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THE HINDU

ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY

RATES OF SUBSCRIPTION	
City and Mofussil.	
Monthly	Re. 1
Annual	Rs. 12
Foreign.	
Monthly	Re. 1-12
Annual	Rs. 21

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THE HINDU ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY

JANUARY 28, 1934.

IN the "Encyclopædia Britannica" it is stated that Nicholas Roerich established his reputation by painting pictures of Russian prehistoric life and the wanderings of Vikings. After beginning with realistic pictures his manner evolved under the influence of Byzantine, Icon and of Oriental art towards a purely decorative and monumental style. Roerich studied the technique of ancient Russian frescoes and his wall paintings for the Kazan railway station at Moscow, representing combats between Russians and Tatars, were at the time considered his most important work.



Portrait of Nicholas Roerich, the great Russian painter, by Sv. Roerich, his son.

It was recently recorded in the Paris press that two of the famous panels of Professor Nicholas Roerich had been cut to pieces in Russia by order of the Director of the Academy of Art for use as canvas. These are the murals that were painted in 1916 for the Moscow-Kazan Railway Terminus and representing two historical events from the ancient history of Russia. One, entitled "Kazan" showing John the Terrible approaching Kazan; the other "Kerjenez" giving an episode from the Russian-Tatar epopee. Apparently the object of the vandals was to destroy these masterpieces because some religious symbols were represented on them.

Both panels were well-known in Russia and abroad, not only from exhibitions and art-monographs, "Kazan" in variant was also widely known from Dhiaghlieff's theatre productions, staging Rimsky-Korsakoff's opera "Grad Kitej"

THE TEACHER FROM THE WHITE SUMMITS

THE ART OF NICHOLAS ROERICH

By A. E. M.

—well-known in Paris, London and other European centres.

It is noteworthy in this connection that the destruction of Roerich's panels coincided with a Banner of Peace Convention held in Washington in November, for the preservation of religious, scientific and artistic treasures, proposed by this world-renowned artist himself. The "Roerich Pact" similarly to the Red Cross proposes a special universal banner for the protection of cultural treasures and besides two Banner of Peace Committees in New York and Paris, has also an "Union Internationale pour le Pacte" in Belgium.

At the time when the knives of vandals were cutting the masterpiece of the artist, he himself was actively engaged in the preservation of the works of other artists.

Nicholas Roerich executed a number of works for the theatre: for the Russian ballet he painted the scenery in Prince Igor; for Stanislavsky the setting of Peer Gynt. He wrote the libretto for and also designed the scenery and the costumes of the "Rite of Spring", for which Stravinsky composed the music. After the Russian Revolution of 1917 Roerich settled in America, and his art grew more and more abstract, tending towards occult mysticism. For thirty years his work has shown a never abating energy, and to-day he is recognised as one of the greatest living artists. Zuloaga, the Spanish painter, on seeing some of Roerich's paintings, exclaimed: "Great artist! Here is the evidence that from Russia is coming some force to the world—I cannot measure, cannot impart what it is, but it is here."

It is a remarkable fact that Roerich has created over three thousand paintings, of



"Glory to the Hero," one of the latest paintings of Nicholas Roerich hitherto unpublished.

which one thousand are in the Roerich Museum in New York, a building of twenty-four stories that was erected in honour of the great artist and philosopher in 1932 and which is now known throughout the world as one of the great cultural centres. The remainder of his pictures are to be found in the Louvre, Luxembourg, Victoria and Albert Museum, the Vatican, in most of the notable museums of the world and in royal palaces and famous private collections.



The Roerich Museum in New York.

During an expedition to Tibet, Chinese, Turkestan and Mongolia, which gave him new inspiration for his later work, he completed 500 paintings which have been described as "a great saga of the East". He is a wizard in colour and composition. Albert Einstein stated that he had been moved by one of Roerich's landscapes as by nothing else; and Rabindranath Tagore expressed similar sentiments.

His paintings show the universality of his mind. Practically every movement from Impressionism to Expressionism has found an echo in his work, and those who have had the good fortune to view his paintings have admitted it to be a tremendous spiritual and intellectual experience.

Royal Cortissoz, the art critic, in the "New York Tribune", wrote: "The essential charm of his art springs from the depth of imaginative power its inventive fervour Roerich passes from dreams to realities and back again," and Dr. Robert A. Harshe of the Chicago Art Institute, which first invited Roerich to America, said, "Roerich's message goes beyond museum walls. He has been a tremendous influence on American art. It is a fact that a view of his paintings impresses on one his breadth of vision, his

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marvellous imagination, and his limitless creativeness.

After a long series of exhibitions in Sweden, Finland, Denmark, and England in 1920-22, a series of rotary exhibitions were organised on the invitation of the Chicago Art Institute in some forty cities in the United States.

A large series of his recent paintings has been dedicated to the grandeur of the Himalayas, where the great artist has now made his home. These paintings reveal

his complete understanding of the deep wisdom of the Orient and have called forth the unstinted praise and admiration of some of the greatest Oriental artists and poets.

In the Roerich Hall in Bruges is exhibited his large canvas, "The Great Mother of the Banner of Peace", under the sign of which already two World Conferences have taken place. The idea of this Banner of Peace is also expressed in several of his most recent paintings.

Let us conclude with the words with which Serge Ernst opens his Monograph dedicated to Roerich: "In the history of contemporary Russian art, the individuality of Roerich in its contact with the last

achievements and discoveries in this sphere, stands out independently, original and perhaps somewhat unexpected."

THE REALM OF ROERICH



"HIMALAYAN" (Snowed Mountain Series.)
(In Roerich Museum, Paris.)



"TIBETAN STRONGHOLD" (In the Museum of the Latvian Roerich Society, Riga, Latvia.)



"THREE" (In the Helena Roerich Hall of the European Center of Roerich Museum, Paris.)



The Artist, Nicholas Roerich, in his Himalayan Estate. (From a studio photograph by the Secretary of the Roerich Museum.)

NICHOLAS ROERICH

"For the past few years," writes M. Dorevitch in his biography of the artist, "the name of the Slavonic painter, Nicholas Roerich, has taken a unique significance. In many countries it has become the symbol of unity and creativity. In more than twenty countries of the West, as well as the East, sixty-four societies have been founded in his name, dedicated to Culture, Art and Science. The Roerich Museum in New York which already a quarter of a million visitors yearly, the decade of the educational institutions founded by Roerich in America and finally, the Doctor of Peace, presented in the Roerich Park, now universally recognized all indicate the name of the artist as a creative force which in these days of general destruction becomes a vital force transcending boundaries and nationalities." Roerich is ever on a quest for the most simple and artistic expression, a synthesis of simplicity. Indeed he belongs to that apostolic and timeless order of the Initiates who cannot be classified



"PATH TO KARAKAS" (Snowed Mountain Series.)
(In the Roerich Museum, Paris.)

into any particular school or category. There is no field of pictorial art in which he has not participated. Depending to all vital manifestations he gives willing and simple expression to his emotions in the most unadorned materials. Synthetic and indelible staining into the fabric, a response to all the manifestations of life, sharp attention to everything which awakes, and mysterious, a consciousness which, without exaggeration proceeds by day and by night—these are the basic traits of Roerich since his very childhood. It has been well said that to follow Roerich means to enter into a new world. Not an illusory dimension but concentration, clarity, and victorious light are the distinct traits of his multi-faceted and indelible creative life. Quietly, recently, last November, Roerich's labors on behalf of the Peace Treaty were crowned with success when a great conference of thirty-four nations assembled at Washington paid glowing tributes to the great artist and pledged adherence to the Peace Treaty pact.



"LIGHT CONQUERS DARKNESS." This is one of the latest masterpieces added to the Roerich Hall in the Alhambra Municipal Museum.



"MADONNA LABOURS" (In the Roerich Museum, New York.) This painting is dedicated to a legend glorifying the labors of the Holy Virgin, who along Her staff saves sinners from hell.



"GUGA CHORVAN." This painting depicts the Protector of Kulu Valley in the North-Western Himalayas. (In Roerich Hall, National Museum, Belgium, Ypres.)



"SUTHERANAN DWALLERA" (Himalayan Series.) This painting is dedicated to the ancient legend that some little isolated folk in a subterranean dwelling to await the new era.

ROERICH

Fragments of a biography by Jean Dorevitch.

To most of us, Roerich is a legendary figure of romance. Against the broad planes of the Soviet West, his mighty figure looms large like the mountain and hermitic Buddha in the midst of a vast cosmic solitude. For above the tumultuous din of a crowded nation rings his voice—the unperpetrated measurements of the Eternal—the Voice of Truth, Beauty and Culture.

Great is Roerich, but greater still are his works, the beautiful languages of Peace and Good Will among men. Indefatigable in action, indefatigable in spirit and honest at heart, he is the new Far Cathedra seeking where the Holy Grail.

M. Dorevitch has done a great service to all aspirants by the timely publication of this useful biography.

Ernest Fox.