

RAVISHANKER M. RAVAL

A TRIBUTE

by

SVETOSLAV ROERICH

The entire life of Shri Ravishanker M. Raval is an outstanding example of enlightened service and dedication to the ideals of art and culture.

He personifies the lofty ancient concept of the Guru-Teacher and his life has been filled with a singular devotion to a great cause. The whole of cultural India and the State of Gujarat in particular should be grateful to him for his contributions to the art life of the country.

All his time which was not taken by his own artistic work was given to the noble task of spreading the message of art and beauty and to the training and encouragement of young artists and students who came in contact with him. The magnitude of his task can be easily realised when viewed in the light of the general conditions that prevailed in society in the first decades of this century when he began his public life. Through the pages of his magazine, in the class rooms of his studio he forged new links with the outside world and succeeded in creating a new interest and appreciation of art in his own state and beyond.

Many artists whose names have now become famous and whose fame spread far beyond the borders of their state have been tutored and guided by Shri Ravishanker M. Raval. Like a true, dedicated apostle of culture, he struggled and fought often against great odds

to propagate and uphold his ideal of a more beautiful world, where beauty would fill our days and inspire thoughts of lofty concepts and ideals.

In his work as an artist his inner aspirations and urges made him turn at times to the heroic themes of the immortal epics which he tried to recreate and portray in some of his paintings. His scope as an artist is wide indeed and ranges from portraits and realistic studies to compositions and mythological subjects, but in all his work is reflected the flame of his own inner strivings and realisations, which like a thread passes through and unites his pictorial work with his writings and has always inspired and illumined his other manifold activities.

I had the joy and privilege of meeting Shri Ravishanker M. Raval for the first time some twentyseven years ago when he stayed with us at Naggar in Kulu and I remember well how happy was my Father to meet him and to find in him that rare dedication to those higher and true values that have in the past and will again, inspire and move humanity to still greater achievements at some future date.

Artist, teacher, a dedicated worker inspired by high ideals of life and creative expression, how rarely one can meet such persons and how much one must cherish them and help them in their great and arduous task.

I shall not enumerate or discuss the many achievements of Shri Ravishanker M. Raval as they are too well known to be repeated here, but I would like to conclude these few words

of my appreciation and esteem with an appeal to all who cherish the higher values of life to pay a just tribute to this outstanding man who has dedicated his entire life to the service of art and culture.

Both my wife and I wish him on the auspicious occasion of his 75th Birthday, many more years of active creative work and a very happy birthday.

SVETOSLAV ROERICH

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