

AGNI YOGA

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Death and Transition

Leaves of Morya's Garden, Book Two: Illumination, 1925

Leaves of Morya's Garden, Book Two, 100. Let us speak of death. Death is no more than the shearing of the hair, for in the same way is matter cast off. The question of Guides is answered by the familiar law of attraction and repulsion. The principle of requitement and assistance is a powerful one in the spiritual world. Therefore, every appeal of an embodied spirit evokes a response. It depends upon who asks. One can attract and keep near oneself lofty forces. Also, the lowest spirits may be fastened about oneself. One receives what one wishes. When men understand the usefulness of pure giving, they will receive riches.

The spirit is a light of the beauty of the stars. But few spirits blend with light; more of them are in astral bodies. Better to glow as a star, retaining knowledge and the possibility of returning to the planets to help. One may choose a better destiny—are the possibilities of the giving one not evident?

One may strive upwards toward light, seeking to render assistance; then there is no parting. If those who remain would consider the departed as having been sent to light and for enlightenment, then the communion would be more sound. The loftier the spirit, the more he beholds—it depends upon the development of the spirit. A lofty spirit feels whither to strive—it flies as an arrow. But a dark one hovers behind the stove. Therefore, precious is the bold desire to seek, because he who seeks finds. If the desires of the spirit are lofty it can discover lofty forms, and in creating them it can contribute to perfectionment.

“...the moment of death is a moment of greatest bliss...”

Supermundane: The Inner Life, 1938

Supermundane, 193. The disciples also asked, “Where will we be after death?” The Thinker answered, “Not as far as you think! Each of you during his life visits the future abode in dreams, and has traveled to the destined spheres more than once. Everyone has access to the Supermundane Realm, and therefore should learn to have a wise attitude toward all events during the day and at night.

Letters of Helena Roerich, 1935–1939, Volume 2

Letters of Helena Roerich, Vol. 2, 11 February 1938. To be able to find joy in thinking about the dear one who has crossed into the better world is in itself a big spiritual attainment. Verily, one may rejoice when the spirit passes over into the Subtle World having become cognizant beforehand of the

striving toward the Hierarchy of Light. Such a spirit receives support from the Great Teacher, continues his study and associates himself with that work which is closest to his spirit. All earthly bonds, spiritual and of the heart are not only preserved in the Subtle World, but even grow more and become more refined. And your calmness and joy, in a large measure, arise because during the night hours your spirit dwells in full communion with the one dear to you. Luminous, joyous striving thoughts do not burden the one who crossed over, but, on the contrary, such fluids strengthen him and his striving toward the Common Good. Therefore, rejoice at the possibilities opened before O. V., and grow your own wings so that your crossing can be equally joyous and beautiful. If people knew the truth, if they could convince themselves that the moment of death is a moment of greatest bliss for a luminous and striving spirit, the fear of death would forever leave them.

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SPECIAL
ISSUE

IN
MEMORIAM:
**Daniel
Entin**

Welcome

For discussions and posts on the Agni Yoga Teachings, please visit our “Agni Yoga – Living Ethics Community” site on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Agni.Yoga.Living.Ethics.Community>

and WMEA on the Web:

<http://www.wmea-world.org>

NETWORKERS LETTER

Dear Networkers,

This issue of *Agni Yoga Quarterly* is a special issue. It is dedicated to Daniel Entin, who was the executive director of the Nicholas Roerich Museum and the Agni Yoga Society, in New York City, New York, U.S.A., from 1983 to 2016, and then became director emeritus. He was born on April 30, 1927. On January 18, 2017, after a year of health complications, Daniel made his transition. The following is a collection of notes culled from the many letters sent by Daniel to me over the years, letters that show his humility, wisdom, appreciation of life, and devotion to friends.

Thoughtfully shared,

Joleen

🌿 June 18, 2009 (*Incorporation of the Agni Yoga Society*)

By the way, the Agni Yoga Society was not formally incorporated until 1946, not 1920. Until then, the activities were not organized or controlled by any institution. The Roerichs themselves, not some blueprint, were the guides.

🌿 February 23, 2009 (*When I was young*)

It was good to have you there. You know, I always go to Puerto Rico unprepared (it's a kind of test and

Community

"Begin to build the community as a home of knowledge and beauty."

– *New Era Community*, verse 229

Rev. Joleen D. DuBois



discipline, and practice, for me), and yet, as soon as I walk into the room and ask what they'd like to talk about, it just starts, and the talk goes on for twelve hours. Learning to wing it has been an enormous character-builder for me. When I was young, I was so shy I couldn't look anyone in the face; if I was introduced to someone, I couldn't offer or take someone's offered hand, I couldn't get into a cab and give instructions to the driver, and I certainly was unable to stand in front of a room and talk. Then, in 1984, one year after I came here as Director, I had to go to the Roerich conference in Moscow (thrown into the pool, one could say), and I had to start making speeches. I just asked for courage, and the fear vanished forever. I made my first speech to the Russians, and Svetoslav, who was there, declared it just right, just what was needed. So I was not only empowered, but approved of. Now I can talk, I can banter, I can give it as well as take it (the s--t, I mean). It was a liberation.

Life is always so busy, time so filled up, I always wish there were time to just sit in the grass, under a tree, having long and leisurely conversations with loved people. You are one of them.

🌿 January 28, 2003 (*God and Beauty*)

The dictionary definition (something that provides aesthetic pleasure) certainly cannot be what we mean in Agni Yoga when we talk about Beauty. The dictionary will not do justice to many of the terms that we use so often. Beauty is a great, grand, and all-embracing principle. So maybe the definition of beauty is best when it includes the aggregate of all our ideas about the subject, rather than the very limited definition provided by the dictionary.

This reminds me of the problem of defining God. There are teachings that discuss the 99 attributes of God, for example. The 99 is a metaphor for the Infinitude of attributes of God. I attended a one-week seminar

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Kenneth Archer's International Interviews on Nicholas Roerich, 1982–83

DANIEL ENTIN

Daniel Entin (1927–2017) succeeded Sina Fosdick, who died some six months after Kenneth Archer's research period in the United States. Mr. Entin had been Sina's assistant for more than a decade. At the time of this interview, Daniel was a trustee and archivist of the museum. A professional photographer, he supervised the preparation of Roerich photographic prints for international distribution. Also a student of Russian language and culture, he traveled to the Soviet Union and other countries in connection with his work at the Nicholas Roerich Museum in New York City.

ROERICH RESEARCH JOURNAL

NICHOLAS ROERICH AND HIS PAINTINGS – AN ARCHIVIST'S VIEWPOINT

Excerpts from Kenneth Archer's Interview with Daniel Entin, New York, USA, Autumn 1983

KA: Whom do you think was Roerich's most important teacher?

DE: I think it was Kuindzhi. The Ralph Houston people insist that Kuindzhi was Roerich's spiritual teacher as well, but I do not think he was.

KA: Who are the Ralph Houston people?

DE: They are a group of people—some are here in New York and some are elsewhere—who gathered around a man named Ralph Houston, who claimed that he met Roerich in the thirties. Houston died some time ago, but the group still meet to study Agni Yoga and take an interest in Roerich's paintings. The only one who comes along to the museum is Margaret Janice Vann, who gets on quite well with Sina.

KA: Which do you consider were Roerich's most important artistic affilia-

tions when he was in Russia?

DE: Well, he eventually became the president of Mir Iskusstva, but there was antagonism from other artists who felt he was being pushed by Princess Tenisheva. There is a painting of the Mir Iskusstva group, incidentally, in which Roerich is placed at the head of the table. It is difficult to see what

kept the Mir Iskusstva group together, but they had certain things in common, which attracted Roerich. They were interested in folk art, in looking back to the past, and in bringing back design into everyday life. They were also interested in getting away from the easel: interest in mural painting developed, also in costume, mosaics, and public buildings. Though painting modern cities did not interest Roerich at all. I think he pulled away from Mir Iskusstva people because they



Daniel Entin, Executive Director/Director Emeritus of the Nicholas Roerich Museum

were not interested in philosophical subjects.

KA: Which of Roerich's contemporaries do you think influenced his style of painting?

DE: His theatrical designs were not influenced by other people's designs—the others were much more flamboyant. Some of his paintings, it is true, were similar to those of Vrubel, Bilibin, and Vasnetsov. But one has to ask the question: "Were these an influence or a concurrence?" Incidentally, he worshipped Nikolai Ge, who did religious paintings, including that large panel entitled *Gethsemane*. This is mentioned in Roerich's early letters. There are two or three books on Ge in the Four Con-



The Mir Iskusstva Group by Boris Kustodiev, 1910

tinents bookshop. The son of the Latvian painter, Ciurlionis, claimed that Roerich would have been influenced by his father. There is also a book on Ciurlionis in the Four Continents bookshop. In Paris, he admired Gauguin, and his use of the flat look might have originated there. Later on, when he left Russia, he went entirely his own way.

KA: To what extent were his paintings influenced by Mme. Roerich?

DE: He, himself, wrote that she was involved in all of his paintings, and that she commented on all of them.

KA: Do you know the exact date that the Roerichs left Russia?

DE: Accounts and opinions seem to vary. It would be useful if you could unearth the exact sequence of events, and their timing, of that Revolutionary period—when did he leave and why did he leave?

KA: To what extent were his paintings influenced by world events?

DE: Not much, except for the prophetic paintings before World War I.

KA: But what about his painterly response to changing cultural events and the collapse of world values, which he speaks of in his writings—everything to do with the Roerich Pact, in fact?

DE: Yes, well, there is all that—the apocalyptic paintings like *St. Sophia, The Almighty's Wisdom*, which he painted before World War II; also the Partisans painting in the Second World War. He would comment in his own way, using mythological objects and symbols to make his point.

KA: Roerich was obviously an independent thinker. To what extent do you think this independence of thought was reflected in his style?

DE: He was an independent thinker, but he was not a rebel. While in Russia,



Christ in Gethsemane by Nikolai Ge, 1888



St. Sophia, The Almighty Wisdom by Nicholas Roerich, 1932

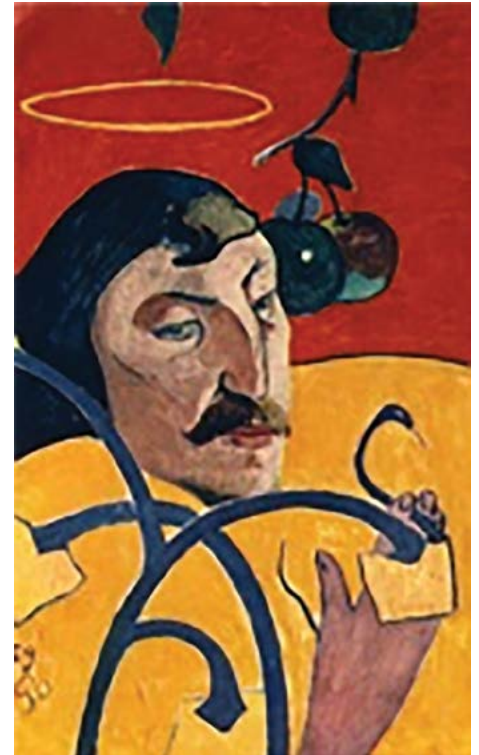
he fitted into the context of the people of his period. He worked with traditional methods but, nevertheless, his painting was new and he worked with new schools. In the early days, he was part of a developing art movement. Later, he went his own way and did his own thing, but he was not a revolutionary in the accepted way. His paintings continued to be representational, yes, but this, in itself, would not prevent them from being great painting.

KA: To what extent did Symbolist notions influence his paintings?

DE: Vrubel's work would have influenced him. He would have absorbed many of the good ideas which were surrounding him.

KA: To what extent was he influenced towards abstraction?

DE: Well, Roerich's world is a world of its own. His paintings are not Realist paintings—he is abstracting immedi-



Self-Portrait with Halo by Paul Gauguin, 1889



The Mother and Child by Michail Vrubel, 1884

ately by his paintings being flat without light or shadow. His compositions are traditional but flat.

KA: What else, apart from the influence of Gauguin, do you think influenced him to paint in that flat manner?

DE: The influence could have been due to his interest in icons. But it could also have been due to Japanese influence. Japanese paintings influenced Western art in that way in the nineteenth century.

KA: Could you say something about the development of his style?

DE: There were definite changes. At one point there was a very radical change. The absence of chiaroscuro—the flat shadowless painting—was always there. Yet the flatness did increase: in the Blue period, there was no roundness.

KA: What would you describe as his Blue period?

DE: From the twenties onwards, there were palette changes: the warm colours were dropped—the reds and browns.

KA: What other changes were there?

DE: There were simplifications of line and detail. But, from the time he left the United States (1923), the colour changes had stabilised, and there was an incredible consistency in his painting.

KA: Were there any other broad changes in his style of painting?

DE: Well, there was a big difference in the look of his paintings at different periods of his life. The early look of his paintings, when he used oil—as in his Architectural Series of 1903 to 1904, for instance—they were heavily painted in the traditions of the old school. Later, when he used tempera, they looked so smooth. And eventually, his painting became so spare, that there was almost



Yarolaval, Church of the Nativity
Architectural Series, 1903



Hidden Treasure by Nicholas Roerich, 1917
(warm colours)



Tibet - Himalayas by Nicholas Roerich,
1933 (cool colours)

no paint on the canvas.

KA: What was his opinion of Modernist painting?

DE: His comments on all the “isms” were included in his writings. He expressed cosmos through representational painting: Malevich tried to express it on a white canvas.

KA: What do you know about his method of painting?

DE: Well, his paintings were very drawn, so to speak, with the colours filled in. And they were thought out in advance. We have his sketchbooks from

Maine, and all the colours have been pencilled in by name.

KA: Do you know if he painted quickly?

DE: He objected strongly to people saying how quickly he painted. On one occasion, he indicated a canvas and said: “This painting took me from 1906 to 1912.”

KA: What are the major divisions into which his paintings may be divided?

DE: Well, firstly, there is his ancient historical and Slav period; next comes his architectural period; then, perhaps, his mythological-heroic; after that, his theatrical. Finally, there is his Eastern period, and this may be subdivided into mountain-landscape and religious-spiritual. In fact, the thread of religion in some ways runs through them all. And I think the religious aspect is more interesting than the archaeological.

KA: Was there continuity in Roerich’s painting?

DE: I think there was a steady evolution in his art.

KA: So you would say there was no decline from his earlier to his later work?

DE: I cannot see it. His earlier painting seemed to have more vigour, but it was not necessarily better. If originality is the criteria, then, perhaps, yes, there was a decline, because he began to repeat earlier themes.

KA: What was his own opinion of his later work?

DE: He never betrayed a shadow of self-doubt.

KA: Which were the early design elements that influenced his painting?

DE: In Russia, Scythian, Persian, and Scandinavian design elements influenced his painting. And, as I said, he

was also influenced by his great interest in icons—he was one of the first to advocate their value.

KA: Why was he sometimes referred to as Nicholas de Roerich?

DE: This was probably connected with his activities in France. The French made him a member of their Legion of Honour under that name.

KA: To what extent did the turn-of-the-century interest in archaeology influence his painting?

DE: Roerich was an archaeologist, and he was the first to excavate at Novgorod. He would have helped the turn of the century movement. His own interest pre-dated that influence and had contributed to his art from the beginning. He was not the first historical painter, but he could have been the first archaeological painter. His paintings were influenced by his interest in movements of peoples, movements of knowledge, and things like sacred signs.

KA: To what extent did his work for the theatre affect his style and technique?

DE: It would have worked the other way: he would have influenced the theatre with his type of Symbolist interest. His early paintings were, in fact, like stage sets.

KA: From where can I get information relating to the early years of the Master School of United Arts?

DE: Francis Grant was the executive director in the early years. So she is the best person to help you. She is an important contact for you.

KA: What were the early spiritual influences on his painting?

DE: The earliest spiritual influences on his painting probably grew out of his early archaeological work and his fascination with the Stone Age. His creation of the ballet, *The Rite of Spring*, grew out of his interest in early religion. There were also



The Rite of Spring by Nicholas Roerich, 1945

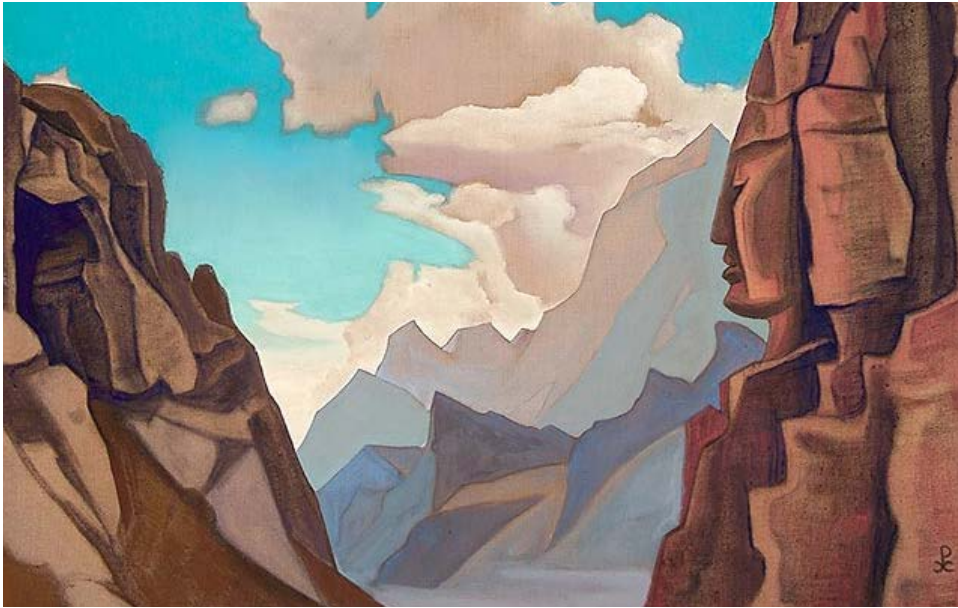
the Christian influences—the stories of saints and monks—and the growing awareness of so much that was coming from the East, the teachings of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, for instance. He would most probably have known Ouspensky, but he was not impressed by Gurdjieff, and I have been told that he spoke disparagingly about him in New York. His access to Theosophical material would have probably come a little later. As I understand it, the first translation of *The Secret Doctrine* was poor. As regards the influence of Eastern philosophy, some of the major influences are covered in Frances Grant's book, *Oriental Philosophy*.

KA: How did his interest in philosophy manifest in his paintings?



St. Sergius of Radonezh by Nicholas Roerich, 1932

DE: In various ways: for instance, the life and spirituality inherent in all things in nature is symbolised in his paintings by the inclusion of such things as the faces of old sages in rocks and mountains.



Great Spirit of the Himalayas by Nicholas Roerich, 1934

KA: Some people have said that the colours of his paintings have had a beneficial effect on people. Do you think this is so?

DE: It was his intent, I think, for his paintings to have a spiritual effect—to be uplifting and healing. And the spiritual message is given in a traditional manner—it is very representational.

KA: Whom else, do you think, in addition to Mrs. Fosdick, would give me valuable first-hand information on Roerich and his life and work?

DE: As I said, it is important for you to see Francis Grant. She was connected with the Roerichs and their work from their arrival in the twenties, and she was one of his closest coworkers. It was she who got the American and South American countries to sign the Roerich Peace Pact. She was asked by Prof. Roerich to focus on her South American work, and she did so—she is still doing that work.

KA: Did Roerich's livelihood depend on his painting?

DE: His livelihood depended on his painting after the Revolution. And in

pre-Revolutionary Russia, he earned his living. But his parents would have seen him through university.

KA: Who promoted him as a painter?

DE: He was very good at getting his own reputation enhanced, getting his articles published, and getting the people around him to serve his own reputation. He could have appeared to be self-serving or cunning as he was a self-promoting person, but I think he promoted himself in the interests of a larger whole. He had a strong personality, as had other teachers who were similar to him.

KA: Whom did his paintings please? Who were his supportive audience?

DE: From the time his exhibition opened in the Kingore Gallery in New York in 1920, he had a tightly-knit supportive group, who bought his paintings for the rest of his life, in spite of the scandals—tax, Manchuria, etc. No painter has ever had such a tightly-knit following. It was because of the content of his painting in the second half of his life. He was a message painter, and that is what held the interest.

KA: Why is it that Roerich seems to be ignored in so many art historical books in the West?

DE: Well, you know, for a long time there was a tendency to think that the history of modern art existed only in France, and that anything else was a cheap copy or a sham.

KA: Why is it that so much writing on Roerich fails to place him in the context of his contemporaries?

DE: People tend not to think of Roerich in relation to the history of painting. They seem to place him outside of it.

KA: Is this due to the philosophical content of his painting?

DE: Probably yes, but in Russia until the War, no one considered Roerich's painting or his philosophy unusual. It was similar to others.

KA: What is the best critical writing that has been written about Roerich's painting?

DE: Well, until the 'teens, all things were written by the Russians. The articles by Benois you will find in the Soviet Union. Many other people wrote about him because he was interesting. You will find articles by and about Roerich in the magazines, *Mir Iskusstva*, *Appolon* and *The Golden Fleece*. In addition to those magazines, look at the monographs. A big monograph entitled, *Roerich*, was published in Petrograd in 1916. There was also a smaller one published earlier in Kazan by Mantel. Then there is the book, *Roerich*, by Serge Ernst (1918). These are the critical writings.

KA: What about writings in the West?

DE: There is a book written by Barnett Conlan, who went to live in Paris. He was active with Irish cultural people and was a friend of Russell and Yeats. But anyone could be an art critic in those days.

KA: Is there anything else that comes to mind?

DE: Well you might look at *Fragments of a Biography*, written in the thirties by Jean Duvernois, a pseudonym for Sina's sister-in-law, Esther Lichtmann. She wrote it in Kullu.

KA: You have seen the recent writings by Robert Williams and John Bowlt?

DE: Yes, but the policy here is to ignore them—not to get involved.

KA: That is all very well but, if you do not challenge it, people will think you accept it as true.

DE: Williams and Bowlt both came to the museum before they wrote, and Sina liked them both.

KA: Whom did Roerich influence with his paintings? Did he start a school?

DE: In the early days, I think, he took Russian art in one of its new directions, because of the look of his painting and its ideas. And, since then, he seems to have influenced some Soviet painters. As regards Asia, he was the first to reveal the Indian landscape to the Indian people, and some painters were influenced. Then there is Rockwell Kent, an American painter: He was a convert. He and Roerich had known each other, and he was involved in the Master Institute. His paintings of Eskimo life in Alaska are similar to Roerich's. In the U.S.A., they ridicule his work, but the Russians love him. You can get a Soviet monograph on him in their *World Painters Series*. It is available from *Four Continents*.

KA: How important do you rate the collection of paintings at the Nicholas Roerich Museum in New York?

DE: It is an important collection, but we do not have enough of the early paintings. We have almost nothing relating to those early years in Russia.



Guardian of the Chalice, Mongolia. by Nicholas Roerich, 1937

KA: What happened to the paintings that Roerich painted after going to India in 1923?

DE: From 1924 onwards, they were either shipped to America, where they went mainly to the old Roerich Museum, here in New York, or they were left in India.

KA: That was during Roerich's lifetime. What happened after he died in 1947?

DE: George Roerich took a lot of paintings with him when he went to the Soviet Union in 1947. Some of them are with Raya Bogdanova, in her collection that was once called the George Roerich Memorial Apartment. Just about everything in the USSR which is dated after 1930 was taken there from India by George Roerich.

KA: What about the collection at the State Oriental Museum in Moscow?

DE: That includes a lot of paintings given to them by Katherine Stibbe—architectural paintings she got from Oakland and others from her collection. She gave them *Miracle* from the

Messiah Series (1923). That should never have been given. It was the last picture he painted in America, and it belongs to America—at the Nicholas Roerich Museum.

KA: What about the large collection of Roerich paintings at the State Russian Museum in Leningrad?

MH: Well, that consists of paintings that were in Russia already—from early up to the Revolution in 1917. Then there was a big gap until you get a large quantity of paintings taken to the museum by George Roerich, and these date from around the middle-thirties until 1947. I will lend you my copy of *The Russian Museum Catalogue*. It gives dates and details of some three hundred and more Roerich paintings.

KA: From where can I obtain major listings of Roerich's paintings?

DE: I will show you a very large list made out in Roerich's own handwriting, which we have in the museum's archive. It is only for part of his life, though. Then there is a fairly complete list of paintings up until 1924, included in Brentano's monograph.

There is also a more recent Soviet book of Roerich's life and work, which includes a list of paintings and a bibliography.

KA: Is there anything of particular interest in the archive that you feel I should see?

DE: There is a great deal, of course, including a list of the old master paintings sold in 1930, when the old museum got into financial difficulties. There is also an article by Mme. Knyaseva on Roerich's system of dating during the last decade of his life.



GLOSSARY AND NOTES

Agni Yoga: An Eastern philosophical teaching, written down and published in seventeen volumes by Helena Roerich, with help from her husband, in the period from 1920 to 1938.

Archaism in Russian Art (Roerich, Bogaevsky, and Bakst): A piece by M. Voloshin, published in *Apollon*, 1909, No 1.

Architectural Series: A large number of paintings of old buildings—kremlins, churches, town walls, etc.—that Roerich executed in 1903 and 1904 during a tour with his wife of ancient cities in Russia.

Benois, Alexandre (1870–1960): Influential Russian artist, theatre designer, historian, and art critic. A close colleague of Diaghilev and a founding member of *Mir Iskusstva*.

Bilibin, Ivan (1876–1942): Russian illustrator and theatre designer, influenced by Slavic folklore and Japanese prints. He worked with *Mir Iskusstva* and the *Ballets Russes*.

Bogdanova, Raya (born c. 1913): a Cosack woman who, with her sister Ludmila, worked from 1927 onward as a helper to Helena Roerich. In 1957 she

left India with George Roerich to live in Moscow.

Bowl, John E: British art historian who specialises in the history of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Russian art—the Russian Silver Age. He is a professor at the University of Texas, Austin, U.S.A.

Chiaroscuro: The technique in painting of modelling form through the contrast of lightness and darkness. It is associated more with painting in oils than in tempera, which dries more quickly.

Ciurlionis, Mikalojus K (1875–1911): A Lithuanian painter and composer of the *fin de siècle* epoch, who contributed to the Symbolist and Art Nouveau movements and was a pioneer of abstract art.

Conlan, Barnett D (c. 1880–1975): the author of *Nicholas Roerich, A Master of the Mountains*, published by Flamma Inc., Association for Advancement of Culture, Liberty, Indiana, U.S.A., 1938.

Ernst, Serge R (1894–1980): Russian art historian and critic. His Russian Artists series included monographs on Alexandre Benois and Konstantin Somov as well as Nicholas Roerich.

Fragments of a Biography: A book on Nicholas Roerich's life and work, written by Esther Lichtmann in the nineteen-thirties and published under the pseudonym of Jean Duvernois.

Sina Fosdick (died 1983): The executive director of the Nicholas Roerich Museum. She first met the Roerichs in New York in 1920 and worked throughout her life as an executive in their organisations.

Four Continents: A Soviet-sponsored bookstore at 822 Broadway in New York. Similar to Collets Bookshop in Charring Cross Road, London, it stocks books and magazines published in the USSR.

Gauguin, Paul (1848–1903): French Post-Impressionist artist. A leading figure in the Symbolist movement, his exper-

imental use of colour influenced many important artists.

Ge, Nikolai N. (1831–1894): A Russian Realist artist, who was noted for his historical and religious paintings. In 1863 he became a professor at the Imperial Academy of Art in St. Petersburg.

Gethsemane: A canvas showing Christ praying in Gethsemane, painted by Ge in 1888.

Grant, Frances (1896–1993): Former journalist and an executive of Roerich's U.S. institutions (1920s to 1930s), she later worked as a human rights activist focusing on the countries of South America.

Gurdjieff, George Ivanovich (1877–1949): A Russian occultist who used stylised dance movements to release people from their inhibitions, thus enabling them to develop their human potential.

Houston, Ralph: His *Talk Does Not Cook the Rice, A Commentary on the Teaching of Agni Yoga*, compiled and edited by his disciple, was published in 1982 by Samuel Weiser, Inc., York Beach, Maine, U.S.A.

Icon: An image or likeness of a sacred person, often painted in oil on board in traditional Byzantine style. Such paintings are believed to be not just aids to worship but images with inherent power.

Icons: Roerich wrote "The faces of these 'wonder-working' paintings are magically impressive. The faces of Christ, the Virgin, beloved saints, seem to radiate the power attributed to them." *Adamant*, 112.

Kent, Rockwell (1882–1971) U.S. painter of landscapes and monumental figures, featured in the monograph, *Rockwell Kent (Masters of World Painting series)*, Aurora Art Publishers, Leningrad, 1976.

Knyaseva, Valentina: Roerich specialist, biographer, and curator of modern painting at the State Russian Museum, Leningrad. Kenneth Archer interviewed her extensively at the museum in 1983.

Kuindzhi, Arkhip (1842–1898): Russian landscape painter. Member of The Wanderers group of Realist painters. Roerich was his pupil at the St. Petersburg Academy of Art.

Lichtmann, Esther: Sister of Maurice Lichtmann, a trustee of the Roerich Museum, she was active in various Roerich institutions in the twenties and thirties, including the Himalayan Research Institute.

Malevich, Kazimir (1879–1935): Russian painter and theoretician and one of the first to do completely non-figurative and geometrical art. He was the originator of Suprematism.

Mir Iskusstva [The World of Art] (1898–1904): Highly influential and progressive Russian art magazine and exhibition society that inspired a new movement in the arts.

Moreau, Gustave (1826–1898): French Symbolist painter and teacher, whose works on mythological and biblical themes were influential among Symbolist artists and writers.

N. K. Roerich: A monograph in Russian by S. Makovsky published in *The Golden Fleece (Zolotoe Runo)*, No 4.

N. Roerich: A monograph in Russian by A. Mantel published in Kazan, 1912.

N. K. Roerich: A monograph in Russian published by Apollon in Petrograd, 1915.

N. K. Roerich: A monograph in Russian by Sergei Ernst, published by Sv Evgenii in Petrograd, 1918.

Oriental Philosophy, The Story of the Teachers of the East, written by Fran-

ces Grant, Vice President of the Roerich Museum, New York, was published by The Dial Press, New York in 1936.

Ouspensky, Peter (1878–1947): Russian scientist, who became a mystic and a disciple of the Russian occultist George Gurdjieff, expanding the latter's ideas regarding other dimensions of time and space.

Prince Igor's Campaign, painted in 1941, is a good example of Roerich's Russian Warrior Series. It is in the collection of the State Russian Museum, Leningrad, and is reproduced in the monograph, *Nikolay Roerich in the Masters of World Painting Series*, published by Aurora Art Publishers, Leningrad, 1976. The monographs in this series are available in the West.

Ramakrishna, Bhagvan Sri (1834–1886): a nineteenth-century Hindu spiritual teacher, who was particularly noted for his express view that all religions lead to God and are of equal value.

Rite of Spring, The: Igor Stravinsky ballet, staged by Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, Paris, 1913, with scenario by Roerich and Stravinsky, designs by Roerich, and choreography by Vaslav Nijinsky.

Roerich, Nicholas (1874–1947): Russian painter, educator, and Ballets Russes designer. Secretary of the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts and head of its art school.

Roerich: A monograph in Russian by Yu Baltrushaitis, A. N. Benois, A. I. Gidoni, A. M. Remizov, S. P. Yaremich,

published in Petrograd, 1916.

Roerich – Himalaya: A monograph published by Brentano's in New York, 1926.

Roerich Pact, The: An international agreement created by Roerich in the thirties to protect cultural property, etc., in times of war. See *The Roerich Pact and The Banner of Peace*, New York, 1947.

Russell, George W. (1867–1935): Irish writer and poet, who used the pseudonym "AE." A friend of W. B. Yeats and a founder of the Irish National Theatre, he was interested in theosophy and mysticism.

Russian Art and American Money 1900–1940, written by Robert C. Williams and published by Harvard University Press, May 1980, includes a chapter entitled, "Mysticism and Money, Nicholas Roerich."

Madonna Oriflamma and St. Sophia, The Almighty's Wisdom, painted by Roerich in the Himalayas in 1932 are good examples of his Banner of Peace Series. They are in the collection of the Nicholas Roerich Museum, New York, where reproductions of them may be purchased.

Slavs on the Dnieper is at the State Russian Museum, Leningrad, and *Visitors from Overseas* at the Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow. Both are included in the 1976 Aurora monograph on Roerich.

Stibbe, Katherine: A longstanding member and trustee of the Nicholas Roerich Museum and the Agni Yoga

continued on page 11

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Community*(continued from page 2)*

on the subject, and everyone finished the week with the knowledge that knowing God is impossible.

I think it is the same with Beauty. It is so huge a concept that we will never be able to put our minds (or words) around it. A long period of study can only lead each of us to come to some very limited, partial idea of what Beauty is.

It is the same with Love, another aspect of the Triad: Love, Beauty, Action, that lies in the heart of the Teaching. We know what love is when we fall in love, when we love our pets, our gardens, our neighbors and relatives. But what does it mean to love the universe? To love all that exists, the stinky as well as the aro-

matic? How do we define that kind of love?

 **November 19, 2009 (Vegetarianism and the Roerichs)**

Emphatic always makes me nervous. Certainty makes me doubly nervous.

Yes, the teaching is quite clear about the superiority of a vegetarian diet. But what is this about smoked meats, and any other loopholes that exist? Why are they there? The Roerichs did not become vegetarian until middle-age. What held them back? (I was reminded just today, since so many turkeys are slaughtered here on the coming day of thanksgiving, that, while in the Altai in 1926, one more turkey gave up its ghost for the Roerichs. And later, even when she herself was vegetarian, living in Kullu, when disciples would take on an arduous journey to go to

see her, Helena Roerich always made them sit and eat some roast chicken, for them to regain their strength quickly. And when they departed, she would give them another roast chicken, for their trek home. At the same time, she used to sit at dinner and have a few lettuce leaves. And also at the same time, she used to reminisce about the glorious salami sandwiches she used to enjoy during opera intermissions at the Mariinsky Theatre, back in Imperial Russia.

While I'm allowing myself to be a contrarian pest, I'd like to ask if those people who live in the very north, well above the Arctic Circle, and in other places where for long cold seasons there is only meat to eat, do those people lose the possibility of leading a spiritual life? I doubt it.

Sorry for the harangue. I have to warn everyone that I may be haranguing more in these last years of mine. There are things to get off my chest, heretofore always so good-natured. Superstition bothers me; prejudice bothers me; inflexibility bothers me; certainty bothers me; hypocrisy bothers me most of all. So, I ask your indulgence to sound off from time to time. I want to go to my Maker with nothing on my mind.

Daniel Entin Interview*(continued from page 10)*

Society, Inc., in New York, she has a substantial collection of Roerich paintings.

Symbolism: A late nineteenth-century European movement in the arts that was a reaction against Realism and Naturalism in favour of a more imaginative and spiritual approach.

Tenisheva, Princess Maria (1867–1928): Russian artist, collector and important patron of the arts, who funded Mir Iskusstva and set up an art centre at her Talashkino estate.

Vasnetsov, Victor (1848–1926): Russian painter of historical and mythological canvases. He exhibited with The Wanderers and figured prominently in Mamontov's artistic circle.

Vivekananda, Swami (1863–1902): The leading disciple of the Hindu spiri-

tual teacher Bhagvan Sri Ramakrishna, whose teaching he spread widely in the West.

Vrubel, Mikhail (1856–1910): Russian artist, generally categorised as a Symbolist. He is best known for his sketches and watercolours illustrating Lermontov's poem, *The Demon*.

Williams, Robert C.: A professor of history and specialist in Slavic studies, Williams wrote about Roerich in his book on Russian art and the U.S.A., *Russian Art and American Money 1900-1940* (1980).

Yeats, William B. (1865–1939): Irish poet and dramatist. A founder of the Irish National Theater. Interested in occultism and mystic symbolism, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1923.

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