here.

His portraits can stand comparison with those of the famous European masters. His Himalayan landscapes capture the transcendental beauty, majesty, and awe of those snow-clad mountains. His genre paintings are not only true to life; they are splendid decorative compositions. His imaginative creations are full of meaning and message.

In Svetoslav Roerich's art, one finds a new individual approach, unique but always bold and striking colour schemes, draughtsmanship of the highest order, superbly rhythmic composition, realism which does not consist in mere verisimilitude, but is an expression of the essential reality; and above all Vision, founded as much on an intuitive apprehension of spiritual values as on profound knowledge, varied experience and intense contemplation. There is an ancient Sanskrit saying - "Manrishih Kurute Kavyam" No one who is not a Rishi can be a great poet. Nor, would I add, a great painter. To my mind, Svetoslav Roerich is a Rishi and through his paintings has given us a beautiful and inspiring message.

(Svetoslav Roerich's Exhibition Catalogue 20th
January 1960)

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by

Chief Justice, Madras

(National Academy of Music, Dance, Drama and Film).

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THE PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
INLAND & FOREIGN NEWS TELEGRAMS

A transcript of Mr. Nehru's speech inaugurating the exhibition of paintings by Svetoslav Roerich at the AIFACS Hall on January 20, 1960.

Mr. Nehru began with a reference to his meeting Professor Nicholas Roerich, Father of Svetoslav Roerich eighteen years ago when he had been invited with his daughter to Kulu Valley.

Speaking of Svetoslav Roerich, Mr. Nehru said: He is a retiring and restrained person. He has not pushed himself anywhere. He works according to his genius trying to put himself in harmony with surrounding beauty whether it was the snowy peaks in the Himalayas or the scenes of Malabar or any other part of India. On the one hand, he puts himself in touch with his environment, on the other leaps forward in all manner of directions, the future, past and present, trying to mix them up into one composite whole. All this has produced, looking at some of the pictures, a strange sensation, (in me) one of beauty, one of harmony and of some depth if one tries to understand, but I cannot express the sensation that it produces.

"Obviously we have here in this exhibition something very remarkable, something not only beautiful but lasting, which will leave a powerful effect on the minds of those who see it. At any rate that is the effect in my mind. I am sure most of the people seeing it will feel that way. It is a privilege that people in Delhi and those who came here will be able to see these paintings which have been done during the last many years and which have not often been displayed. Therefore, I am glad that I am associated with this inauguration and I have the pleasure and advantage of seeing these pictures which I hope to see again in the course of the next month when the exhibition goes on. I hope that many people, our artists especially, would see them and thereby draw inspiration from them. It is too difficult for me to talk about these matters because I am ignorant about them. I react, I feel the good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant. Apart from that, something remains at the back

of one's mind. It sticks to the mind and comes up again and again. I think Svetoslav Roerich's paintings are of the type which leave their permanent impression at the back of the mind and which are not easily forgotten. So it is an event in the art life of Delhi for this one-man exhibition to be displayed here, and I hope that we shall profit by it and I hope that the artist will produce many more beautiful paintings in the future.

Mr. Roerich expressed profound gratitude to the Prime Minister for having graced this occasion in spite of his exceptionally heavy preoccupations. "I want to thank him for his kind words which I value so much". He also thanked Dr. Humayun Kabir, Mr. P.V. Rajamannar and Mr. J.C. Mathur.

Mr. Nehru then declared the exhibition open with these words: "I declare this exhibition open and invite you to a feast of beauty."

*Happy birthday to Mrs. Devi
20 Jan. 1960*

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PRIME MINISTER SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S
INAUGURAL ADDRESS AT THE EXHIBITION OF
PAINTINGS BY SVETOSLAV ROERICH AT THE
ALL INDIA FINE ARTS & CRAFTS SOCIETY,
NEW DELHI ON 20-1-1960

PRIME MINISTER SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU:

Friends,

I suppose you know that I am an interloper here more or less, that is to say, this function would have been performed by a much better person, more suitable person, our Vice-President Dr. Radhakrishnan. But as he had to go away, go abroad and is not in the country now, this privilege has fallen on me. In fact, it was Dr. Radhakrishnan's wish and almost demand, that I should do this; naturally I had to agree, and I am glad that I agreed although I feel a little bit inhibited about this. Because I do not know that I can say anything particularly appropriate or suitable about this Exhibition of an old friend and a great artist, not being myself in any sense, an expert at judging these things, I cannot talk learnedly or wisely about them. I can only express certain reactions, certain emotions it produces in me and that too, rather in a confused manner.

It was about 18 years ago, as far as I remember, when I met Svetoslav and his father and mother. In fact they invited me to spend a few days at their Kulu house to which my daughter and I went. It was then that I first got acquainted with Professor Roerich, his father, and those lovely surroundings of the Kulu Valley. It was then also that Svetoslav started making a portrait of me and I might mention informally that I have not seen it yet, although I believe it exists somewhere. That itself shows, apart from many other things, what a retiring and restrained person Svetoslav is. He has not pushed himself anywhere, he has worked quietly in accordance with his genius, trying to put himself in harmony with the surroundings he was in, whether it was the snowy peaks of the Himalayas, or the red earth of Malabar, or any other part of India. On the one hand putting himself in touch with these environments, on the other hand leaping forward into all manner of directions,

future, past, present, trying to mix them up into one composite whole. And all this produces, has produced, as I was looking at so many of his pictures just before coming here, the strange sensation, one of beauty of course, one of harmony and one of some peculiar depths which one tries to understand, at any rate I tried to, but which I cannot express except that it produces that sensation in me.

Obviously, we have here in this Exhibition something very remarkable and something not only beautiful but lasting, which will leave a powerful effect on the minds of those who see it. At any rate, that is the effect it will leave on my mind, and I feel sure, most people who see it, will feel that way.

It is a privilege for people in Delhi and those who come here, to be able to see these paintings which were gradually being made in the course of the last many years and which have not often been displayed. Therefore I am glad that I am associated with this inauguration, and had the pleasure and advantage of seeing these pictures. I hope to see them again, in the course of the next month and I hope that many people, and our artists specially, will see them and thereby draw some inspiration, some depth for their own work.

As I said, a little while ago, it is rather difficult for me to talk about these matters because I am rather ignorant about them. I react as most people do, I feel good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant impressions come to me, and apart from that something remains at the back of the mind or somewhere, which sticks to it and which comes up again and again. I think Svetoslav's paintings are of that type, which leave that firm impression at the back of the mind, and which are not easily forgotten.

So, it is an event in the what might be called, the art life of Delhi, for this One-man Exhibition to be displayed here and I hope that we surely would profit by it. I hope that the artist will produce many more beautiful and thoughtful paintings in the future.

MR. SVETOSLAV ROERICH:

I wish to express my profound gratitude to our Prime Minister for having graced this occasion in spite of his exceptionally heavy preoccupations. I want to thank him for his kind and beautiful words, which I value so much.

I wish to thank Dr. Kabir, Dr. Rajamannar, Mr. Mathur, all the distinguished guests and friends who have come here today and all those who have helped in the organisation of this Exhibition. I shall now request the Prime Minister to declare this Exhibition open.

PRIME MINISTER SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU:

Well, now, I declare this Exhibition open and invite you to a feast of beauty.

Excerpt - true copy
(The S.R. Exhibition
New Delhi)

N. I. P A T R I K A

ALLAHABAD

21-1-60

" A FEAST OF BEAUTY
WITH EFFECT ON MIND "

NEHRU OPENS EXHIBITION
OF ROERICH'S PAINTINGS

NEW DELHI, Jan. 20

Prime Minister Nehru to-day inaugurated an exhibition of paintings by the well-known artist, Svetoslav Roerich, which he described as "A FEAST OF BEAUTY AND ONE WHICH LEAVES A POWERFUL EFFECT ON THE MINDS OF THOSE WHO SEE IT".

One hundred twenty paintings of Svetoslav Roerich, son of the famous Professor Nicholas Roerich, are displayed at the exhibition which will remain open for a month. The works include landscapes of the Himalayas, scenes from Indian life, portraits of Mr. Nehru, Vice-President Dr. Radhakrishnan and Mr. C.P. Ramaswamy Ayyar, and other imaginative creations.

Looking at some of the pictures, Mr. Nehru said, he felt "A STRANGE SENSATION - ONE OF BEAUTY ONE OF HARMONY AND ONE OF SOME DEPTH". He was sure that most of the people who saw the exhibition would feel the same way.

Mr. Nehru said that he had met Svetoslav Roerich with his father, Nicholas Roerich, and mother, some 18 years ago

when he was invited to the Kulu Valley with his daughter. "SVETOSLAV ROERICH, Mr. Nehru said, IS A RETIRING AND RESTRAINED PERSON WHO DOES NOT PUSH HIMSELF ANYWHERE. HE WORKS ACCORDING TO HIS GENIUS, TRYING TO PUT HIMSELF IN HARMONY WITH THE SURROUNDING BEAUTY, WHETHER IT IS THE SNOWY PEAKS OF THE HIMALAYAS OR ANY OTHER PARTS OF INDIA. ON THE ONE HAND, HE PUTS HIMSELF IN TOUCH WITH HIS ENVIRONMENT AND, ON THE OTHER, LEAPS FORWARD IN ALL DIRECTIONS, THE FUTURE, PAST AND PRESENT TRYING TO MIX THEM UP INTO ONE COMPOSITE WHOLE.

HIS PAINTING, Mr. Nehru said, WERE OF THE TYPE WHICH LEFT A PERMANENT IMPRESSION ON THE MINDS OF THOSE WHO SAW THEM AND WHICH COULD NOT BE EASILY FORGOTTEN. This one-man exhibition was an event in the art life of Delhi and it was a privilege that people in Delhi and those who came here would be able to see these paintings done during the last twenty years. He hoped that many people especially artists, would see them and draw inspiration from them and that Roerich would produce many more beautiful and lasting paintings in the future. - (PTI)

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True Copy
1960

SVETOSLAV ROERICH'S ART

By

MANOHAR KAUL

Amidst the chaos ridden art world of today, where the shifting art trends make furtive appearance to dissolve and disappear soon after under the passing glamour of a new arrival, it is refreshing to find that in Svetoslav Roerich we have a painter, whose veracity and assimilative appropriation have surmounted all the formal rigidities and enabled him to evolve a happy idiom of his own.

His works of art, now on display at the galleries of the All India Fine Arts & Crafts Society in the capital, constitute a rare sight for the art lovers and a wonderful event in the contemporary art activity of the country.

Breath-taking in conception and staggering in dimensions, the exhibits presented are the works of a matured artist, whose sincerity of purpose is self-revealing, vision broadbased, sympathies catholic and treatment unique.

Roerich is himself an institution in the realm of art, who has exhibited an integrated style, which is at once powerful and refined, real and romantic, emotional and ideal. He is seen as a creative genius, who has a penetrating eye and percipient mind to detect and catch the aesthetic and plastic values in the ordinaryness of things and to reproduce the same both in substance and spirit. He has well understood the people of India from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin and has admirably depicted the throbbing pulsation of their lives in all their dynamic pursuits, passions, joys and sorrows.

To an unwary eye his colours appear in riot, but on serious view his colour schemes are in perfect harmony and rhythm, joyous juxtaposition and delightfully complimentary. The application of colours is not only judicious and conservative but also refractive and luminous under diverse natural conditions and situations. Very few artists in India and elsewhere have succeeded in delineating the refracted light either natural or artificial as Roerich has done in scenes such as "Toiling by Night", where the torchlight in the ravine reflects wonderfully on the bearers and the path in the sombre murkiness of the night. Such is also the case in the paintings, where the golden or purple glow of the rising or setting sun is reflected in the clouds, the landscape and the sky. Paintings like "White Citadel" and "Secret Hour" illustrate my point.

In mountainscapes Roerich appears to have caught the mystic grandeur and abstract majesty of the Himalayas that his father, the late Nicholas Roerich, has made us familiar with. But in representing such themes Svetoslav Roerich has evolved his own style, - a happy blend of the real and the ideal, where the physical form is co-mingled with the underlying spirit and both manifested as parts of living nature. His landscapes also reveal the vivacious spirit hovering over the particular situation depicted. Rarely do we find the joy of the spirit made as manifest in pictorial art as we do in the works of Svetoslav Roerich. This he has succeeded through his keen sense of colour harmonies, bold sweeps of the brush, free and elastic linear expression and balance. These characteristics of his art are all the more visible in the symbolic paintings, like "The Release", "Humanity Crucified" and "Whither Humanity", where his imagination soars into the region of religion and mysticism, of which he has drunk deep at the source of ancient knowledge found in the East and the West. This symbolic and mystic lore he has woven into a multi-coloured texture of varied design, where each picture is

so precise in proportion, perspective and rhythm, that he gives an impression that the artist has, as it were, actually seen what he describes in clairvoyant vision. This is where he shows himself the follower of the ancient Indian aesthetic principles and canons of art, which he seems to have thoroughly studied and imbibed since he came over to live in India. Herein he is also as idealistic and abstract as the ancient Indian art ideals expect him to be, but he also transcends them inasmuch as he does not leave the terra firma of the real world but brings a happy union of the ideal with the actual. In other words, he does not allow himself to be lost in the fantastic and bizarre or the dream world of monstrosity that is nowhere to be met with in real life and rational understanding. His imaginative works are no doubt first conceived in the Indian spirit of a mental vision intuitively experienced and then expressed in line and colour on the canvas in form, atmosphere and background that are true to life and nature.

Roerich's work should be an eye opener to the modernists in India, who, while spurning their own cultural traditions, imitate modern trends of the Western painters. This exhibition clearly reveals the wonderful and rich panorama of India's heritage, which has been a source of inspiration to Svetoslav Roerich.

Shri Manohar Kaul used the pen name "Manmohan Dattatreya" for some of his articles written during Svetoslav Roerich's exhibition of paintings in New Delhi, 1960.

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To an unwary eye his colours appear in riot, but on serious view his colour schemes are in perfect harmony and rhythm, joyous juxtaposition and delightfully complimentary. The application of colours is not only judicious and conservative but also refractive and luminous under diverse natural conditions and situations. Very few artists in India and elsewhere have succeeded in delineating the refracted light either natural or artificial as Roerich has done in scenes such as "Toiling by Night", where the torchlight in the ravine reflects wonderfully on the bearers and the path in the sombre murkiness of the night. Such is also the case in the paintings, where the golden or purple glow of the rising or setting sun is reflected in the clouds, the landscape and the sky. Paintings like "White Citadel" and "Secret Hour" illustrate my point.

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SVETOSLAV ROERICH'S ART

By

MANOHAR KAUL

What is Svetoslav Roerich?

Is he a realist? a sentimentalist? a romantist? a traditionalist? or what? He may be none of these, yet traces pertaining to any of them may be discernible in his works. All the same he defies being labelled with this or that hall-mark. Himself being a synthetic talent of cosmopolitan outlook and broad human sympathies, his art is no less synthetic in character, and cosmic and mystic in conception. His style, mode of expression and choice of themes are rather unique, born of his own inner being. He is forthright and sincere to the core, free from all disturbing trends and quaint idiosyncrasies that characterise the modernist's art of today. His set purpose is to express truth and beauty as he intuitively understands them and to disseminate the same to enliven the otherwise dreary and drab life of man.

The paintings of Svetoslav Roerich on display in the capital for the first time at the spacious galleries of the All India Fine Arts and Crafts Society provide a high standard of aesthetic feast which the art loving people here craved to enjoy for a pretty long time. This show is organically as rich in variety, as superb in quality and taste, through which Roerich shines forth as a master-mind, a creative genius and a consummate painter, who paints with passion and devotion. His paintings show daring and balanced composition, robust colour harmonies, powerful and simple beauty of line, unique sense of design and total harmony - these traits, wedded to his inner thoughts and placid nature, mark his works as great art.

His mountainscapes, such as 'Kanchenjunga' at morning and sunset are pregnant both with grandeur and mystery. His other numerous landscapes present freshness of wild nature in all her nakedness and varying moods, pervaded over by the presence of the informing spirit which, though indefinable and mysterious, is as gracefully expressed in colour and line as Wordsworth did in verse.

The ordinary scenes of life around him are imbued with profound human significance and sympathy towards fellow human beings. Paintings like 'Little Sisters', 'Friends', 'Kulu Boy' and 'Tribal Girl' are delineated with a real human heart full of affection and care. Other works such as 'Toil' and 'Daughters of the sea' are the artist's spontaneous reaction to life around him, and show how his discerning eye can perceive and capture aesthetic and plastic values in ordinary things of life.

Many exquisite and revealing studies of his father, the late Prof. Nicholas Roerich, Jawaharlal Nehru and other celebrities show him to be a born portrait painter, having perfect grasp of anatomical details in changing moods. His treatment of subjects reveals his perfect mastery over technique and draughtsmanship. His handling of drapery is superb. There is nothing disturbing in his portrait studies, in which he successfully brings out the soul and psyche of the sitter, not to speak of his physical likeness.

His monumental 'Triptych' - 'The Release', 'Humanity Crucified' and 'Whither Humanity' - are sure to go down in history as inspired masterpieces and fine examples of Roerich's symbolic and powerful art, comparable to the undying examples of old masters of any nationality.

Behind all this variety treat of beauty, stands the towering and serene personality of Svetoslav Roerich - a complex product of various cultures and influences that have

developed in him an internationally synthetic mind, penetrating insight, broad outlook and insatiable curiosity to find the truth, to realise it and to reproduce it on canvas for others to contemplate and enjoy.

He has travelled much in his quest for truth and seems to have satisfaction in Indian thought, philosophy and surroundings. The serenity of certitude and the intuitive understanding that he has won through ceaseless exploration, have finally impressed and imbued his works of art. In fact whatever he touches or expresses in oils or tempera come direct from the depth of his being with all the freshness of originality and the perfection of a masterpiece. His incisive intellect has fathomed the fount of nature and realised the mystery of the spirit behind it, wherefrom he draws inspiration and power to delineate whatever strikes him most. It would be no exaggeration to say that Roerich is an inspired poet in colour and line visualising the romantic lyrics of India and Indians of today in most of their physical aspects, psychic moods, and spiritual aspirations. His other expression on the canvas is an index to his inner meaning and individual experience. This he himself explains thus:

"There, where our words come from our heart, our inner being where we stand as a complete personification of our emotions and thoughts, our message will have the greatest power, carry the greatest conviction; in other words, it will be the truth itself."

Roerich stands apart among the modernists, whose bewildering 'isms' leave him untouched. He does not belong to that order, nor evinces any tendency to produce revulsion, but keeping in view all the pre-requisites of a good work of art, seeks to express beauty and joy both of form and spirit, wherever it may be met with - be it in the people round about or in the topographical panorama he moves in, or in the

religious and imaginative themes of the past and the present.

His paintings directly appeal to our heart and easily evoke in us the response of peace and joy - the supreme end of all great art.

SVETOSLAV ROERICH'S ART

By

MANOHAR KAUL

What is Svetoslav Roerich?

Is he a realist? a sentimentalist? a romantist? a traditionalist? or what? He may be none of these, yet traces pertaining to any of them may be discernible in his works. All the same he defies being labelled with this or that hall-mark. Himself being a synthetic talent of cosmopolitan outlook and broad human sympathies, his art is no less synthetic in character, and cosmic and mystic in conception. His style, mode of expression and choice of themes are rather unique, born of his own inner being. He is forthright and sincere to the core, free from all disturbing trends and quaint idiosyncrasies that characterise the modernist's art of today. His set purpose is to express truth and beauty as he intuitively understands them and to disseminate the same to enliven the otherwise dreary and drab life of man.

The paintings of Svetoslav Roerich on display in the capital for the first time at the spacious galleries of the All India Fine Arts and Crafts Society provide a high standard of aesthetic feast which the art loving people here craved to enjoy for a pretty long time. This show is organically as rich in variety, as superb in quality and taste, through which Roerich shines forth as a master-mind, a creative genius and a consummate painter, who paints with passion and devotion. His paintings show daring and balanced composition, robust colour harmonies, powerful and simple beauty of line, unique sense of design and total harmony - these traits, wedded to his inner thoughts and placid nature, mark his works as great art.

His mountainscapes, such as 'Kanchenjunga' at morning and sunset are pregnant both with grandeur and mystery. His other numerous landscapes present freshness of wild nature in all her nakedness and varying moods, pervaded over by the presence of the informing spirit which, though indefinable and mysterious, is as gracefully expressed in colour and line as Wordsworth did in verse.

The ordinary scenes of life around him are imbued with profound human significance and sympathy towards fellow human beings. Paintings like 'Little Sisters', 'Friends', 'Kulu Boy' and 'Tribal Girl' are delineated with a real human heart full of affection and care. Other works such as 'Toil' and 'Daughters of the sea' are the artist's spontaneous reaction to life around him, and show how his discerning eye can perceive and capture aesthetic and plastic values in ordinary things of life.

Many exquisite and revealing studies of his father, the late Prof. Nicholas Roerich, Jawaharlal Nehru and other celebrities show him to be a born portrait painter, having perfect grasp of anatomical details in changing moods. His treatment of subjects reveals his perfect mastery over technique and draughtsmanship. His handling of drapery is superb. There is nothing disturbing in his portrait studies, in which he successfully brings out the soul and psyche of the sitter, not to speak of his physical likeness.

His monumental 'Triptych' - 'The Release', 'Humanity Crucified' and 'Whither Humanity' - are sure to go down in history as inspired masterpieces and fine examples of Roerich's symbolic and powerful art, comparable to the undying examples of old masters of any nationality.

Behind all this variety treat of beauty, stands the towering and serene personality of Svetoslav Roerich - a complex product of various cultures and influences that have

developed in him an internationally synthetic mind, penetrating insight, broad outlook and insatiable curiosity to find the truth, to realise it and to reproduce it on canvas for others to contemplate and enjoy.

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PAINTER OF THE FINEST CALIBRE

By

H. L. PRASHER
(Art Critic of "The Times of India")

The recent retrospective exhibition of paintings by SVETOSLAV ROERICH held in Delhi from January 19 to February 20, 1960, has come as a revelation to most of us. We have realised, as we have never realised before, that we have amidst us a PAINTER OF THE FINEST CALIBRE, at once profound in his conception and powerful in his execution.

At a time when we are tossed about in the stormy seas of abstractions and action painting and when there are practically no anchors left to hold to, he towers above the contemporary art scene like a beacon light, spreading far and wide the light of the eternal criterions of art and of the value of discipline and classical restraint.

In personality, he is a gem of the purest ray serene. For one thing, he has a presence that breathes tranquility. It seems as if he has arrived at the heights - a phase something similar to the last phase of Shakespeare of the "Tempest" period. And this is reflected in everything about him. In our sacred books, it has been said again and again that a great soul reveals himself in everything he does - even in trifles and the smallest things. Anyone who has met Roerich cannot help marking the dignity and poise with which he speaks and moves. All his actions and work stem from an inner source of peace and profundity which he has partially inherited from his famous father, Nicholas Roerich, and which he has mostly developed through meditation.

Another remarkable thing about him as a man is his keen intellect. He has a scintillating active mind, as is evident from the range of the manifold subjects in which he is interested. He is a scholar deeply read in philosophy, comparative religion, Indology and Oriental studies, aesthetics and art history. Then he is an architect, art collector, ethnologist and researcher in plant biology. And if that is not enough, he is one of the top figures in the movement for world cultural projects initiated by his father. In his intellectual make-up and curiosity, he is reminiscent of the giants of the Renaissance.

Since he has that rich and great personality, it is no wonder that his works have a quality and finish of their own. In his art he combines imaginative sensibility and depth with a thorough understanding and mastery of technique. He provides the proof, if any proof indeed is required, that it is not the style which matters - it is what an artist makes of it that creates good art. In these days it is usual to make light of the realistic - academic style. But Roerich shows that working in this very idiom, it is possible to create something beautiful and significant.

The great example of Rembrandt is always before him. The Dutch master, indeed, is his ideal. On this point he has said: "Like all great artists Rembrandt knew well that in order to convey a living message, to convey the powerful truth of an experience, the artist must identify himself completely with the inner soul of the subject he was treating or expressing..... In all my paintings, this, indeed, is my endeavour - to treat reality in such a way that it should express the soul of things."

It is not for nothing that his works remind many of the paintings of the Dutch masters. There is the same importance attached to portraiture, the same fondness for painting the dramatic aspects of Biblical subjects, the same revelling in the sensuous elements of details of drapery and flesh and above all, the same striving for standards in finish. As a matter of fact, anyone who knows can see for himself his mastery of draughtsmanship, technical processes and practices. All over in his works, he gives ample proof of confidence and strength. You feel at once that here is one who is in full command of his tools and techniques and who knows what he is doing in whatever he essays on the canvas.

His powers as an artist have astonished all. Usually, it is enough if a person can paint well in one genre. Svetoslav Roerich is not the ordinary kind. He handles landscapes, scenes of life, religious studies, imaginative compositions, still life paintings and portraiture, all with equal ease and success.

To realise the extent of his achievement, let us make a round of his manifold works. And we cannot do better than make a start with his three panels of the triptych - "Release", "Humanity Crucified" and "Whither Humanity". For expressionistic power and strength in composition and colour, these are superb creations, magnificent and monumental. They have the impact of a symphony in music, touching the deepest chords within us. Extraordinary is the rhythmic phrasing of form and colour. But their real greatness lies in the fact that these plastic values have been made the vehicles of something significant. They speak to us what stirred the soul of the artist. We hear the sad still music of humanity and we are moved to our very depths. These embody his profundity. If the painter

had just painted these three pieces and nothing else, even then he would have been entitled to everlasting fame.

From these, let us move to his Biblical and imaginative compositions. Let us look particularly at "Good Samaritan", "Jacob and the Angel", "Hasten", "Out of the Storm" and "Victory". The longer you gaze at them, the more they grip you with their dramatic sweep and verve. The swirling curves and rhythms radiate intense movement. Those rocks, ranges, plains and valleys in the background assume the character of soulscapes where the figures wrestle with their titanic conflicts. These paintings reveal the grandeur of his imagination.

Next, we come into the wonderland of the scenes from life and the still life studies. The opulent and luminous colours burst upon one's vision like a blaze of glory. Such studies as "Toil", "Homeward Bound", "The Call", "Daughters of the Sea" and that skilfully executed large painting, "Gods are Coming" dazzle the eye with their splendour. Here it is obvious that the artist has been inspired by India, the land of colours and by the rich compositions of old Indian Paintings of the Pahari and Gujarati schools. As Gauguin discovered himself in Tahiti and as Matisse received illumination from Japanese and Oriental paintings, so Roerich has found salvation as an artist in the land of his adoption. These give expression to the pagan strain in him which makes him revel in the sensuous aspects of form and colour. Their decorative and sensuous beauty apart, there is another remarkable quality about them. The ordinary scenes of the toilers, the fisher-folk and the peasants are romanticised and idealised. Over them all, there is a light that never was on this earth and that transfigures everything and lifts them from being mere representational picturesque studies.

From these scenes from life, let us pass on to his mountain-scapes and snowscapes. These proclaim all over the influence of his mystic father, Nicholas Roerich, whose studies of the Himalayas are unrivalled in the expression of the atmosphere and the spirit. As you behold them, a sense of awe, vastness and depth overwhelms you. And such is the treatment in composition and colouring that you experience the rarefied, electric atmosphere of the holy peaks where dwell the gods. They have an elevating effect. Communication cannot aim higher than that.

Besides the mountainscapes wherein he follows in the footsteps of his father, Svetoslav Roerich has done an immense number of landscapes, mostly of small size but truly his own and very distinctive. "Spring in Kulu", "Naggar", "Winter in Kulu", "Keksar", "Winter Sunset", and "Autumn Pastures" are excellent instances in point. These are composed felicitously and capture the moods of nature captivatingly.

And lastly we come to his portraiture. In this branch of art, he is famed far and wide. Many of his portraits, notably the studies of his father, adorn museums all the world over. Herein he shows another aspect of himself - his workmanship and technical proficiency. It is a marvel how he brings out the very feel and texture in the details of drapery, flesh and the accessories. This is best exemplified in his study of Mrs. Asghari M. Qadir and in his portraits of Madame Devika Rani. And yet working in this genre where the representational element is a matter of necessity, he manages to go beyond reality and bring out the character of the sitters. The most notable portrait of this category is that of Miss Raya Bogdanov. Admirable as the composition is, the exquisite thing about it is that as we look at her, her personality radiates towards us.

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THE SVETOSLAV ROERICH EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS
NEW DELHI,
January 20, 1960

SVETOSLAV ROERICH

By

KARL KHANDALAVALA
Vice-President of the Lalit Kala Akademi,
(National Academy of Fine Arts, New Delhi)

It is a rare phenomenon in the world of art to find that both father and son are highly distinguished painters.

Even in the lifetime of the renowned Nicholas Roerich it was apparent that Svetoslav had inherited the genius of his father.

My first contact with Svetoslav's work was through one of his brilliant portrait-studies of his father Nicholas, and my immediate reaction was that it displayed the spirit of an "old master" though in a new garb. A characteristic of Svetoslav Roerich's work is that it instantly bespeaks of a long and thorough apprenticeship in the principles of good drawing and painting. In him we have no eccentric modernist who seeks to smother his shortcomings of sensational and, too often, meaningless puerile creations.

Svetoslav's output can be roughly divided into three groups - portraits, landscapes, and imaginative studies. The versatility of his mind can be judged by a comparison of these three groups. In his portrait studies, his superb technique is a revelation. His models are beautifully drawn, and his likeness though far from being photographic are (thank God!) authentic. It is sheer nonsense to my way of thought to maintain that portraiture is not concerned with the authentic. In his treatment of drapery and textiles, he can give an object lesson for the young aspiring painter. Perfect textile values are achieved by precise brushwork and the most skilful application of colour. Richness, depth and glow of colour do not

come out of a paint box. These qualities have to be built up.

In some recent studies of his wife, Devika Rani, he has introduced a restrained decorative element into his work only by the device of emphasis on the textiles draping his model, a method reminiscent of painters such as the Antwerp-born Paul Van Somer.

In his landscapes one is apt to sense the influence of his father, Nicholas. But the resemblance is largely due to the fact that both of them lived for many years amidst the majestic Himalayan ranges, and the mountains became not merely their source of inspiration but almost a religion to them. That, at any rate, is the feeling these landscapes evoke. In great contrast to his portrait-studies, the landscapes are usually austere in form and their treatment is broad and imposing, with large expanses of colour so juxtaposed as to capture the mood of the ranges. Sometimes the colouring is a blaze of glory, in most unusual tints, but sometimes it is sombre and forbidding. It is the spirit of the mountain that always dominates the artist. The remarkable quality of these landscapes is a deep reverence for the subject matter of the scene and a recognition that man may sense the mystery of the great hills but can never expect a full revelation. It is this approach which imparts even to the smaller canvases an emotional quality that would otherwise be hard to capture.

It is not surprising that one who has lived so long beside the hills should have the outlook of a mystic and a philosopher. And, this facet of Svetoslav's mental make-up, seen in his landscapes, becomes more prominent in his imaginative studies which, in the fitness of things, are conceived on a large scale and often deal with religious themes. They are splendid compositions executed with the artist's usual skill, and must evoke admiration even from those who are not easily attracted to religious and mystic forms of art.

Khandalava & Dene, 20.I-1960

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SVETOSLAV ROERICH

By

G. VENKATACHALAM

The world is familiar with the name and art of Nicholas Roerich, the sage and savant, the master-painter. Like the heaven-piercing Himalayan peaks that he loves to paint, he stands out, a titan among men. He is already fast becoming a legend, like the unseen Himalayan mystics, whose spiritual messenger to the outer world he truly is.

The world knows the other Roerich too, Svetoslav, the son, but only as the painter of his father's portraits and the enthusiastic propagandist of his father's dreams and aspirations in the outside world.

As the Vice-President of the New York Roerich Museum and of the Urusvati Himalayan Research Institute and as the organiser of the Roerich Pact and Peace Banner, he has ably and worthily represented his father in many an international gathering, and has done splendid pioneering work in the cause of art and beauty, peace and freedom. That in itself is no mean achievement.

THE GRAND MANNER

But Svetoslav is cast in as grand a mould as his great father both in his art and life. He is not a mere chip of the old block; he is a substantial part of the block itself. There is the Roerich touch in everything the Junior does or says.

He is a painter after the grand manner of his father, a painter of mountains and their moods, a revealer in form and colour of the mysteries of nature and a daring explorer from the devaic world, where colours take their birth and have their being in all their pristine purity.

There is something more than mere Roerich tradition and style in Svetoslav's art; there is his individual uniqueness no less great than his father's. He too is a mystic dreamer. Some do not sense any mysticism in his life or in his art but see only a humanitarian with an artist's impulse and the craftsman's skill. He is abundantly all these, but he is also a born mystic, if there is one. His art reveals it.

Great as are his gifts as a technician in the art of painting, who knows all there is to know about building imposing structural masses, suggesting strength and beauty, (the "substance of things" of which Cezanne spoke) and of laying contrasting complementary colours in such a subtle way as to bring out their rich pulsating qualities, (the dream of the Impressionists), and which make Svetoslav's pictures such exquisite dreams in colour harmony and pattern.

Great as these pictorial merits are, it is not for these that one would like to appraise his pictures as great works of art, but for their inherent mystic elements which, in the words of Carlyle, "take you to the brink of a precipice and let you gaze into Infinity."

Svetoslav Roerich's paintings, like his father's have this indefinable "something" which gives them their immortal character. In other words, his art is a kind of Yoga, the Yoga of Beauty, another pathway to Moksha or Liberation.

That, according to the ancient scriptures of India, is the real purpose of all art; and the true test of all great art is this: that it should not only please the senses, satisfy the emotions and the mind but also lift one to a realm of spiritual ecstasy and experience.

Some of Svetoslav's works have this deep mystic quality, the quality of letting you glimpse, however momentary it may be, the Real amidst the Unreal, the Light amidst Darkness,

the Truth amidst Falsehood. That definitely is a spiritual form of art. Hence also the symbolic nature of some of his large canvases, like the triptych - "Whither Humanity", "Humanity Crucified", "Humanity Released", "Jacob and the Angel", and others.

Dr. Goetz, the well-known critic, summarises the spiritual significance of this aspect of Roerich's art thus: "The suffering Christ and the Mother of Sorrows occupy a central place in his art. But Christ is dying even today, Christ is born and sacrificed in every one of us in the Apocalypsis of these decades of successive horrible wars and revolutions.

"Thus mankind crucified is the central figure of Svetoslav Roerich's grand triptych: "Whither Humanity", feeling helplessly amidst the threatening rocks and sultry clouds of inescapable disasters, "Humanity Crucified" under the flames of war and destruction poured by God's angels from the phials of wrath, and "Humanity Released" from the inferno of hatred by the love of Christ.

"A grand triptych, like the visions of William Blake, accepting tradition only in order to say what the philosophical ideas cannot be expressed by the artist, by means of discreet allusions to other masterpieces, and mastering the drama into a symbol by means of a grand rhythm and antithesis of lines and colours worthy of a Greco."

Svetoslav is a lovable man, kind and courtly, soft of speech and gentle of manners, he is a born aristocrat, who impresses all who come in touch with him. He is a Western artist after the heart of an Eastern law giver, Sukaracharya, an artist who is pure in life, kind in deeds, noble in words and spiritual in aspiration. Such have ever been the sons of the spirit, the true creative artists.

3. Nidam (?)

SVETOSLAV ROERICH

by

G. VENKATACHALAM

The world is familiar with the name and art of Nicholas Roerich, the sage and savant, the master-painter. Like the heaven-piercing Himalayan peaks that he loves to paint, he stands out, a titan among men. He is already fast becoming a legend, like the unseen Himalayan mystics, whose spiritual messenger to the outer world he truly is.

The world knows the other Roerich too, Svetoslav, the son, but only as a painter of his father's portraits and the enthusiastic propagandist of his father's dreams and aspirations in the outside world.

As the Vice-President of the New York Roerich Museum and of the Urusvati Himalayan Research Institute and as the organiser of the Roerich Pact and Peace Banner, he has ably and worthily represented his father in many an international gathering, and has done splendid pioneering work in the cause of art and beauty, peace and freedom. That in itself is no mean achievement.

THE GRAND MANNER

But Svetoslav is cast in as grand a mould as his great father both in his art and life. He is not a mere chip of the old block; he is a substantial part of the block itself. There is the Roerich touch in everything the Junior does or says.

He is a painter after the grand manner of his father, a painter of mountains and their moods, a revealer in form and colour of the mysteries of nature and a daring explorer from the devaic world, where colours take their birth and have their being in all their pristine purity.

There is something more than mere Roerich tradition and style in Svetoslav's art; there is his individual uniqueness no less great than his father's. He too is a mystic dreamer. Some do not sense any mysticism in his life or in his art but see only a humanitarian with an artist's impulse and the craftsman's skill. He is abundantly all these, but he is also a born mystic, if there is one. His art reveals it.

Great as are his gifts as a technician in the art of painting, who knows all there is to know about building imposing structural masses, suggesting strength and beauty, (the "substance of things" of which Cezanne spoke) and of laying contrasting complementary colours in such a subtle way as to bring out their rich pulsating qualities, (the dream of the Impressionists), and which make Svetoslav's pictures such exquisite dreams in colour harmony and pattern.

Great as these pictorial merits are, it is not for these that one would like to appraise his pictures as great works of art, but for their inherent mystic elements which, in the words of Carlyle, "take you to the brink of a precipice and let you gaze into Infinity."

Svetoslav Roerich's paintings, like his father's, have this indefinable "something" which gives them their immortal character. In other words, his art is a kind of Yoga, the Yoga of Beauty, another pathway to Moksha or Liberation.

That, according to the ancient scriptures of India, is the real purpose of all art; and the true test of all great art is this: that it should not only please the senses, satisfy the emotions and the mind but also lift one to a realm of spiritual ecstasy and experience.

Some of Svetoslav's works have this deep mystic quality, the quality of letting you glimpse, however momentary it may be, the Real amidst the Unreal, the Light amidst Darkness, the Truth amidst Falsehood. That definitely is a spiritual form of art. Hence also the symbolic nature of some of his large canvases, like the triptych - "Whither Humanity", "Humanity Crucified", "Humanity Released", "Jacob and the Angel", and others.

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THE ART OF SVETOSLAV ROERICH

By
VIVEK BHATTACHARYA

Dr. Radhakrishnan after his second visit to the exhibition described the art of Svetoslav Roerich in the following words: "His portraits are not mere representations but catch the spirit of the human face divine. His landscapes are poems of colour." The learned philosopher observed, "You find in him not only technical skill and intellectual power but also creative imagination and spiritual insight." In the words of Jawaharlal Nehru, it was indeed "a feast of beauty" !

Svetoslav's exhibition has belied the statement of critics that the Delhi public is not attracted by art. In the very heart of the capital this altogether separate wonderland consisting of beautiful landscapes, portraits, genre and imaginative paintings attracted connoisseurs and lovers of art not only from Delhi but from outside. I met an art connoisseur who came all the way from Kashmir to witness the exhibition. I met lecturers and students of Government Women's College, Ludhiana who came particularly to see the exhibition. I was told by the Secretary of the All India Fine Arts and Crafts Society, Mr. Bhowmik, that well over one hundred thousand people came to see the exhibition during the past four weeks - a record crowd for any art exhibition ever held in Delhi !

The exhibition was a grand success; it attracted India's topmost leaders; it attracted Russia's top-most leaders and other foreign dignitaries. But above all, the crowning success came when it attracted the simple ordinary people. The success of art lies not in its limitation within a selected so-called 'elite' but its power of appeal to the ordinary man.

During the past four weeks our soldiers came, our Air-force men came, our Navy men came, University students and School children came, our Government Secretariat Staff came, and countless numbers of people came, who enjoyed the paintings.

This is how an Army man describes the exhibition: "The paintings carry us to a wonder land. When you look at the paintings depicting the scenic charm of the Himalayas you feel as if you are in the lap of the lofty Himalayas and standing on the high peaks of the mountains enjoying the cool breeze there". The Captain gave this description of the Exhibition over the A.I.R.

This is because Svetoslav genuinely believes that art is a part of people's daily life. "It is impossible to describe, to convey in words the importance of Art in our daily life", says Svetoslav. He believes "besides the wonderful training, the study and practice the Arts provide, they help to crystallise the genius of the people and give an outlet to the creative faculty which resides in every human being. That mysterious creative force which expresses itself throughout the infinite manifestations of life from the flash of a butterfly's wing ready to alight on a flower adapted to its pollination to the happy song of a bird calling out to its mate and forgetting all in the ecstasy of its sublime expression."

When Prime Minister Khrushchev went to see the exhibition I was moved seeing his reactions to the paintings. Looking at the portrait of Prime Minister Nehru, Mr. Khrushchev said: "It is a great portrait of a great man". He went nearer the portrait and said in a jovial mood, "Now let us talk to each other." And looking at the next portrait - which was that of Dr. Radhakrishnan - the Russian Prime Minister said, "I do not need any introduction

to him." I refer to these quotations merely to stress the life-like quality of the portraits.

Svetoslav's paintings have vigour, strength and hope. His "Triptych" consisting of "The Release", "Humanity Crucified" and "Whither Humanity" conveys his deep sympathetic study of humanism. His affectionate heart made him sit with his brush to paint "The Little Sisters", "The Tribal Girl", "Friends", "The Kulu Boy" whose portraits he has painted so vividly and with such deep understanding.

When Prof. Humayun Kabir was explaining the mountain-scape "Kanchenjunga" - the "golden shoulders" to Prime Minister Khrushchev, my mind was hovering over the second highest peak of the Himalayas. I have seen both - the mountain peak and the painting. Both are vivid in my mind !

Svetoslav is an inspired poet in colour and line "visualising the romantic lyrics of India and Indians of today in most of their physical aspects, psychic moods and spiritual aspirations." Svetoslav says "there, where our words come from the heart, our inner being, where we stand as a complete personification of our emotions and thoughts, our message will have the greatest power, carry the greatest conviction; in other words, it will be truth itself."

Svetoslav believes it is the sincerity of purpose, the untiring search for truth by the artist that creates an impression in the mind of the people. Svetoslav asks, "Why are we moved by the early primitives, their simple often clumsy lines and forms, all far from the perfection of technique attained at later periods? Because the faith which animated those artists, the directness and sincerity of their feelings, radiate upon us from those early works and convey the message with the same vibrant intensity as it was experienced by the artists themselves."

Art must reach the ordinary people's heart. It must always be a source of perennial joy. It must be a symbol of our hopes and aspirations. It must touch the finer emotions of the people. Otherwise Art loses its real significance. Judging from this point what do we find about Svetoslav's paintings? His Himalayan landscapes that "capture the transcendental beauty, majesty, and awe of these snow-clad mountains" always leave a deep impression in the mind of the people. His genre paintings mirror most vividly the ordinary scenes from life. His portraits talk to you. His imaginative creations carry your thoughts to a serene beautiful wonderland. Svetoslav is an artist of the people. He is understood by the people. His art is not restricted to a few limited art connoisseurs of the limited fortunate elite. There can be no greater success for an artist than of belonging to the people, mirroring their hopes and aspirations, their every day struggle. These paintings inspire them, add vigour hope and strength in their struggle against despair and sorrows of life. And there lies the success of the artist.

(Signed) VIVEK BHATTACHARYA
29.3.1960

THE ART OF SVETOSLAV ROERICH

By
VIVEK BHATTACHARYA

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29.3.1960

B. V. Madhavan

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THE TIMES OF INDIA
Wednesday, January 20, 1960.

S V E T O S L A V R O E R I C H ' S A R T
G R A N D E S T E V E R O N E - M A N S H O W

ASTONISHINGLY RICH FARE

by
Our Art Critic

The exhibition of paintings by Svetoslav Roerich, which had a gala preview at the All-India Fine Arts and Crafts Society building on Tuesday evening, is the grandest one-man show ever held in Delhi. It occupies all the four A.I.F.A.C.S. art galleries which have been completely renovated with improved lighting arrangements and with effective wall coverings. Instead of the usual run of 10 days, it is to last for full one month.

It presents the work of a senior and distinguished painter, Russian by birth and heredity but now very much Indian by adoption and affinity, who is holding a one-man show after some 13 years (the last being in Baroda Picture Gallery in 1946) and who is exhibiting his work for the first time in the capital.

Going round the galleries, one is struck by the retrospective character of the exhibition. Here is the harvest of the experience of a life-time and it is astonishingly rich and rewarding in the different genres of painting - portraiture, landscapes, scenes from life, imaginative compositions and religious works.

TWO INFLUENCES

(2) The key to Roerich's art lies in understanding the two great influences in his life. First and foremost is the influence of his renowned father, Nicholas Roerich, his 'guru' in the real sense of the word. This is evident most notably in his studies of the Himalayan ranges and the imaginative paintings. It is to the senior Roerich that he owes his profundity in conception and it is to him he is

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indebted for the magical gift of giving a sense of depth, vastness and movement by an imaginative treatment of flat colours in his backgrounds.

The second influence vying in strength with the first is the influence of the Dutch masters. This is best exemplified in his portraits where there is technical skill of a high order and where there is abundant delight in bringing out the sensuous values of the flesh, form, drapery and details. It is between these two great influences that the artist shows all his varied and wide range.

MAGNUM OPUS

Much has been said and written about his magnum opus - the triptych "The Release", No.10; "Humanity Crucified", No.11; and "Whither Humanity", No.12. Let me add my homage. It is truly monumental in conception as well as in execution. The central piece, a veritable conflagration of lurid tragedy, is flanked by two moving expressionistic scenes of exquisite plastic beauty. It has an immediate emotional impact on the spectator and it is dramatic in the best sense of the word. Two Biblical scenes, "Good Samaritan" (No.101), "Jacob And The Angel" (No.105) have a similar grand sweep and effect. "Hasten" (No.108) is another imaginative composition remarkable for its radiation of movement.

His scenes from life offer a felicitous blend of realism and romanticism. In the artist's hands, the ordinary becomes extraordinary. The fisher-folk, the toilers, the group of peasants going homeward, the mother and child squatting on the roadside, are treated in such a way that they become significant beings. These paintings are, indeed, outstanding for their opulent and decorative colouring. "Toil" (No.2) and "Homeward" (No.8) are fine specimens in this category.

RARE COMPETENCE

Fascinating as his imaginative compositions and scenes from life are, he is at his strongest in his portraits and landscapes. As a portraitist, he has gained wide recognition and reputation. He has done a number of studies of his father and many of these have been acquired by museums and art institutes. In the present exhibition, there is

a fine study of his father on view. In most of his portraits, notably in those of Mrs. Ashghari M. Qadir and Miss Raya Bogdanov, the execution is marked by rare competence and skill. At a time when slipshod work is the vogue, he is like an oasis in a desert. He takes infinite pains on the details and thereby adds another source of pleasure.

If he is strongest in his portraits he is undoubtedly at his best in his landscapes. The most delightful of these are in the basement gallery. They are mostly of small size but exquisite both in colour composition and atmosphere. "Spring In Kulu" (No. 6) is beautiful beyond words. Its colouring is a creation in harmony. Other notable studies are "Spring In Kulu" (No.46). "Winter In Kulu" (No.47), "Koksar" (No.54) and "Naggar" (No.77).

The exhibition will remain open daily till February 19 between 10 a.m. and 8 p.m.

b Under.

EXCERPTS

THE SUNDAY STANDARD
NEW DELHI: SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1960.

ROERICH'S ART FASCINATES KHRUSHCHEV

NEW DELHI.

The Soviet Prime Minister, Mr. Nikita Khrushchev, this evening spent over 40 minutes at the exhibition of paintings by the Russian-born Indian artist, Mr. Svetoslav Roerich, in the All-India Fine Arts and Crafts Society's art gallery.

Mr. Khrushchev described the paintings as "FASCINATING" and as the depiction of "MAN IN HIS STRUGGLE AGAINST NATURE - MAN WHO DOES NOT BOW HIS HEAD TO NATURE, BUT CONSTANTLY STRIVES ON AND ON, FORWARD AND FORWARD."

The Soviet Premier, who was accompanied by the Foreign Minister, Mr. Andrie Gromyko his two daughters and Prof. Markhov was conducted round the four galleries in which the 120 paintings and portraits of the artist are displayed - -

- - - - - Looking at the portrait of Prime Minister Nehru, Mr. Khrushchev said: "IT IS A GREAT PICTURE OF A GREAT MAN." - - -

- - - - - Next to Mr. Nehru's portrait was hung that of the Vice-President, Dr. Radhakrishnan, Mr. Khrushchev commented: "I DO NOT NEED ANY INTRODUCTION TO HIM".

Commenting on the brilliant colours used by Mr. Roerich, Mr. Khrushchev said of one landscape paintings: "SOME MAY SAY THERE ARE NO SUCH COLOURS IN NATURE, BUT I HAVE SEEN THEM. IT ONLY REQUIRES THE RIGHT TYPE OF ARTIST TO PORTRAY THESE COLOURS AND THERE IS NO EXAGGERATION WHATSOEVER."

- 2 -

Mr. Khrushchev told the artist that if the exhibition opened in Moscow (President Voroshilov has already invited Mr. Roerich to visit Russia and exhibit his paintings there)", the first visitor to it was assured' (himself)."

NOTE:

(For quotation of Mr. Khrushchev's remarks)

THE ROERICH ART EXHIBITION IN DELHI

Translation of a talk in Urdu

By

Mr. K.G. Saiyidain

I have appeared in many examinations in my life, but today Madame Roerich has got me entangled in one of the most difficult examinations in which I have ever appeared! I do not know a great deal about the art of painting. But I am quite sure that if this irresistible couple, that you see before you, asked you to do anything, however difficult - for example to jump down from a tree! - you will do what they ask you. Similarly I have come here not because I am fully conversant with the theme on which I am asked to speak but because I could not possibly say 'No' to their invitation. It is, in any case, a matter of great pleasure to me that so many girls from your school should have come to see this feast of beauty which is spread out so generously in this Exhibition.

I am sure many of you know that Mr. Roerich who has created so many manifestations of beauty - as attractive in their way as manifestations of natural beauty around us in the world outside - originally belongs to Russia. But, for several decades, he has been living in this country and has now become one of us. I hope you also know that his father, Prof. Nicholas Roerich, was himself a very great artist with an international reputation. So, what Roerich has learnt of art includes the best elements from the East as well as the West, and his reputation is not confined to this country but also covers Europe, America and other countries of the world. It is a matter of singular good fortune for us that, in Delhi, which is the capital and the heart of India, we have the opportunity of seeing these paintings and enjoying their beauty. When it was decided that this exhibition be held here, I was anxious that students from our schools and colleges should have an opportunity of seeing it in large numbers. I am glad to find that this wish has been fully realised.

We all know how difficult it is to create such beautiful paintings but it is not quite so difficult to get the thrill of enjoying them as works of art. As you look

around these rooms, you will feel that you have been transplanted into a new world which, in many ways, is very different from the everyday humdrum world in which we live. Let us try and see in which way they differ. I have just told you that it is a matter of great good luck for us to be able to see these paintings. But merely passing the eye over them is not enough. A good deal depends on the approach, the mental equipment and the emotional responsiveness of the beholder. Whether one is looking at a picture or reading a book or receiving the impress of any other new experience, depends a great deal on the person himself as to how much he is going to get out of it. It is, as it were, a challenge to his vision. Think of the great classics of the world. They can be read by small children, by persons of ordinary education as well as by great scholars. What they get out of them depends on the heart and the mind which they bring to this experience. There is a great deal of beauty and goodness and truth around us - sometimes obvious, sometimes hidden. How much of it passes into our own life depends largely on ourselves. God's great gift to the artist is that, compared to the ordinary people, his insight is deeper and more sensitive and he is able to see aspects of beauty and truth which may not be revealed to the eyes of ordinary mortals. If we could create in ourselves a little of the quality of the artist's eye, I am sure we will be able to see more beauty in the world than normally falls to our lot. There are numerous persons in the world of whom it may be said that they have eyes but they see not, ears but they hear not, and minds and hearts which they are unable to use. On the other hand, there are also sometimes rare individuals who have neither eyes to see nor ears to hear nor the capacity for speech, and yet they are lively and vital and appreciative. I am thinking, for example, of a person like Hellen Keller. She was born - or became very early in her life - deaf, dumb and blind and yet she developed her capacities and her sensitivity so enormously that she blossomed into a person of great culture, sensibility and distinction. Her fingers are so sensitive that if she passes them once across the face of an individual, she can, as she puts it, "see" the face and remember it. I had the privilege once of entertaining her in my house and she was introduced to all the members of the family and the guests in that manner and she said: "Yes, I have seen them and I know them now." She can also place her hands on the top of the piano and from its faint, almost imperceptible, resonance, she recognises what music is being played! My advice to you,

therefore, is that you must try and create this inner vision and sensitivity to art and beauty in yourselves. If we live in the world in such a way that we remain insensitive to the beauty in it - whether it is the beauty of words or colours or sounds - we would be like lonesome strangers who are not fully adjusted to the country in which we are living. And what can be greater misfortune than to be strangers in this world which God has made our home! In saying this, I am really echoing the idea of a beautiful Persian verse which says:

"Naught is needed to see but the appreciative eye;
In the land of your birth, do not live like
a stranger"

This appreciative vision gives us an approach in which there is sympathy and love and the capacity to sink deep into our experiences. If we have something of this vision, then we can assimilate into ourselves the beauty by which we are surrounded.

I have made these preliminary remarks because I want you to approach this exhibition in that spirit. It is your good fortune that you have gone round these rooms with Mr. Roerich, who is obviously the finest interpreter, to guide you in this pilgrimage. I cannot repeat all that he may have told you but there are two or three points to which I would like to invite your attention. You have probably heard of the ancient Greeks who made a great contribution to our thinking about the basic issues of life. To them we owe the idea that there are three basic entities in life - truth, beauty and goodness - and almost all that is valuable is eventually derived from them. If we do not have the capacity to appreciate, it means that our life is defective, incomplete and trivial, like that of the animals. The real distinction between man and the lower animals - with whom he shares many things - is that man can learn the difference between truth and untruth, beauty and ugliness, goodness and evil. If he fails to do so, he is obviously living at the animals' level. It is the quality of creativity that rescues man from this level. Now, people generally think that a good artist is always questing for beauty in life. This is true. And, as I have said, he even sees beauty where our own imperfect vision may not be able to do so. But I would like to assure you that a good and great artist is not only a seeker for beauty but also for truth and goodness. Just as the poet expresses his concept of these values through words and the musicians through sounds, the

artist uses the medium of colours and brush to bring out the inner responses and impressions of his heart and mind and present them to us in beautiful forms and patterns.

Look at these pictures around you. In some of them Roerich has presented the beauty that he has seen in Nature through vivid and imaginative colours. There are others in which he has presented the faces of numerous men and women which have impressed him. There are small-sized paintings as well as large-sized paintings. But in almost all of them there is a generous and large-hearted use of vivid, striking and harmoniously balanced colours through which a whole new world of beauty and meaning opens out before us. I have the feeling that it is only a large-hearted person who can use colours in this spectacular way. Amongst the portraits are those of distinguished men and women whom we all know - persons like Nicholas Roerich, our Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, our Vice-President Dr. Radhakrishnan and Devika Rani Roerich herself - and also of unknown common people particularly of the Kulu Valley - children, women, old men, beggars, Yogis and persons of all kinds who have caught the artist's eye. But the one feature which you will find common to all of them is his approach which is characterized by sympathy and understanding. There is a clear evidence of his having created a relationship of love and sympathy between himself and his subjects with the result that many new doors seem to open out before him and through them he can see their faces not superficially but in a deeper sense. His inner eye can penetrate the skin and reveal something of what is hidden inside, and through his art he makes it manifest to others. This is the artist's true role.

You probably know that there are many schools of painting with different approaches. But there are two broad categories amongst them, specimens of whose work you may have seen in different exhibitions. Some of them are 'realists' ! - they paint a thing exactly as the eye sees it and the portraits that they make may sometimes not be very different from what a good photographer may achieve with his camera. There are others who have a more subjective approach, who see a person not as the eye of the camera would see him but as it appears to their interpretative vision, and they attempt to present him according to this inner perception. Sometimes they produce paintings and portraits which you and I may find rather strange and difficult to understand or even to recognise.

It seems to a layman like myself that one of the secrets of Roerich's beautiful paintings is that there is realism in them - so that you can recognize the faces easily and clearly - and yet, at the same time, you feel that the artist is not merely showing the face but also the inner soul and spirit of the man. Look at Nehru's portrait, look at it carefully. You will feel that here is a person who is looking intelligently and hopefully but also a little anxiously into the distant future as if trying to visualize how this future would shape out for his own country and the world in general. There are signs of deep thinking on his face and yet there is a certain expression of inner peace and shanti and understanding which can only come from a life of self-fulfilment. So, the artist shows not only the contours of Nehru's face and his sensitive mouth and his deep set eyes but also something of his inner soul. And the same thing can be said of many of the other portraits. One is not surprised at his creating such a painting of his own wife, Devika Rani. It is comparatively easy because he knows the whole of her gracious personality and her noble spirit. But the remarkable thing is that the same depth of sympathy and understanding revealed in the portraits of so many men, women and children of the Kulu Valley whom he must have seen only in passing. The reason perhaps is that he has seen them also not with the bodily eye but with the eye of the heart and the mind, and, therefore, the whole passion of love and sympathy and understanding has entered in his presentation of their faces. One can only express one's deep admiration for such art.

When I saw this Exhibition for the first time, I was so impressed by the vividness of its colours, their harmony and their calculated contrasts that I felt as if I had arrived in an entirely new world of grace and beauty. One of the few other occasions when I had a similar thrill was in America during the fall season when, in the region of the Rocky mountains, the magnificent trees had put on their mantle of autumn colours. Never before had I seen such a vivid variety and spread of colours as I did in these mountains, not even in Kashmir. Sometimes, one would pass a long continuous row of trees covered by magnificent flame-coloured leaves and set against that background one would find - as if for the sake of contrast - a tree whose leaves were entirely green or yellow. One had the feeling that the setting as well as the contrast had been cunningly and consciously contrived by Nature. I had not realized before that there could be so much power and dynamism and appeal in

colours - in art or in Nature - as revealed through these two moving experiences ... Also, when you see these paintings, you feel as if the frontiers between music, poetry and painting had broken down and they had all come together to form a single beautiful pattern of harmony, as if the world had been transformed into a poem or a musical composition. This is the great gift of the true artist and the true poet to enable us to see beauty more fully and in a new way. If our schools and colleges could create in our students the capacity to see and to appreciate beauty, it will not only improve the worth and quality of their education but also make their life richer and fuller and more meaningful.

A few days back I was reading Maulana Azad's Commentary on the Quran. Somewhere in it, he has described in words of great power how beauty is spread by Nature all around us, provided we have the capacity to appreciate it. According to him, it is one of the great proofs of God's existence as well as His grace and beneficence that He has not only made this world useful but also invested it with beauty. It occurred to me that while you are looking at these paintings - and through them getting a glimpse into the meaning of beauty - I might give you an example of how a great writer uses words in order to produce the same kind of effect as great paintings can do. For it is through the various media of words, colours, music, sounds and dance that men expresses his creativity. Maulana Azad's magnificent language is very difficult to translate because every word that he uses is charged not only with meaning and significance but with a beauty and aptness all its own. I am quoting these lines for you because you will see in these paintings many of the manifestations of natural beauty which he has described in words, and thus learn to appreciate something of the intimate relationship between the medium of words and the medium of colours. -

"If you live by the side of the Ganges, water would perhaps appear to you quite unimportant. If, however, you were deprived of it even for 24 hours, you will realise how precious it is. The same thing applies to our response to Nature's resplendent beauty. Its open manifestations pass in an unending parade before your eyes day and night and you fail to be thrilled by them. The morning dawns every day with its fresh beauty - you do not even care to raise your head from the pillow

to welcome it! The moonlight scatters its spell over the night - you shut the windows of your room and go to sleep! But if these natural beauties which invest our days and nights were to disappear, or you lost the power of sight or hearing, how would you feel? Would you not then realize that each one of them was a gift of incalculable value? Ask the residents of a winter-bound region, where the greater part of the year is cloud cast, whether there is any greater joy in life than the warm kiss of sunshine. Ask the helpless, immobile bed-ridden patient and he will tell you what infinite wealth of joy and peace a glimpse of the clear blue sky can give. A person, who has lost his eye-sight, can tell you what an unbearable deprivation it is to go through life without seeing the colourful pageantry of season and flowers. You often pine greedily for artificial luxuries and regard hoards of gold and silver - vulgar display of wealth - as the most important things in life, forgetting that Nature has placed spontaneously at the disposal of every human being her lavish joy-laden gifts which no man-made luxuries can rival. He who has these treasure, let him ask for no other! How can a person feel poor and unhappy in a world where the sun heralds the smiling dawn every day and the evening disappears behind the jewelled curtain of the night, where the sky is studded with the stars and the moonbeams and the earth decked with flowers and green swaying fields - a world of light and colour and smell and music, each with its infinite variety? Is it proper for anyone, who has the eyes to see and the mind to understand, to be always bewailing his misfortune and deprivation in a world like this?"

He has lamented the fact that there are many persons in this world who are unable to appreciate these beauties of Nature, which can be a source of perennial joy because they are not trained to utilise the great gifts of the seeing eye, the understanding mind, and the appreciative heart that God has given to them. So far as these paintings are concerned, they are significant because the artist has not merely mirrored life through them but also provided an eloquent commentary on life and brought out some of its inner significance. Look at the panel of these three paintings on the central wall which are listed under the title "Triptych". Perhaps Roerich has already talked to you about them. I do not know what he has told you, but I might share with you my own reaction. It seems to me that these three paintings represent the unending story of human life and endeavour, and through them is presented to us a vision of man's great struggle through the ages. They make us forget that we are denizens of a particular city or country, or a particular age, and we become a part of the great heartbeat of mankind. It is

the story of how men have risen and fallen, of their joys and sorrows, of their hopes and frustrations, and we feel that we are a vital part of this marching caravan of history. In the first painting it seems that man struggled and toiled and suffered and is now tired and in despair and wonders whether or not the road would lead him on to anything better. The second painting seems to give us the message that whether it is the man of this century, or a thousand years ago, or five thousand years ago, he has always suffered and passed through trials and tribulations, wars and famines and epidemics, and natural as well as man-made calamities have surrounded him like a furious fire. Like Jesus Christ mankind itself has had to undergo the experience of the Cross. What then is the future of mankind? Will it be able to find the way out? Now look at the third painting, which shows that whatever may be man's failures and sufferings and frustrations, there is something inside him which is always beckoning him forward and upward, which leads him from despair to hope, and from the ache of bondage to the joy of freedom. Man is certainly enslaved but all these are not chains which external forces have forged round his feet. Many of them are chains of his own making - chains which man has forged for himself because of his weaknesses, misdeeds and injustice. But man ever aspires to free himself not only from external bondage but also from the more tenuous and dangerous fetters which he has created for himself in the domain of the spirit. This painting, therefore, reveals the external truth that it has been man's constant endeavour to awaken his spiritual powers and capacities and to utilise them in such a way that he becomes an instrument for fulfilling God's increasing purpose. Our great Indian poet Iqbal has expressed this yearning of the human spirit when he said, and again this is a very imperfect translation:-

"What can I do? My nature is averse to rest,
My heart is impatient like the breeze in
the poppy field!
When the eye beholds an object of beauty
The heart yearns for something more beautiful
still !
From the spark to the star, from the star
to the sun is my quest!
With an impatient eye and a hopeful heart
I seek for the end of that which is endless."

This is man's great glory and triumph that he should be able increasingly to conquer his weaknesses and limitations and move towards greater truth, greater beauty, and greater goodness and collect these invaluable jewels into the apron

of his life. All the studies that you carry on in your schools, the skills that you acquire, the crafts that you learn are important in their own places. But far more important is the realization that 'man does not live by bread alone', that there are thousands of things in life and in Nature which are even more important because they represent the eternal values of truth, goodness and beauty and decency which we must learn to assimilate into our being. It is the great gift of Roerich to us that he has shown all these various aspects of life as well as man's failures and frustrations and yet conveyed to us the message to hope and to create and to aspire. He puts on our eyes a kind of spectacles which enable us to penetrate and look deeper into things.

I am very happy and I consider it a good fortune to have been able to come here and meet all of you and I would like to offer, on behalf of all of us, our tribute and admiration to the Artist.

B. Indur.
My copy of the painting is in the collection
of the Museum 20 and.

"ROERICH'S PAINTINGS HAVE TOUCH
OF SUBLIMITY "

It is not easy to write	By-----
about a living artist, as there	H. GOETZ
is at present no internation-	What is the hallmark of
ally acknowledged standard of	a great work of art? The
judgment. We live in a cultur-	writer of this article
al transition period.	ventures an opinion on the
	subject and discusses the
	works of Svetoslav Roerich
	by this standard. Roerich's
	paintings are not only
	distinguished by their
	monumental line, colour
	conception and eastern thesis,
Everywhere there are	says the writer, they also
remnants of the art traditions	bring to the viewer a reali-
of the past which are slowly	sation of the grandeur of
swept away by a new techno-	the universe and the omni-
cratic civilisation of differ-	presence of divine life.
ent structure. In the East we	Roerich's paintings will be
witness romantic efforts at	exhibited in New Delhi from
a revival of the old "national"	January 20.

arts. In the Occident these "traditionalist" experiments, limited to church art, often verge on the grotesque, because the artists have lost the religious experience which they are expected to convey.

Progressive art, on the other hand, speaks of despair, or has renounced any message other than the abstract harmonies of lines, surfaces and colours brought to the most delicate refinement.

Admirable as far as it goes, it represents a self-obliteration, where sculpture and painting dissolve into industrial design, and where even architecture, though functionally adjusted to the demands of new materials and techniques, threatens to disintegrate in an attempt at getting out of the monotony of standardised mass production. These are all symptoms of a civilisation in agony, despite its apparently flourishing conditions.

PERSONAL NOTE

Communist art has landed in "social realism". Though often competently executed, it lacks the sensitiveness of true art, and is rather the soil for an art to come, than a new art.

Between all these currents the artist who goes his own way is in a difficult position. As he cannot be classified, he is in danger of being condemned as a reactionary and an eclectic.

To partisans of any movement a "reactionary" is whoever does not toe their line. And to them everybody is an eclectic who is prepared to make his own selection of techniques or themes, so far as they serve to express his own visions and ideas.

The paintings of Svetoslav Roerich, have roots in many traditions and yet do not belong to any movement of our time, but represent a very personal style of their own.

Svetoslav Roerich is the son of the famous Russian painter Nicholas Roerich, of the old aristocratic stock and yet in his time a revolutionary in art and a champion of international understanding and collaboration.

After the revolution, the family had lived in Sweden, America and at last India where they found a new home in the Himalayas. Thus Svetoslav's background became very international in the special sense of an occidental-oriental synthesis.

Svetoslav Roerich is a cultured European in the best sense of the word, but at the same time a connoisseur and collector of Indian art. He has with an amazing capacity for discovering the most beautiful and most important objects.

He is a sincere Christian and a devotee of Indian philosophy, a painter trained in the best tradition of occidental technique and yet inspired by the great Indian art of the past. How could such a personality fit into any of the trends of the day, whether western or eastern?

However, nothing would be more erroneous than to see in Svetoslav Roerich an eclectic. This might rather be said of his father.

Nicholas had been one of the first Russian representatives of that simplified style developed by Manet. Gauguin and

Van Gogh which restored to the picture its character of a surface covered with lines and colours which sacrificed illusionism to a new spatial and atmospheric probability by means of an intensive line and colour, in its turn evolving emotional responses never possible in earlier art.

His pictorial contribution was the intensity of light and colour contrasts peculiar to the atmosphere on high altitudes where the almost black sky glows like fire, where the snow shines like the sun and where the shadows reflect a wonderful blue. His Himalayan landscapes designed in monumental rhythms open a fantastic world almost unbelievable to one who has never seen them himself.

And this magic realm he filled with the mystic figures of Tibetan lamas and Indian rishis Lamaistic and Hindu gods and goddesses, such as were to him the representatives and symbols of the high philosophical and religious ideas that preoccupied him more and more, figures, however, more or less adapted from Tibetan or Hindu art.

Svetoslav's paintings are very different, notwithstanding certain superficial similarities. They have the same monumental conception, the same rhythmic line, the same intensive colour, the eastern themes.

But Svetoslav is not a visionary, a dreamer of the past whether Russian or Central Asian. He is a keen critical observer of our time, and his philosophy is rather analytical than visionary.

Fundamentally there is the same comprehensive vision of life, the same synthesis of Western and Eastern religiosity and philosophy. But it is not a romantic harking back to the simplicity of Byzantine Russian saints or Eastern rishis and Bodhisattvas, nor to the cosmic imagery of the Apocalypse, of the Ramayana or Gita, or of Lamaistic Sambhala.

(Svetoslav's world is the present the landscape and the people of India;) and the Christian mystery or the dharma of the East, though consummated beyond time and space, fulfil themselves here and now amongst and around us.

The divine has not revealed itself in the past, it is always and everywhere present, immanent in and transcending the visible reality. Where Svetoslav Roerich resorts to traditional imagery, he does so with a purpose.

Just as T.S. Eliot or Ezra Pound have used verses of ancient Greek, Old French, Renaissance Italian, Elizabethan English or Chinese poets, slightly altered or in a different context, in order to convey by such associations a richer meaning. Svetoslav Roerich has occasionally adapted figures created by the masters of the past. Michelangelo, Delacroix, and others. But he has done so rarely.

USE OF SYMBOLS

Normally he tries to convey his ideas by purely pictorial means, by a structure imperceptively evoking symbols by a musical rhythm, by a colour not only intense but in its selection appealing to our emotions.

In this respect he goes far beyond his father. His rhythms are much more complicated and involved, evoking a life rarely found in Nicholas' work. The range of his colours is far more varied, from the grandiose simple contrasts of the high Himalayas to the immensely variegated delicate colour shades of the monsoon and post-monsoon atmosphere, the homely warmth of the valleys and the hot mist of the plains.

Here also are light effects which most people ignore, but which are real and which immerse those responsive to them in a realisation of the ineffable grandeur of the universe, the omnipresence of the life divine, of the enrapturing love of God.

SUCH EXPERIENCES ARE NOT PREACHED, THEY ARE
EVOKED IN THE ONLOOKER JUST BY THE MANNER IN WHICH
THE SUBJECT IS INTERPRETED.

They are evident in the wonderful mountain landscapes, the Himalayan peaks presented in the most different light and atmosphere - in the full daylight, at the rising of the sun over the mists of the morning, at a sunset above heavy clouds in a moonlit night.

They are felt not less in apparently ordinary scenes, a peasant in the field, a herdsman in the South Indian mountains, villagers going to a fair, a hut in a garden, or just some flowers. There are always new approaches, new experiments.

However, this is just the art which we need in our time. Art is more than a matter of form, of light, of colour. Art which will survive the vicissitudes of time, has to be more than a mere decoration, or an advertisement for any social, political or religious system.

Such art, of course, has always existed, has served its purpose in its time, and has perhaps played a not unimportant role. But timeless, ever valid art has always been more.

We remember Michelangelo not as the father of the Baroque style. Michelangelo is to us the prophet of a grandiose conception of life, of a human ideal inexorable in its demands for perfection.

We remember Rembrandt not so much as the creator of a new naturalism or of an immensely refined analysis of light and shadow. He is to us the discoverer of the profoundest depth of the human personality, the tenderest beauties of the human soul even behind an ugly exterior.

We admire Vermeer not for his extremely clever perspective, his mirror effects, his beautiful colours, but for the divine life permeating all his works the quiet harmony of an apparent chaos the inner peace of some everyday scene, the sunlight filling with a secret life every nook and corner.

We love el Greco not for the rhythm of his lines, the glow of his colours, the delicate slenderness of his figures, the sickliness of their faces, but for his evocation of a reality beyond that of everyday life.

Whenever we meet a great artist, it is this vision luring us beyond our normal life, this realisation of the cosmos as a living whole which reshapes our life. His technical achievements are no more than means to this purpose, instruments without which he would not be able to convey his message, but nevertheless just instruments.

GREAT ARTIST

A generation which denies any message beyond that of formal beauty confesses that its life has no meaning. A generation which merely preaches some social, political or religious system, may be highly qualified advertisement experts, but they are not artists, at least not of that type which humanity later on remembers as its great teachers and prophets.

A great artist has to be more than an exceptional technician, a man of taste, he has to be a personality which has found its own relation to God and the world.

That they are rare in our time, is not to be wondered at: for our time is torn between the myths of economic and social systems which irretrievably belong to the past: and a new order which has not yet been integrated into our spiritual life. But the synthesis will come, and those who today stand isolated outside the pale of current trends, will be the pioneers of tomorrow.

