

SOUL SURVIVORS

Apa Tani | Konyak | Tibetan Nomads

Celebrating the Human Spirit



ANU MALHOTRA, filmmaker

ANU MALHOTRA

“The Journey Is The Destination”

Anu Malhotra is one of the most widely travelled Indians. Various rendered through the still and moving camera, the paint brush, and the pen, these journeys show glimpses of other worlds that are seldom reached and little known. An oeuvre of films and television programmes and campaigns spanning over two decades have made Anu one of India’s best known filmmakers, and won her over 16 national and international awards.

In 1994, Anu set up **AIM Television** as a boutique production house and went on to create over 600 hours of quality non-fiction television programming for premiere Indian television channels (Zee TV, Sony and DD) and a range of infotainment series for reputed international channels (BBC, Discovery, Travel Channel U.K., France 5 et al).

A pioneer of the travel show genre on Indian television, Anu was the mastermind behind the presenter-based reality format for travel shows with her multiple award-winning programmes ***Namaste India*** and ***Indian Holiday***, setting trends that most travel shows still ape today.

Anu also successfully formatted and showcased pioneering lifestyle programming (***Khubsoorat, Jhatpat Khana, Take 5, Peoples Club, Breakfast with Zee*** et al) which became household names and their dynamic and glamorous style defined the whole experience of television viewing for generations of Indians.

AIM Television acquired a global appeal with shows like ***Tribal Wisdom, Yatra- Indian Travels*** and ***Holistic Healing***, that were aired internationally (Discovery, Travel Channel UK, France 5, et al).

Anu has also consulted for the BBC World Service Trust as the Creative Head for its India Project, with the specific mission of raising awareness about HIV/AIDS in India. For this campaign, she designed and directed a hugely successful and impactful ‘Behaviour Change Communication Project’ ***Haath Se Haath Milaa*** which won the UNAIDS Global Award (2007).

With her characteristic eye for detail and rare sensitivity, Anu turned her experiences into several appealing commercials and promotionals for the

Department of Tourism, and gave it the slogan that it is recognised by the world over: ***Incredible India!*** She also directed the first films of that series.

Despite her remarkably wide-ranging repertoire of work, Anu's first love has always been the documentary film genre. Her films have showcased unique cultures and traditions of alternative wisdoms from little-known parts of India, which were documented for the first time through her lens. ***The Apa Tani of Arunachal Pradesh, The Konyak of Nagaland*** and ***The Maharaja of Jodhpur*** have redefined the scope and tone of the genre. Anu's latest docu-series and docu-film ***Shamans of the Himalayas*** was premiered at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi on 24th October 2010 and is now running as a four-part TV series worldwide.

In April-May 2011, Anu conceptualised and curated an exhibition of her captivating photographs titled *Soul Survivors*. This unique multimedia exhibition showcases the Apa Tani of Arunachal Pradesh, the Konyak of Nagaland, and the nomads of Tibet through photographs that Anu shot while filming her documentaries on these cultures from 2000 to 2002.



ANU MALHOTRA with an Apa Tani woman



SOUL SURVIVORS

Soul Survivors is a multimedia exhibition holistically rendering little known cultures and life practices of the Apa Tani of Arunachal, the Konyak of Nagaland (both from the northeastern states of India) and Tibetan nomads.

The exhibition centres on photographs shot by one of India's most acclaimed documentary filmmakers Anu Malhotra during the filming of her documentaries on these cultures in years 2000-2002.

It provides an experiential frame for understanding these cultures through snippets of rare information accompanying the photographs, her detailed documentaries on these cultures, anecdotes from her travels there, and real life objects documenting the daily rhythms of these peoples.

Anu has pledged all profits from the sale of all *Soul Survivors* photographs, installations, artefacts and merchandising to the Donyi Polo Mission, Papumpare, Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh, who work with the visual and hearing impaired.

The exhibition was inaugurated at the Stainless Steel Gallery in Delhi on April 23, 2011 and then hosted by the National Museum in Delhi from May 4-31, 2011.



THE VISION

Soul Survivors is a tribute: It is an appreciation of alternative wisdoms, of customs and institutions that have remained valid over centuries, and of peoples that have intrigued and instructed hundreds of curious explorers over time.

Soul Survivors is an attempt: It seeks to relativise the value we attribute to some of our customs and material possessions, and to encourage us to rethink our own priorities and urbane lifestyles.

Soul Survivors is a record: It has documented the customs, opinions, cuisines, costumes and quotidian rhythms of these peoples, both for us and for their generations to come.

Soul Survivors is a contribution to heighten awareness about these three cultures and their wisdom traditions, provide support to organizations doing developmental work in these regions and promote indigenous arts and crafts.



SOUL SURVIVORS

Soulful Journey
By Antara Datta, Writer

Talking about her immense body of landmark work as a documentary film-maker Anu Malhotra says: “I have always sought to capture India’s rich cultural heritage and vibrant living traditions through my films. My mission is to document cultures that are fast disappearing and remind viewers of the importance of sustaining and learning from their traditional wisdom.” This is the kernel, the abiding sensibility running through all her work ranging from travel shows to her path-breaking documentary series on The Apa Tani of Arunachal, Konyaks of Nagaland, Tibet, and her most recent work- ‘The Shamans of the Himalayas.’ ‘The Shamans of the Himalayas’ is the culmination of Anu’s long cinematic engagement with cultures and societies that exist in the fringes of modernity, bringing their ‘wisdoms’ to her urban audiences. For her audiences, Anu herself is quite like a ‘shaman’, whose practice as a film-maker shows that there are other ways of being, ways that can heal the fractured, alienated, urban existence- if we can ‘only connect’.

In her most recent initiative Anu Malhotra has put together an exhibition entitled the *Soul Survivors* which consists of photographs she took while shooting her documentaries on the tribes of the north-east and Tibet. These are intimate, spontaneous moments Anu captured, the visual distillation of lives she witnessed, and a tribute to the spirit of celebration, poetically and beautifully rendered. Part of Anu’s intention to release these photographs after almost a decade of their filming is to share with her spectators the relevance of the ways of life that these portraits intrinsically encapsulate – a larger philosophy of holistic existence, in harmony with nature and social environments. These are not mere photographs of people but embody the very ‘soul’ of the communities they belong to, from whom the urban modern world has much to learn. Hence the title of her exhibition- Soul Survivors. The portraits displayed are a window to a world of free children, revered, happy elders, spunky young girls and mothers, festive crowds and colours - faces and moments of inordinate beauty and charm.

What marks this exhibition apart from most others is that Anu creates the context for these photographs by providing details about the cultural life of these tribes. There are snippets of invaluable information accompanying these pictures, slices from Anu’s own experiences while traveling among these peoples and terrains. The entire exhibition is beautifully designed

and curated by Anu. Installations and antique pieces of artefacts gathered from among the tribal societies tell the spectator about each culture's life-practices: the installation of a typical Konyak grain pounder, filled with different grains of the region, with wooden carved masks mounted on iron rods emerging from the grains depict the Konyak practice of head hunting as relating to their belief in the concept of fertility; a huge installation of typical Konyak earrings in wood and wool; hand woven shawls mounted on spears, some with masks mounted on them; an antique Naga carved bed; bamboo and cane basketry; wooden utensils and even mannequins wearing authentic Tibetan nomadic attire and Naga ceremonial attire; antique Konyak belts and jewellery make the exhibition an enjoyable and educative experience.

The exhibition is an experiential showcase - and when one walks along the gallery walls, it seems that one has entered a world of rare beauty and harmony, educating one about cultures one has known little about, subtly evoking reflection about what we are losing or need to retain desperately. Anu's award-winning documentaries play on the multimedia displays for those who are curious to learn more details about these cultures.

This is perhaps the first photo-exhibition of its kind in India that seeks to render cultures holistically using all forms of visual representation- film, portraits, artefacts, aesthetic utilization of space, light and colour. And underlying all this aesthetic delight is a philosophy of life- that of community building, of living in harmony with nature and a seamless connection between inner and outward beauty. Anu's work is a tribute to life and to the rich cultural diversity of India and a poetic reminder of the need to preserve and cherish it.



SOUL SURVIVORS

at

The National Museum
New Delhi

4th May to 31st May, 2011



The *Soul Survivors* exhibition at the National Museum was spread across 7000 square feet in 3 large galleries, one for each tribe. 80 photographs, 3 documentaries running simultaneously in each of the galleries, chosen artefacts and objects from daily life, and mannequins dressed in traditional attire made it the most unique multi media exhibition at the Museum. Despite running in the hot month of May which draws the lowest footfall, the exhibition attracted about 2000 visitors from all age groups and different parts of the world.

The Apa Tani Exhibit

The Apa Tani exhibit comprised 25 photographs, had a ubiquitous presence of bamboo, a seating area, large-sized reproduction of quotidian objects like utensils and hand woven baskets, rare artefacts like a necklace made of *mithun* teeth, and Anu's seminal documentary, *The Apa Tani of Arunachal Pradesh*, screened on an LCD screen.

The photographs were stunning portraits and a decade later each of these has become an archival document of a culture that has got irretrievably altered at the altar of modernisation.









Visitors to the *Soul Survivors* galleries spent hours watching the documentaries and working their way through the installations and artefacts that challenged their stereotypes about tribal peoples. The ambience created by the bamboo sofa set and specially designed and upholstered chairs containing a grid of Apa Tani women in their distinctive nose plugs called *yappin-hoollo*, the photographs mounted on bamboo frames and the artefacts symbolic of the Apa Tani way of life made the experience tactile and immediate.



In another important curatorial intervention, Anu deliberately distanced her frames from the standard and monotonous framing that characterises a museum photograph. Each frame quite literally became the voice of the photograph by responding directly to its content, while the accompanying texts highlighted the context.





The Apa Tani brought home the importance of leading a physically active and outdoorsy life. People were strong and healthy, even the oldest among them; and city diseases like cancer and diabetes were rare.



Older Apa Tani Woman
Hans Ulrich, *Anthropological Notebook*, 1959
20 x 40 cm



Apa Tani Child
Hans Ulrich, *Anthropological Notebook*, 1959
20 x 40 cm



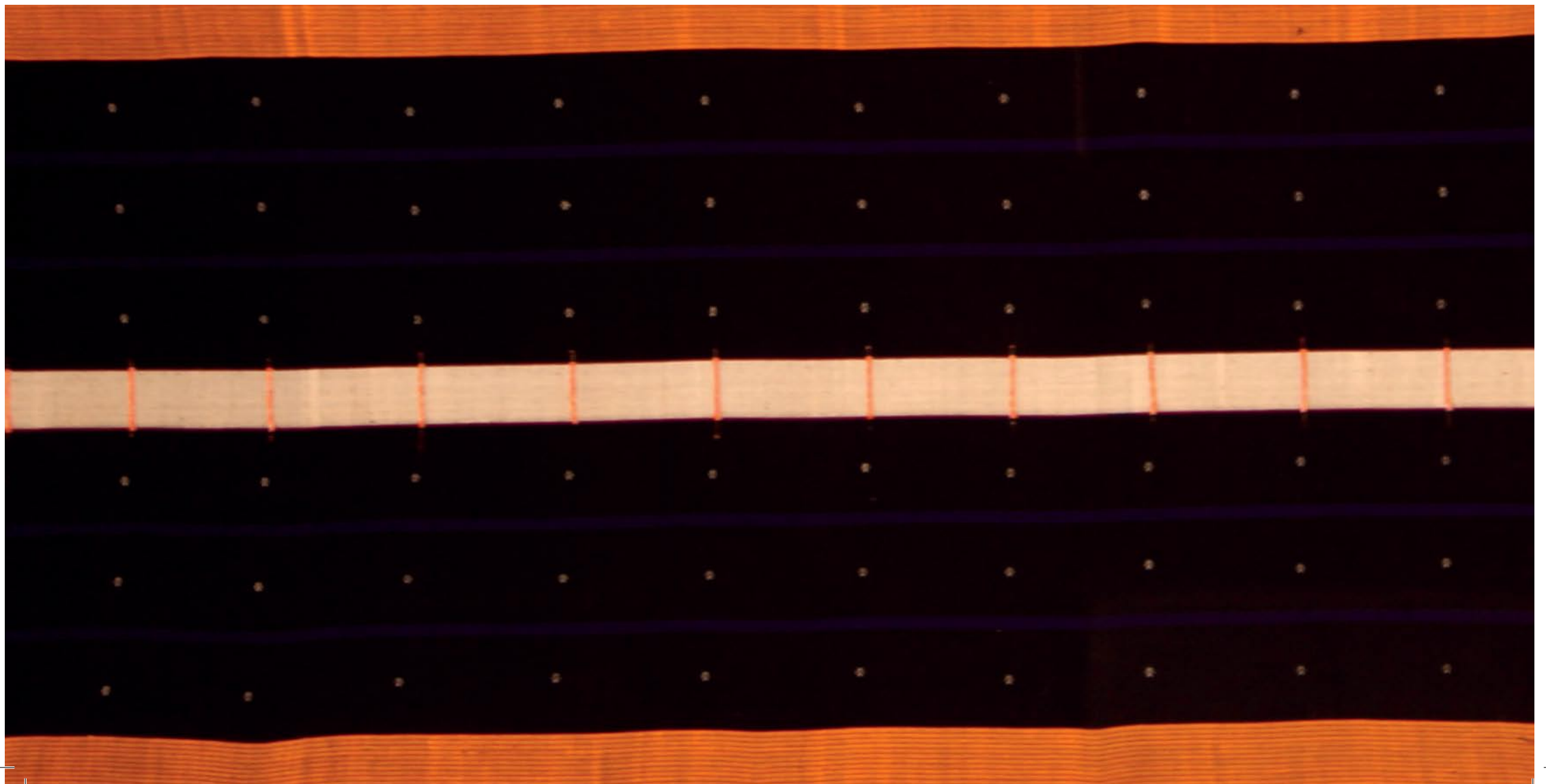
Agar Tandi Man
The village of Agar Tandi, 2000
10 x 15 cm



Agar Tandi Woman
The village of Agar Tandi, 2000
10 x 15 cm

Unlike in other parts of India, weaving is exclusively done by women. Each household has a loom and weaving is done on open verandahs. The designs of different villages and each tribe are never copied by any other tribe. They traditionally wear Abbi – a woollen shawl around the waist and embroidered borders. These are the ones they weave themselves.

Among the several forms of bamboo on display in the Apa Tani exhibit were these hand-woven baskets used to store and carry objects of everyday use. The Apa Tani were master weavers although it was a hobby associated with old men. The belief went that those who started weaving baskets at an early age would age before their time. It was perhaps a way of encouraging the young to take up tasks that were more demanding on the body than basket weaving!



“One day, Legang takes me to witness a shamanistic ritual in Reru. We walk into the forest and as we approach a bamboo grove, I hear distinctive rhythmic chanting. Two Apatani Shamans, Nyibos, are conducting a chicken liver divination in front of a long bamboo altar.”

Legang explains that the Nyibo is the Apa Tani’s link to divinity, and is believed to converse with spirits in a state of trance. It is the shaman who decides which animal is to be sacrificed and what rituals conducted for the well-being of a family.”

*from The Apa Tani of
Arunachal Pradesh (2000)*

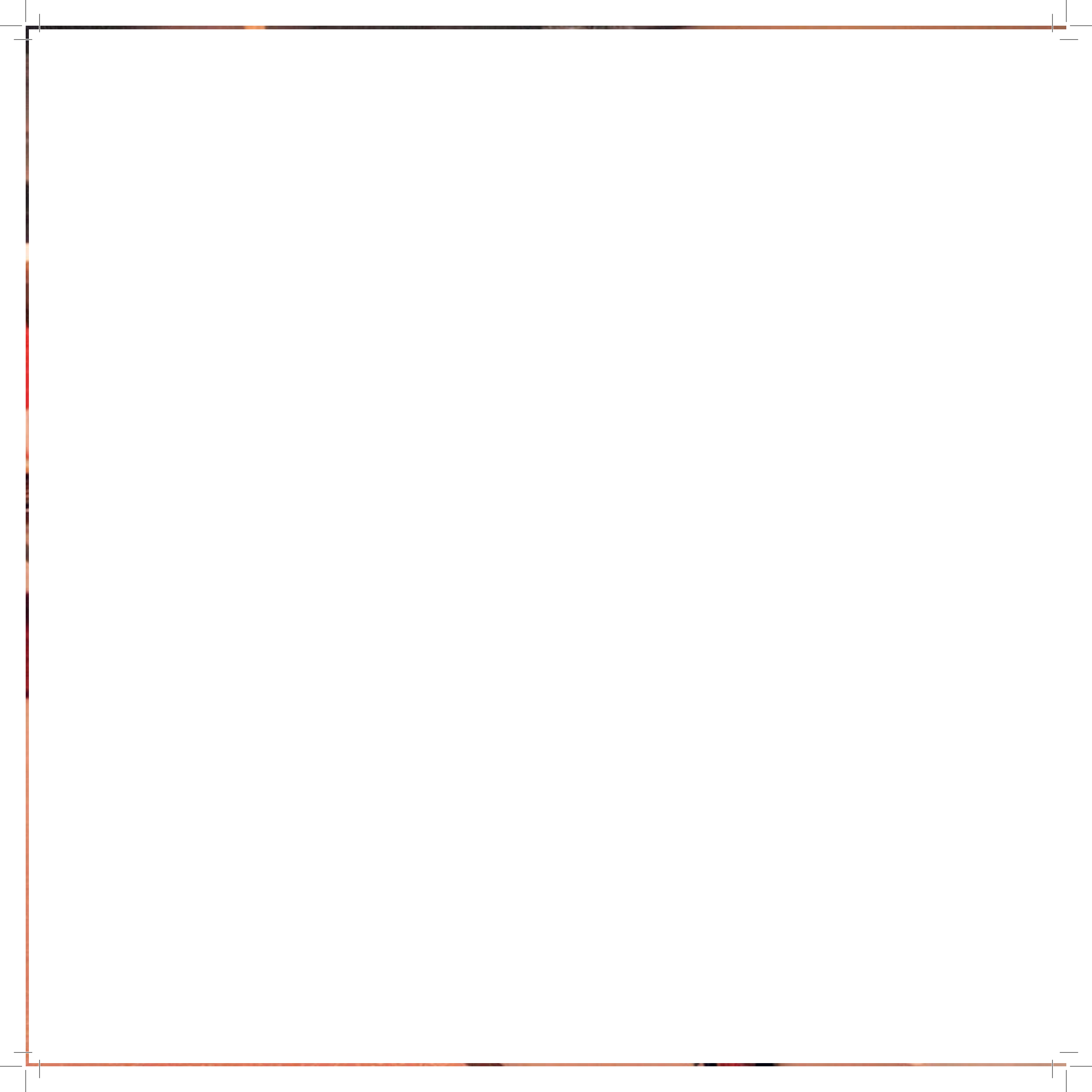


Apa Tani Nyibo (Shaman)
Reru Village, Arunachal Pradesh, 2000

Apa Tani Woman
Reru Village, Arunachal Pradesh, 2000

Two Apa Tani Nyibo (Shaman) conducting a divination
Reru Village, Arunachal Pradesh, 2000

Apa Tani Woman and Child
Reru Village, Arunachal Pradesh, 2000



The Konyak Exhibit

The Konyak exhibit was rich with 17 photographs, several antiques, artefacts and installations showcasing important Konyak beliefs, customised frames, and the rich depth of the colour red—central to the tribe’s beliefs in the concept of “fertility”—present everywhere from the shawls mounted on the walls to the rugs placed under the artefacts. Anu’s seminal documentary *The Konyak of Nagaland*, added context and ambience.

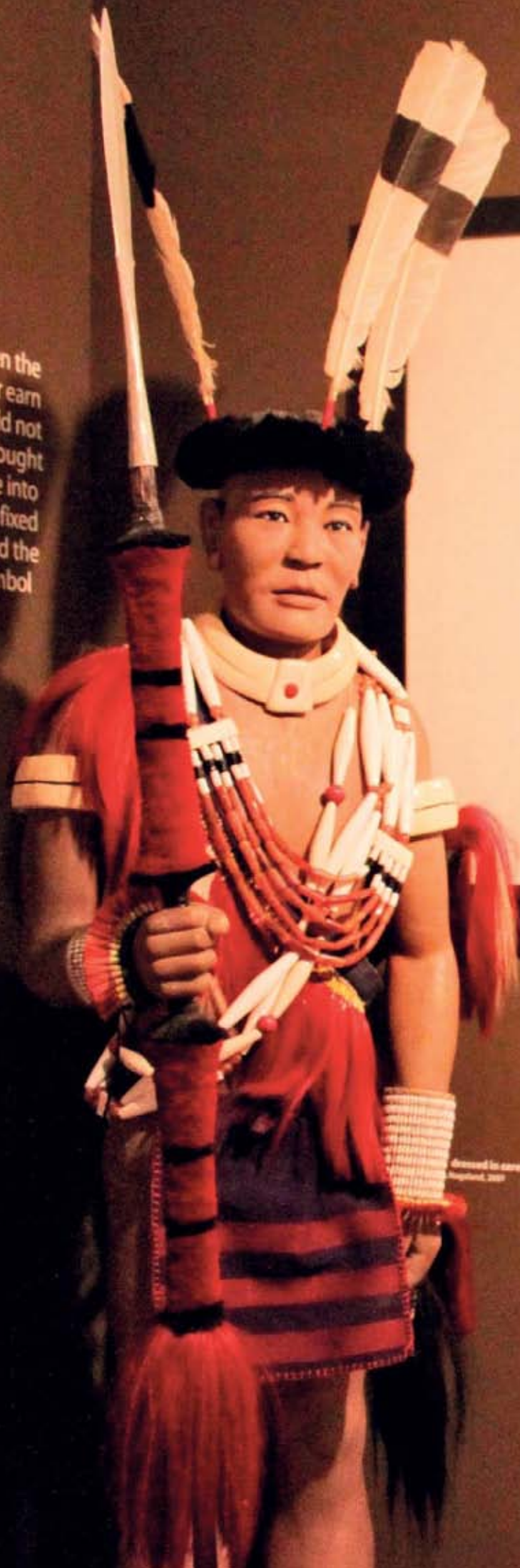


Among the last visual documents of the former Konyak headhunters, these photographs were unparalleled in their attention to minute details and speak loudly of the proud tradition even in black and white. Contrasting this were the spears wrapped in centuries of tradition and the colour red that brought this age old practice alive in the museum gallery. Details captured in the photographs like the tattoos on the face, the use of the versatile weapon *dao*, the significance of the number of heads in the necklace and the use of leaves rolled up in the ears for carrying tobacco were explained in the accompanying text.





hunting could win for men the
ornaments, get married, or earn
the clan. Konyak customs did not
get tattooed before he brought
the act as a rite of passage into
or a tattooing session was fixed
consulting the oracles, and the
the process made it a symbol
of courage and virility.



Dressed in ceremonial costume, Auli Spring Festival
England, 2007



This mannequin held a former headhunters' spear and is dressed from head to toe in traditional ceremonial attire. The hornbill feathers in his headgear, the jewellery made of ivory and cowrie, and the red and black pattern of the skirt were all reminders of the Konyak cult of fertility.



Traditionally, the Konyak believed that the soul of a person lives in the nape of the neck, while the spiritual being, which is a source of “fertile potency,” was situated in the skull. This “fertility” could be transmitted to others and the means of acquiring such power was to behead one’s enemies. Warfare and headhunting were sacred ritual practices to ensure bountiful harvests, reinvigorate villages, enhance prestige and be endowed with the power of “fertility.”





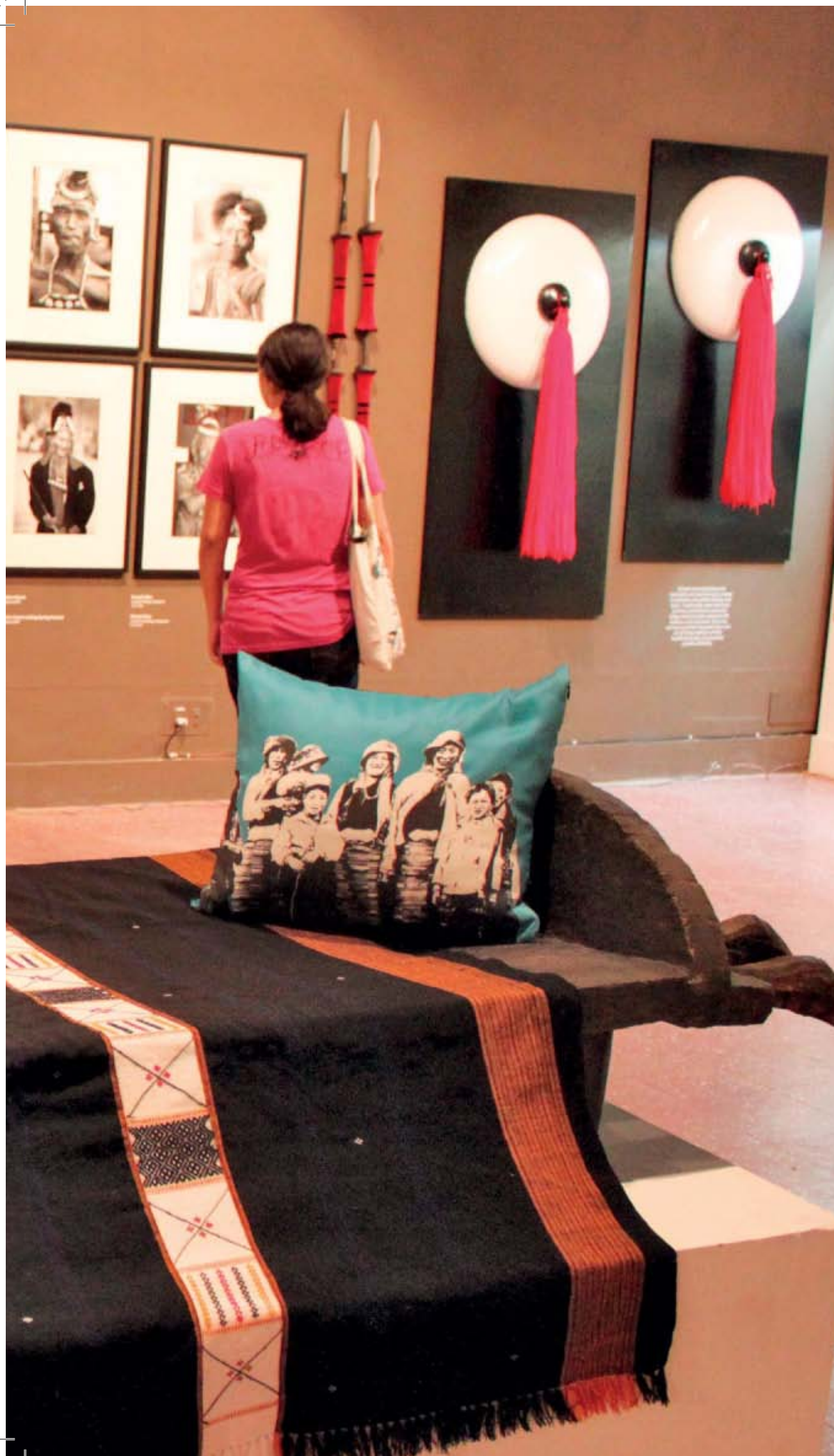
Sengai Headhunter of yore, Anding Spring Festival
Langens Village, Ngazun, 1981



The wooden figure was the ancestor of the village. It was made of wood and was painted with red and black. It was used to represent the village and its people. The figure was also used to represent the village's history and its future.



Bamboo horns were often attached to stylised mithun heads made from wood, with smaller bamboo sticks. These were then hung from bamboo poles in front of morungs when a headhunt was pending, and made a rattling sound as the wind blew.



“There is a fire in the village of Wakching and about 30 huts are gutted. As I look at the site of the fire, three days later, I find that the entire hill face is in different stages of reconstruction. Shingwang, the assistant commissioner tells me, ‘Men from neighbouring villages have rushed here to help, bringing with them huge quantities of food supplies - rice, tea, blankets, clothes and even utensils. Within a week, all 30 huts will be rebuilt and their owners reinstated by the community.’ And all this is done voluntarily, and as a matter of duty! I am completely astounded by this amazing sense of community service!”

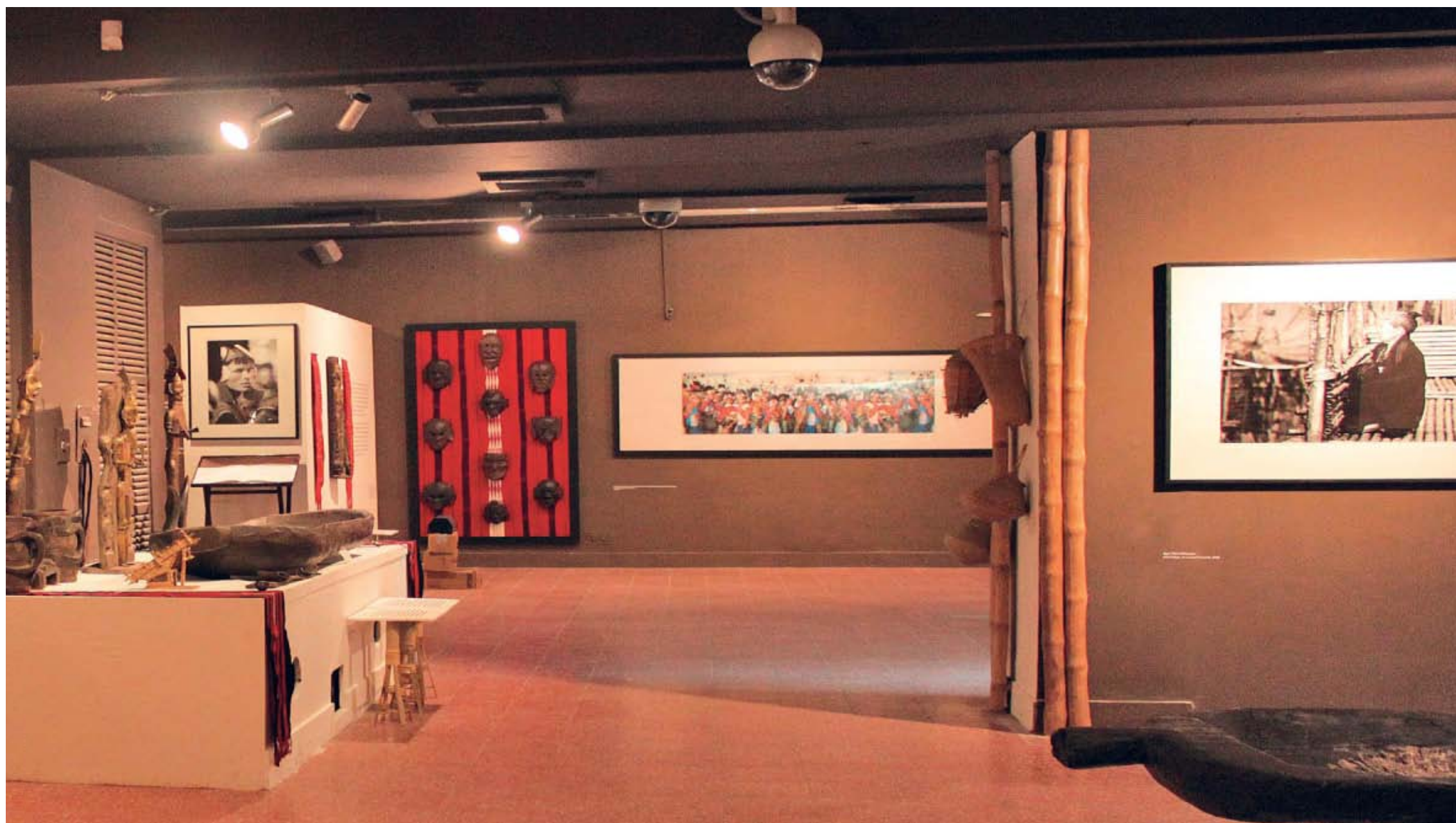
From *The Konyak of Nagaland* (2001)



This is a visual representation of the lycanthropic myths among the Konyak who believed that the ancestry of the man and the tiger were intimately related, and that the tiger-spirit could root out evil and cure disease.

Anu kept few chosen objects like artefacts depicting headhunters, their belts and shawls and select ornaments over a large space in the centre of the gallery. There was enough room for the spectator to move around and form her own connections. The space also allowed for multiple interpretations and associations between the details outlined by the texts, the expressions in the photographs, and the anecdotal evidence in the documentary *The Konyak of Nagaland* simultaneously playing in the gallery.





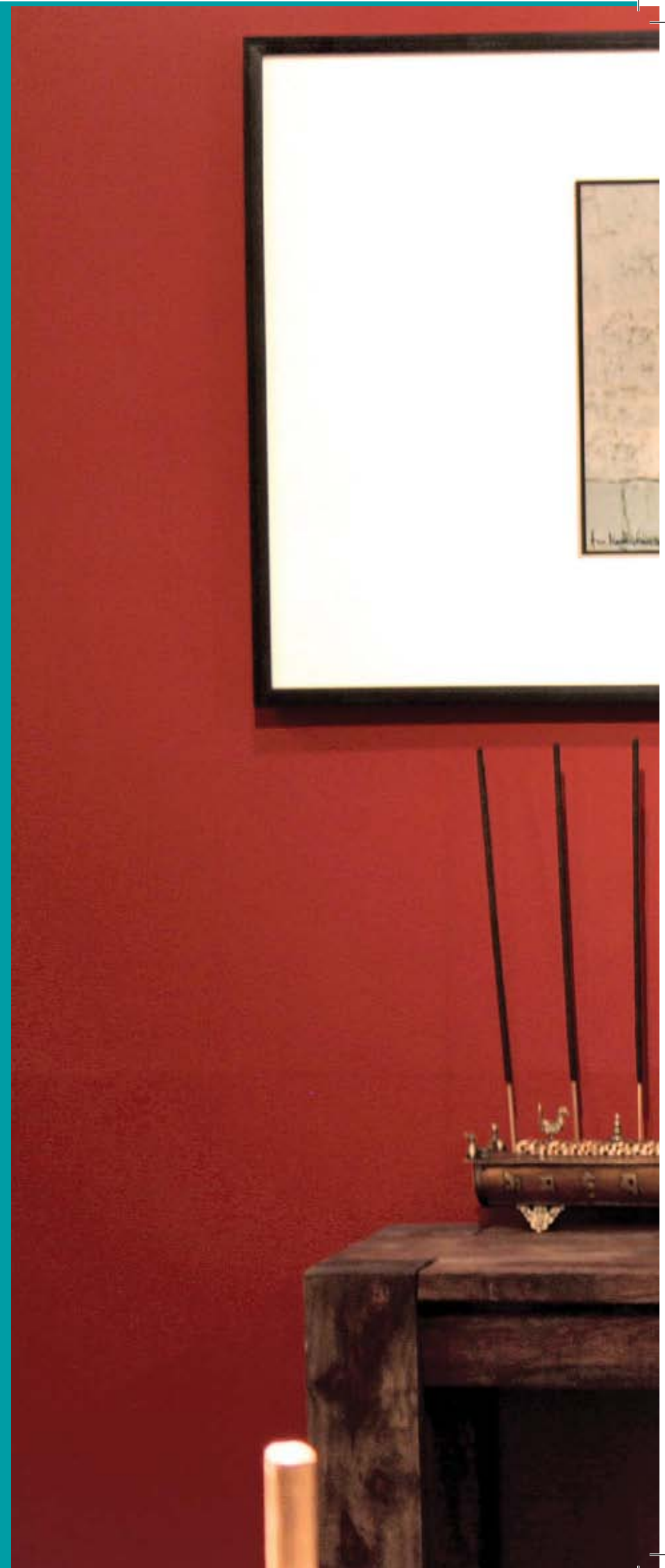
The Tibet Exhibit

The Tibet exhibit comprised 31 photos, general antiques, artefacts, the video of *The Road to Nirvana* and two mannequins dressed by Sonam Dubbal. The ambiance was breathtaking, evoking an experience of peace. The ceiling was decked with colourful Tibetan prayer flags indispensable in any Tibetan landscape and poignant reminders, especially in a museum space that seeks to make things immortal, of the ephemeral nature of all existence.





The overall aura of the Tibet exhibit derived largely from the central position of “dharma” identified by the Buddhist path within Tibetan culture. Anu put together important sacred objects like statues of Avalokiteswara Buddha, incense stick holders and prayer wheels, and placed them against a maroon backdrop denoting the sacred colour of the monk and nun’s robes.





The turquoise backdrop for some pictures was reminiscent of the Tibetan use of the stone in ornaments. Drums painted with guardian deities and creation myths were placed along with objects used in worship and meditation like the singing bowl, the bell and the prayer wheel. The visuals and music of the documentary added to the ambience.





The frames were especially designed to complement the content of the photographs. While the blank glass borders around the photographs of the nomads suggest the vast expanses and lightness of being characteristic of nomadic life, the ornate and colourful stripes around the pictures of women carrying the holy Mansarovar water replicate both the horizontal patterns of their aprons and the framing of Tibetan thangka paintings.





Portrait of a woman
Tibetan, 1980s



Portrait of a woman
Tibetan, 1980s



Portrait of a woman
Tibetan, 1980s

Assembled by designer Sonam Dubbal, the mannequins were dressed in the traditional Tibetan full-length chuba. Their headgear, accessories like jewellery, scarf and belt, and the prayer box in the man's hand, are all derived out of specific Tibetan practices. The apron worn by the woman indicated that she was married, with the belt tied very loose around the waist to leave enough room for carrying food and other essentials.





INSPIRED BY THE NOMADS OF THE TIBET
I HAVE IN MY WORK INCORPORATED THE
CHUBHA, ULL LENGTH TUNIC
AS CONTRAST

A few installations and artefacts

Konyak wood and metal figure carved in Nagaland (50-100 years ago) depict a link perceived by the tribe between themselves and their dead ancestors who are revered and from whom the fertile potency of the tribe is derived. This artefact shows a headhunter along with two of the tribe's ancestors.



This Naga shawl distinguishes the tribe from others from the pattern of its weave. Red, the colour associated with fertility, was chosen for the display of wooden masks carved in Nagaland, to highlight the importance of the practice of headhunting in bringing fertile potency to the village.





Anu captured multiple Konyak beliefs in this installation of the antique Naga manual grain pounder. The heads coming out of the holes - filled with grains underline the importance of the practice of headhunting to the concept of fertility and the need for propitious harvests symbolised by the different grains. The red rug is another reminder of the symbolic “fertility” within which the headhunting practices were embedded.



These Konyak figures from Nagaland are over a century old and denote important beliefs associated with headhunting.

This figure represents the prestigious position of a headhunter by placing him on a pedestal and his proud display of the head symbolic of the sacrifice he had made for the village. He also holds the versatile tool *dao* in his other hand.



This figure shows a headhunter holding his (now missing) prize in one hand. The elephant tusks around his feet point to the belief that killing of an animal would transfer its strength and virility to the headhunter.

This installation designed by Anu Malhotra is a reproduction of the traditional Konyak earrings in wood and wool. The red background and tassels are markedly evocative of the tribe. The white bowl is like the cowrie shell which is a prized treasure of the Konyak of yore.



The antique belts worn by former headhunters also provide a tactile and three-dimensional corollary to the photographs. Made of metal and animal parts like shells, horns, feather and tusks, they were indispensable in a proud headhunter's attire.



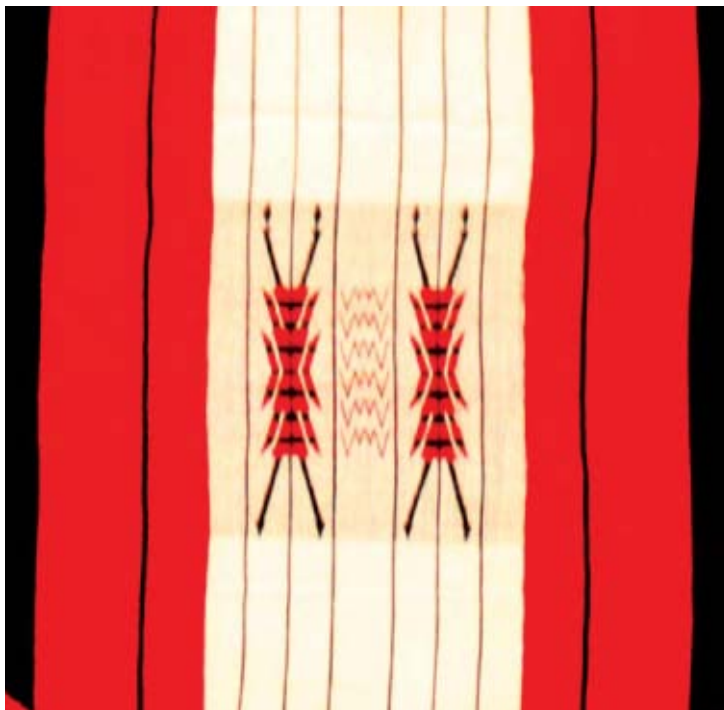
This installation is a large-sized stylised replication of the bamboo horns that were attached to stylized *mithun* heads made from wood with smaller bamboo sticks. These were traditionally hung during the April spring festival of Aoling outside the youth dormitories or “morungs.” The Aoling spring festival was a time to look forward to the period of sowing, and was also a time to renew community ties and celebrate together as a tribe. The horns were also hung from bamboo poles in front of “morungs” when a headhunt was pending.

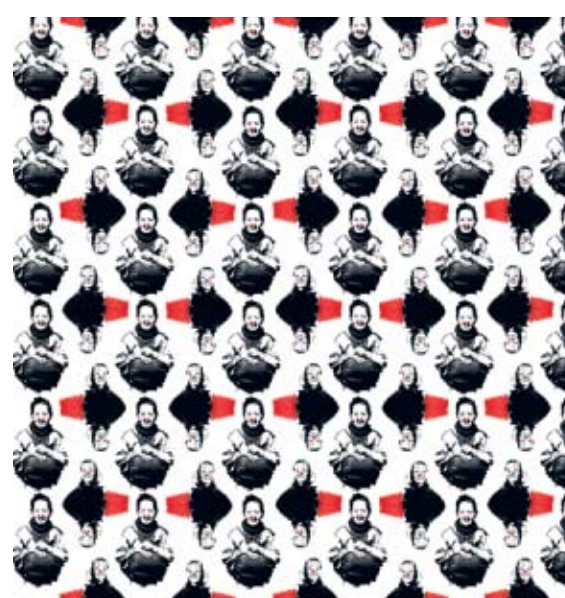


This antique bed, sourced from Nagaland, is carved with the pattern of the sacred Konyak bird, the hornbill. The traditional Naga shawl indicates social position, marital status, wealth, headhunter or feast giver and clan identity, while weaving on the back-strap loom was the exclusive preserve of women. The pop-art cushions perfectly fuses tradition and modernity.



Furniture designed for the exhibition included the Konyak chairs with especially designed patterns. The first one with a pointed curve replicates an animal horn and is upholstered with a hand woven shawl depicting tigers (a reference to the Konyak belief in the intimate connection between the ancestries of man and the beast). The second chair has carvings found on “morungs” or dormitories where Konyak youth learn everything from the tribe’s values to weaponry, and is upholstered with patterns of spears (the former headhunters’ treasured weapons). The chairs designed for the Apa Tani exhibit are tall like bamboo shoots and upholstered with the grid of women in nose plugs.

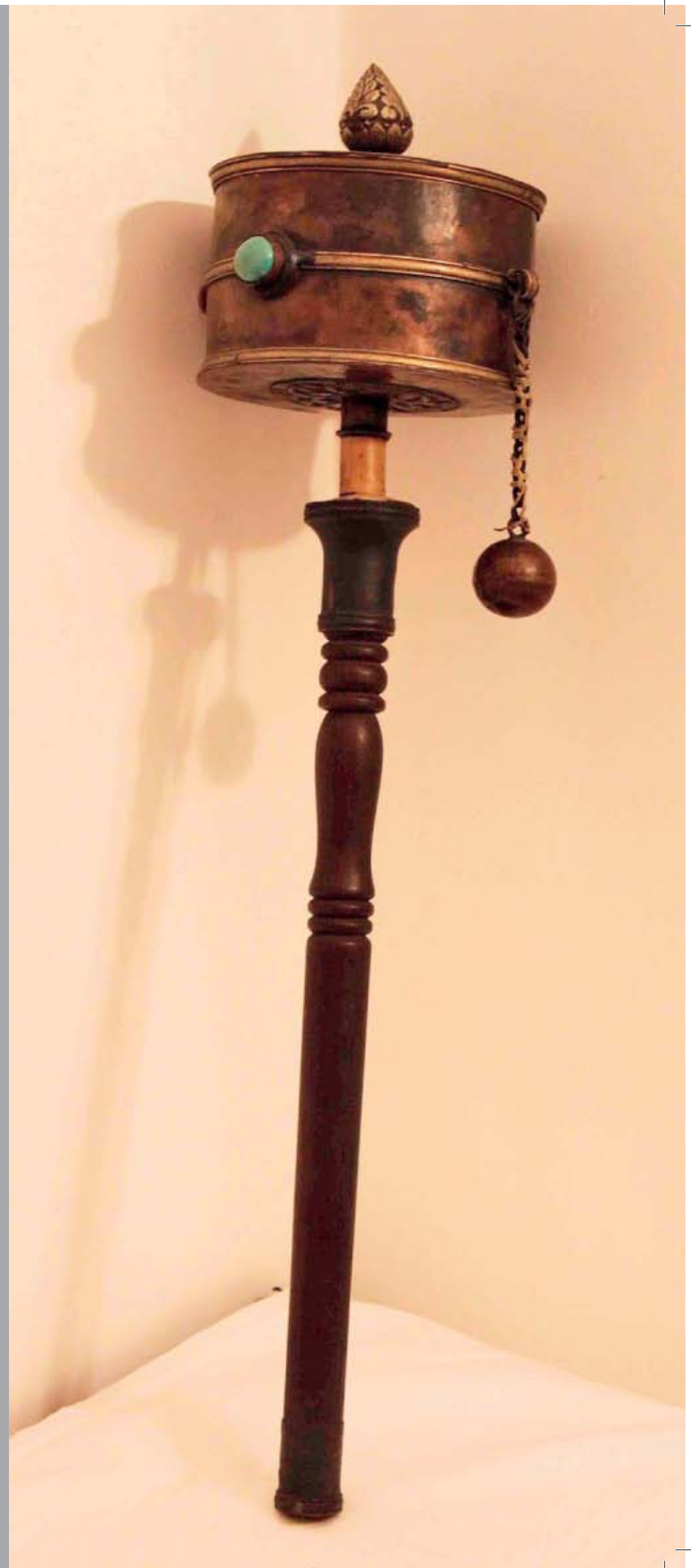




This antique metal statue is of Avalokiteswara Buddha who is believed to be endowed with complete illumination and refrains from entering the blissful state of nirvana in order to remain among and save the living beings on earth.



The Tibet exhibit was complete with the physical embodiments of the prayer wheels like the ones carried by the old nun in Lhasa square. With a metallic gong and ornately carved head, the wheel contained sacred texts inside it and according to Tibetan Buddhist belief, spinning a prayer wheel was just as effective as reciting these texts aloud. This belief derived from the Buddhist belief in the power of sound and the formulas to which deities were subject. For many Buddhists, the prayer wheel also represents the wheel of Dharma set in motion by the Buddha.



Literally “the Lord who looks in Every Direction,” this Buddha of Compassion was believed to reach out in compassion to all sentient beings. This large antique copper prayer box from Tibet has an image of the Buddha and carvings in gold leaf and is embedded with turquoise on the sides and at the back.



Prayer boxes were slung on shoulders of the mannequin of the Buddhist monk. They were used by nomads to carry rosaries and other objects used in prayer and contained an image of Buddha.



The Buddha in His many manifestations was omnipresent in the Tibetan exhibit. These are reproductions in metal.



The vividly painted drums depict Tibetan deities and important mythical episodes and were often painted with natural dyes and used in sacred performances.



The overall experience benefited greatly by the inclusion of these objects used daily by average Apa Tanis. These bottles made of wood are used to store water and other liquids. The Apa Tanis do not raze trees recklessly and plant four for every one that they cut.



This one-of-a-kind necklace has been strung together with real *mithun* teeth. The bovine *mithun* is the most important livestock animal in the largely agrarian Apa Tani economy, and its many uses have been meticulously documented by Anu in her documentary *The Apa Tani of Arunachal Pradesh*.



Specially designed cushions made with pop art pictures of Anu's photographs sat easy on reproductions of centuries' old grain holders, and gave the exhibition a contemporary yet traditional aura.



These antique jewellery items with turquoise and other precious and semi-precious stones are indicative of the wearer's region, tribe and marital status, and are purported to ward off evils.



These necklaces from Nagaland were crucial to a former headhunter's attire. Made in wood, brass and other metals, the number of heads in the necklace corresponded to the number hunted by the wearer, and these were often displayed as marks of pride.







Viewer Feedback

(From Comment Book)

The media reviews and feedback from critics, connoisseurs and visitors have been overwhelming. Here is a sample from the guest book:

Shannon, Emily and Nicolas (France) – Absolutely fascinating! Wonderful exposure to a forgotten people. Thank you for this exhibition.

J. P. Sachoz (USA) – Brilliant photography and well presented exhibition. Most informative thing in the museum.

Paul Michael Burten (UK) – What an exhibition! Deeply moving and a fascinating installation. Thank you for your talent!

Nuntawun Yuntadiloh (Thailand) – Very good work. Excellent, thank you for sharing [with] us these very naïve and unseen people.

Sanchita Panch (India) – Awesome, I am speechless. Felt like I am really visiting Nagaland and those other places. It was really, really perfect.

Gaichuitu Gangmei (Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi) – Wonderful work by Anu Malhotra. Very informative too. The Apa Tani's concept of 'beauty' is unique. It took me by surprise! Would love to see more of such works in the near future again.

Nicolleta Dentico (Italy) – I had never heard about the Apa Tani people, and I am grateful to learn so much in this outstanding setting.

Mellisa, Walt and Meredith Gray (Dallas) – Wonderful, intelligent exhibition – thank you!

Rani Mullen (New Delhi) – Lovely photos and effort! Thanks for putting this all together in a beautiful exhibit!

Emma Dickson and Elle Oakley (London) – Amazing photography! Fascinating!

Jane Arrow (New Zealand) – Fantastic photos and videos.

P. Koji (Delhi) – The work done by Anu Malhotra should really get great appreciation. The way the exhibition works with photographs as well as video was wonderful. Even in our North Eastern states, I didn't see such work. Keep it up again with more beautiful and wonderful photographs.

Asha Mathew (New Delhi) – Fantastic, awesome, that's what comes up from my mouth every time I look at the photographs. Excellent photography... loved it...!! Thank you so much and more...



Amlan (Assam) – This is an awesome work. Particularly it is awesome to see Mansarover Lake. It has been lucky to see the birth of the Brahmaputra.

Anuj Sharma & Devika Bhattacharya (New Delhi) – Very touching!! Thank you for bringing the untouched and unmentioned part of India so close to us....!!

Andria Davis (Lakewood, Colorado) – Breath taking and beautiful.

Anna Kock (Germany) – Shows culture very well! Good information.

Alaysa (Turkey) – I am Impressed...!!!

Yonatan (Astonia) – It was really beautiful. Amazingly cool...!!





Takayo (Tokyo, Japan) – Peaceful yet dyanamic...!!!

Jan (Netherlands) – Beautiful pictures, inspiring movies!

Bir Bahadur Singh (UP) – Knowledgeable...!! Interesting about Indian heritage.

Dayone (Brazil) - Amazing and inspiring...!!

Caryn Tan (Singapore) – This work is very well done. Impeccable, because it touches the heart of me and my friends, who now understand and sympathise with the Tibetans. Goes to show how western philosophy fails to grasp the notion of God, as these people have. Well done photographic display that changes a person's thoughts. Thank you!

Akhil Khare (Kanpur, UP) – I have never seen this type of perfection in any type of photography before. Anu, you have done wonderful work. Best of luck.

Charles Foldes (USA) – Beautiful... thanks for sharing all of this culture with us.

Oscar Demello (Gurgaon) – The overall display left me spell bound. Thank you for sharing! This is an India I never knew. The pictures are true windows of the unique culture. Well done – looking forward to more!

Dr. MS Gill (New Delhi) – Fascinating!

C.B.K. Karthik (Hyderabad) – Really great collection, wouldn't have seen such collection anywhere, thank you for the exhibits! You rock Anu Malhotra...!! Learnt a lot about our tribes.

Konchak – “Wow” and thanks a lot for the video especially on the way to Mt. Kailash. Born and brought up here in India. Never been to my own mother land but today I got chance to see it through your video. The beautiful Tibet and I am sure Tibet will be free one day. Cheers.

Tsering Dolma – As a Tibetan I was too happy to see our culture inside this museum and I would like to thank you Mr. Iqbal Malhotra for doing this great job. In place of all Tibetan people I would like to say thank you so much.

Royal Andey Gujral (NMI, New Delhi) – Fabulous photographs – Fabulously curated!

Ariel Ahart (NMI, New Delhi) – Wonderful exhibition – amazing photos!



Monika Singh (New Delhi) – Inspiring, innovative and exclusive. Love it. Truly Incredible India.

Gautam (Mumbai) – After seeing these types of historical things we should be proud to be Indian!

Ankita Jena (Cuttack, Orissa) – Wow, this place was fascinating, with all the photographs and rich ambience, the whole experience was worth. Very beautiful and very interesting.

Dorohe Jain (Ministry of Culture, Poland) – Excellent exhibition.

Mrs. Pamela Chatterjee (Alhora) – Terrific work behind this exhibition. It takes time to relate to people before they allow such relaxed and friendly photographs. The quality of the photographs and the display is the best. Congratulations.





Giedj Olivier and Fouquet Emilie (Paris, France) – Very nice exhibition, great pictures in color and black and white.

Jessica (Netherlands) – I have learned so much just by looking at your pictures. Thank you!

Vu Hoang (Vietnam) – Very nice! Impressive.

Vicki Rothwell (Edinburg, UK) – Real insight into these cultures.

Biaolo Perrera (Italy) – Beautiful! Good design.

Graydan Burgess (Australia) – Inspiring and educational. Could you have some more tribal exhibitions! Thanks.

Harsh Vardahn (Delhi) – Nice blend of nature, art and spirituality.

Christoph Trost (Germany) – I really enjoyed the presentation of all individuals – interesting, but with respect and honor.

Shifa Haq (Delhi) – The photographs bring their world closer... the documentaries are a quiet way to educate us. Thank you for the effort and passion behind it. Good luck to Soul Survivors.

Jatin Jaswal (Himachal Pradesh) – It was a first attempt to touch India's north east and Tibet by your works of photography, videos and other things. So interesting to see the culture of tribal areas. So beautiful. I would like to invite you to Himachal Pradesh to do such kind of works. Thanks.

Navil Kapur (Gurgaon, Haryana) – An excellent photo exhibition, the insight into a new culture and the human approach of Mrs. Malhotra is very appealing and the sense of humor in bringing the presentation is right, appreciated!

Somkiat Bounchoo (Bangkok, Thailand) – Impressive Exhibition.

Rangsenla Marsosang (Nagaland) – I am very happy to see your exhibition and documentary film on Konyak. To show to the world where Nagaland is.

Surya Shah (Hyderabad) – Amazing, definitely immortalizing, question history, culture and diversity.

Sherina Joshi (New Delhi) – More of such work should be done – specially liked the photographs – even more special was the Tibet section captured so magnificently- great photographs – great moments. To preserve this is to understand the great diversity we are.

Roshni Krishan (Bhilai, Chattisgarh) – Very nice, Beautiful, unique photographs. Thank you for discovering such a unique area of the world.



Tage Otung (Symbiosis Institute of Business Management, Bangalore) – I am amazed at your work as you have beautifully captured and presented the “Three Tribes”. It has been a wonderful experience revisiting my own tribe “Apatani”. Congratulations!!! And wish you success in your future endeavours.

Blodagh Nowood (The Sheepfold, Fryerstown, Australia) – Thank you to Anu Malhotra and to the wise lady who advised us to see this inspiring exhibition.

Amanda Goy (Melbourne, Australia) – Fascinating exhibition, I feel wiser for seeing this educational journey.

Rhica Hoyuf (St. Paul, MN, USA) – This collection is most intriguing! Keep up the good work. Good collection, keep it up!





Monica Rind (Canada) – Amazing photographs, great insight.

Jyoti (India) – Learned a lot. Thank you.

Tina Harjola (Finland) – Truly Wonderful!!!

Sushmit (Assam) – A beautiful exhibition, truly amazed by the beautiful photographs.

USA – India is best. I love India. Thank you India.

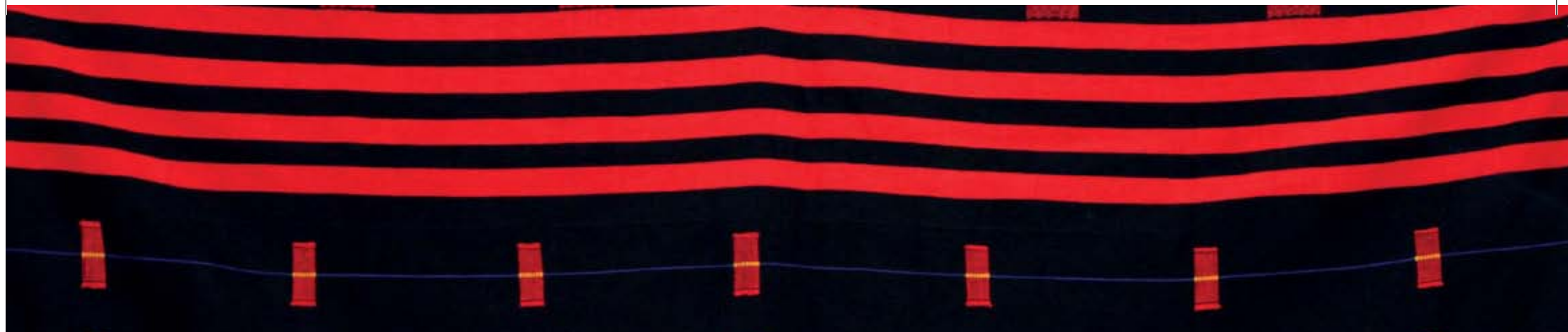
Rohit Gautam – Hard work conquers. You are a diamond!

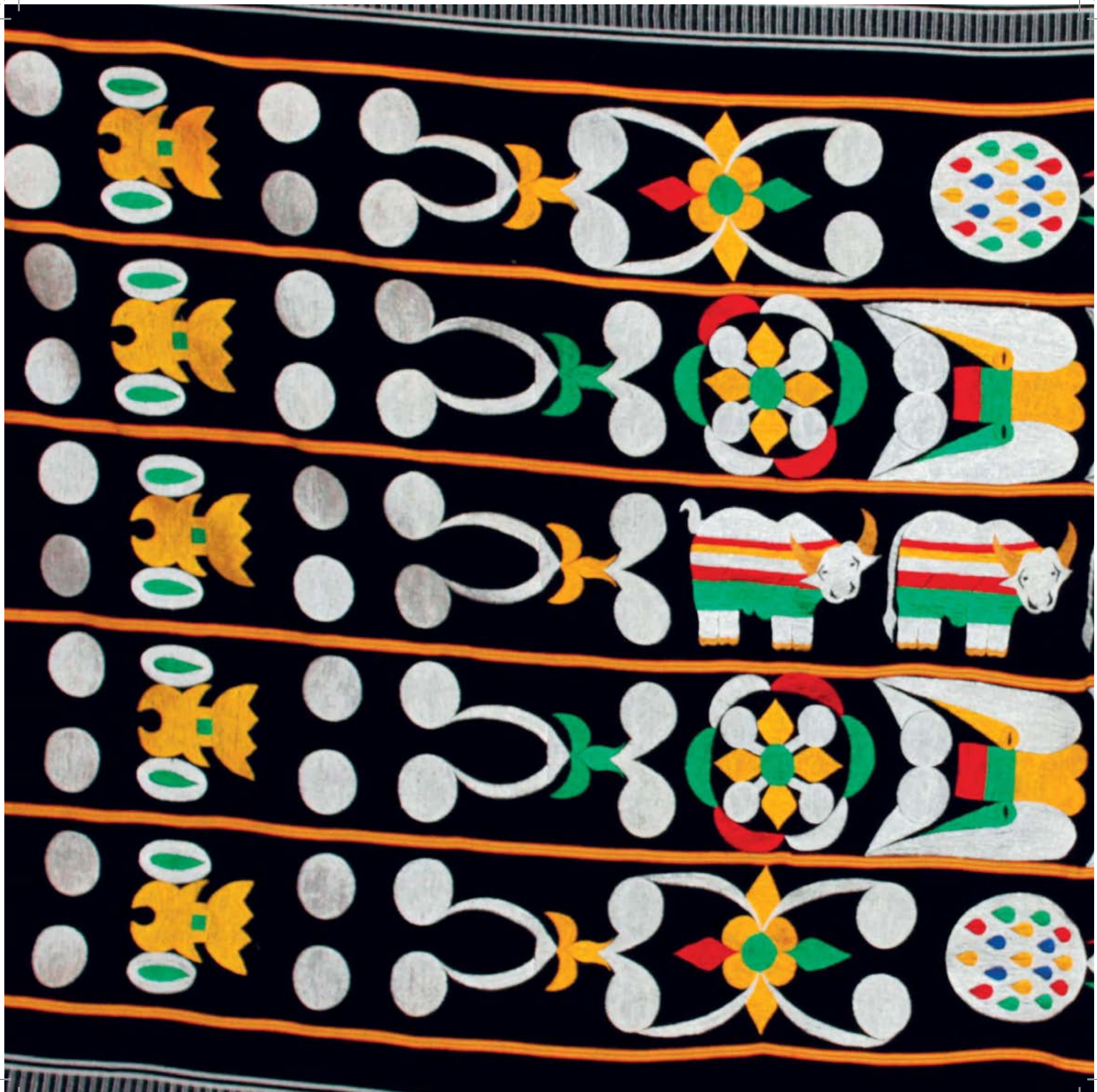
Neeraj and Kavi (New Delhi) – Outstanding! Amazingly captured...

Shobita Punja (NCF Delhi) – A wonderful exhibition – it must be shared with more people across India!

Swati Rastogi (NMI, New Delhi) – Speechless!!! For a moment as I entered, the very first thing that struck me was the beautiful layout and composition of the display. Secondly, the presentation left me spell bound. Then comes the real work – I can see the dedication and amount of hard work put in by the artist. Thumbs up. The show takes me more into the depths of photography and inspires me to discover more and even more. I can clearly see the aesthetical mind behind the presentation. The saturation and tones of hues in each picture had made it speak. Now that I am making an exit to the show, it feels that I have just had a talk with the Apa Tanis, Konyaks and the Tibetan nomads.











SOUL SURVIVORS

Eclectic, Enriching, Experiential!
Swati Chawla, Writer

An Indian museum finally has an exhibition that is true to the spirit of what a museum should be: a place where an engaged spectator can learn more about the past of her own, and of other cultures, and an institution that acted as an adjunct to the classroom, and was pedagogical without necessarily being pedantic. The *Soul Survivors* exhibition on display at the National Museum in Delhi from May 4 to May 31, 2011 does just that: it introduces parts of a country to itself and to the world; for India is indeed many countries, some of which are often ignored, and often misunderstood. *Soul Survivors* showcases 70 large size photographs, which documentary filmmaker Anu Malhotra had shot while filming her documentaries, *The Apa Tani of Arunachal Pradesh* and *The Konyak of Nagaland* in 2000-2001, and during her journey to Tibet (the subject of *The Road to Nirvana* which she co-directed) in 2002. Videos of these three films, installations, artefacts and texts make *Soul Survivors* speak to the audience through different media.

Designed and curated by Anu Malhotra, the exhibition facilitates a different understanding of the nation through three cultures on its margins: the first two are the Apa Tani of Arunachal Pradesh and the Konyak of Nagaland from the country's North-eastern region, and the third are the nomads of Tibet, living in a cultural give and take with India. While Malhotra's photographs taken in the years 2000-2002 during her travels to these areas are the centerpieces of the exhibition, the display is made richer by the three documentaries she shot during this time, and the installations of woodwork, basketry, metalwork, costumes, and unique antiques and artefacts from the three cultures.

The exhibition has been appreciated by visitors and media alike. A sixth grader accompanied by his mother decided to work on Arunachal Pradesh for his school project on Indian states after spending hours in the Apa Tani section. He said that his schoolbooks had only taught him the state capitals, its important plants and animals and costumes. He was fascinated to see, among other things, that the Apa Tani had devised so many ingenious uses for the bamboo. A Sikkimese architect, Arnold Harvey based in Delhi, spent an entire day watching all the documentaries, carefully going through the descriptions that accompanied the installations, and wrote that this was the first exhibition he had seen that truly captured the soul

of a people so little known in mainstream media. Harvey's gratitude was immense and he was particularly impressed by the detail and accuracy of the Tibet section, and the rigorous research that went into the three documentaries. He felt that the section on Tibet had actually come alive, and had a presence, an aura, courtesy the carefully attired mannequins, the prayer flags, sounds from the meditation bowls, and the richly painted turquoise wall at the entrance.

The Konyak are best known for their age old practice of headhunting. This section has a detailed display of different marks of a headhunter accompanied by an explanation of specifics like tattoos, symbolism of heads in the necklace and other jewellery, significance of lycanthropic features like man's relationship with the tiger, as well as a recreation of select objects like bamboo wind chimes from the morung (the youth dormitory). Instead of exoticising these objects as belonging to "another world" of "barbaric practices," Malhotra's display corrects our assumptions of the Konyak as a fierce people given to wanton killing. The significance of headhunting as well as the value given to all life (plant, spirit, animal and human) is brought about through snippets of interviews with the Angh (or chief) of a Konyak village, extracts from anthropological accounts of the tribe, and her own observations while she was among them. The Apa Tani section likewise brings the culture to life without othering it. Malhotra's photographs and descriptions of the last generation of women with nose plugs contextualises and historicises this practice. We hear from the women who regard them as marks of beauty and distinction and ask her to get them for herself!

The exhibition is richly layered and the viewer experiences it at many levels: the photographs are almost poetic portraits of people and have an immediate aesthetic appeal. Noted photographer Avinash Pasricha remarked that the photographs were technically brilliant and the portraits were true to the name of the exhibition. He left the comment book with the words "excellent" and "beautiful"! Painter Satish Gujral rated them among the best "character studies" he had ever seen. Malhotra does not fall into the trap of merely labelling them with dates and names; the descriptions instead extend the photographic narrative through anecdotes, historical trivia (the Apa Tani wanted to disfigure their beautiful women through





Tibetan man
Saga, Tibet

the nose plugs that later became desired as marks of beauty), ideological underpinnings of customary practices (the extraordinary sense of ownership sans material possessions among the Tibetans) and contextual detail (the installations add to the immediacy and add to the slice-of-life effect). As Kishore Singh wrote, “it is not an exhibition but an experience.”

At the level of aesthetics, the exhibition takes the viewer in by the size and expanse of the photographs, customised colours for the walls, the rich detail of the exhibition, and not in the least by Sonam Dubbal’s beautifully assembled antique attire for the section on Tibet. For the historically inclined, the displays and descriptions bring to life centuries of work done on the three cultures and also provide resources like the three hour-long documentaries and the hundred-odd page catalogue with a bibliography. The exhibition also appeals to those in search of answers to life’s profound questions: the value of a human life, its connection with others in the community, as with the animal and the spiritual world; the Apa Tani institution of “buning,” for example, is a uniquely structured network of close friendships that forms the backbone of this close-knit society; when a fire consumes an entire Konyak village, people from sister villages rush with supplies and construction materials. In a matter of three days, they put fifty families back on their feet. For those of us who like to travel, literally and vicariously, Malhotra’s still and moving lens, and her anecdotes pasted across the walls, take the viewer on a journey across time and space, for it was made ten years ago to places that no longer look like how she left them.



Soul Survivors is an appreciation of alternative wisdoms, of ways of life that stand in contrast to urban mainstream, of customs and institutions that have remained valid over centuries, and of peoples that have intrigued and instructed hundreds of curious explorers. As one exits from the exhibition, one is left with a feeling that the three peoples brought to us through Malhotra's lens are the last bearers and witnesses of their respective age-old customs. The land beneath their feet has transformed rapidly and irreversibly: they are, in more ways than one, soul / sole survivors!



Tibetan Nomads
Tibetan Plateau, Tibet

Foreword
SOUL SURVIVORS

Kishore Singh



I'm amused at the idea of Anu Malhotra as a portrait photographer. She's a filmmaker, one I have worked with, romantic, sentimental, shrill (uh-oh!), demanding, affectionate, but the idea of her taking pictures is absurd – she doesn't have the personality for it: she's a changeling, impetuous, impatient, tyrannical. Chimera-like, she can morph in different places, demand different things, fling her temper like a weapon, then murmur soft words like a salve. She's Durga in high season, creating and destroying schedules, multi-tasking, inhabiting a world inside and outside time, someone you fear as much as you revere, organised and disorganised, she's both myth and reality, a Kali on the highway, and goddesses in wrath don't pick up cameras and take pictures.

At least, not the kind I'm seeing: somewhat bewildered, somewhat bemused. Pictures that will haunt me long after I've gone home, portraits that will stay with me in my moments of silence and meditation, photographs that have successfully glimpsed into the innermost intimacies after piercing through but retaining the outermost shells. Do they not say that photographers steal souls away?

Let's start at the beginning.

Anu Malhotra is a filmmaker, she wields a mean camera, she's not above taking charge when the going gets tough, she can slay as much with her fury as with her fondness.

But this isn't about Anu, it's about her pictures.

I close my eyes and I think of the photographs I've seen – pictures that are in this book, pictures that are part of this exhibition – and here's what I recall. A crinkling of the eyes. Lips that are laughing. A child suckling at a mother's breast. A young lad looking like he owns the world. An old woman's skin parched into deep scars, like the fissured earth, that she wears like a trophy.

I see them in parts, and in the whole. A sky bleeding colour, a trail of clouds, a horizon, hills and huts – all of an insignificance. For all that matters is a fleeting moment when her camera – one she's slung about her shoulder in the middle of a frantic film shoot, and which is an extension of her senses – has captured a meditative moment, a contended smile,

an unconscious glance. A freeze frame that singularly, uniquely, captures an instant in time, a nano-second that is a flash reflection of a human being's entire life.

It ought to be impossible, you might argue. A life reduced to just a moment in time and place. But a photograph can do that in the right hands, in the right place, at the right time – a Shiva's eye that notices rather than scars, that records and reports rather than ruptures.

An Apa Tani woman sips her glass of tea, a long tattoo splitting her forehead, nose-blocks flaring her nostrils, part of a vanishing tribe, but it is not her endangered status that makes her unique but a frame as perfectly possible as the one in which another tribal walks through a picture, basket balanced on her head, conscious but oblivious of Anu's camera, part of her canvas and, for that moment, of her world. The contented smoker, the carefree barter-trader, the worker in contrast to the gallant Galahad, enacting tribal rituals, a child in training, others at play, they are of a world at once familiar and alien, but exuding a human spirit that is no different whether in Ziro, in Arunachal Pradesh, or in New Delhi – an exuberance of the human spirit that binds us all, but also individually identifies us.

The headhunter ought to be a scary reminder of times gone by – but isn't. This is the Konyak – fiercely tattooed face and hat with curving hornbills meant to terrify, but those times are past, making these pictures a body of work that is less narrative, more documentative, in nature. Here is a tribe that is ancient, with practices that remain relevant in a fading page of history, where changes are swift, but where cultural rootings and pride predominate. Spears and hornbills hats, necklaces festooned with skulls, part of an ancient cult but living in a world that has since embraced modernity, yet not split by the chasm, festooned in shawls and jackets loomed in the village, part of ritualistic orgies that celebrate tribe loyalties and living practices that seem at once ancient and contemporary, based not on ownership but sharing.

And somewhere in the Tibetan plateau, where the air is light enough to make you giddy, a people proud, beautiful, handsome beyond belief, rulers of their individual realms, their own monarchs, tribal yet cosmopolitan, tolerant of unfamiliar cultures and of strangers, confident beyond belief,





shepherds and herders who need nothing more than the sky for a roof, the earth for a bed – how, then, did they learn to be so sophisticated?

Pictures, I ask Anu, taken over years? She chuckles.

Over months? Laughter.

Weeks? Days?

Not moments, she says, not seconds, these are photographs taken when there was no time, pictures taken beyond time.

I am disbelieving too, so it's okay for you to nod your head and say, these creative types, this is just how they say these things.

But what Anu explains is that she was not there, in Arunachal Pradesh and in Nagaland and in Tibet to take pictures, but as a filmmaker – directing, shooting, arguing, creating timelines, following and being tripped over by stories that may or might not turn out to be episodic. But she also does what no one else – and there are other filmmakers, other photographers, who come to these remote parts – cares to do. She makes friends. She talks to these people as though they are her allies, she eats with the tribes, she lives amidst them, she is respectful of the elders and one with the youngsters, she is obsequious but also detached, and she romances them all personally while she flirts with them through her camera.

It is for this reason that Anu's camera isn't voyeuristic. But it is penetrative, diligent, mischievous. It is frank and opinionated. It cajoles and seduces. It is both conscious and unconscious, but never self-conscious. That's because her photography – yes, even her portrait photography – is spontaneous, a consequence of her work as a documentary filmmaker.

Directing, scripting, setting up scenes, shouting directions, cajoling, pleading, making things happen, she will pick up her camera when the right person walks into the frame, when the light turns perfect, when there is a contemplative smile, a glint in the eye, a swagger, a stance, and with a whirr of the camera she has captured a portrait of a person or a people who are an endangered species, fast disappearing off the map, lost tribes giving up their native sophistication for urban deception, sacrificing

a way rooted in tradition for opportunities in a modern world, kings being reduced to serfs, rulers to the ruled.

In these portraits, several things come together. The exotic, true – it cannot be taken away, what we perceive as outlandish, or bizarre, but which is no more than the ordinary for them – but also a disappearing breed of people who will not long walk this planet, so few you can count them on your fingers, people who sport tattoos and wield spears, who might yet hunt their prey, whose clothes speak of a proximity to the land they call their home, whose nose blocks are a sign of beauty, who inspire admiration not fear.

Impetuous these images might be, infatuated even, perhaps, but they combine a seriousness with a playfulness, a sense almost of jubilation and candour and delight, at the ease between the camera and the subject. They might document, but they also enchant; they might record, but they will remain forever ephemeral. For Anu's roving camera captures the spirit – difficult as it might be – and the image, but it does so lightly, with a nonchalance and a caress.

The camera is an interloper, but only for a moment. In the very next second, the magic might have gone, along with the perfect light, that wry turn of the lip, the twitch of the eyebrow, the spin of a prayer wheel, that whiff of smoke. But for now, there are these images – of a place not far away from us, for these are portraits of a people, a tribe, a region that is only a heartbeat removed from our realities.

In exposing that moment, Anu's camera allows us a glimpse into her world of soul survivors.

Or, maybe – just maybe – that should be soul survivors.





SOUL SURVIVORS

The Apa Tani of Arunachal Pradesh
A few sample photographs and texts

Apa Tani woman, Hija village
Arunachal Pradesh

“In the ancient days, the beautiful Apa Tani women would fall prey to neighbouring tribals and therefore nose plugs called yappin-hoollo were devised to disfigure them, and tattoos were put on their faces as marks of identity. However, in time they became desired as marks of beauty. The Tribal Council banned both the plugs and the tattoos in the 1970s. I was probably meeting the last generation of women with their distinctive nose plugs and tattoos. Even without getting the nose plugs myself, I could not help but reflect on the stereotypical idea of femininity and beauty that I had submitted myself to all my life!”

--Anu Malhotra, *The Apa Tani of Arunachal Pradesh* (2000)







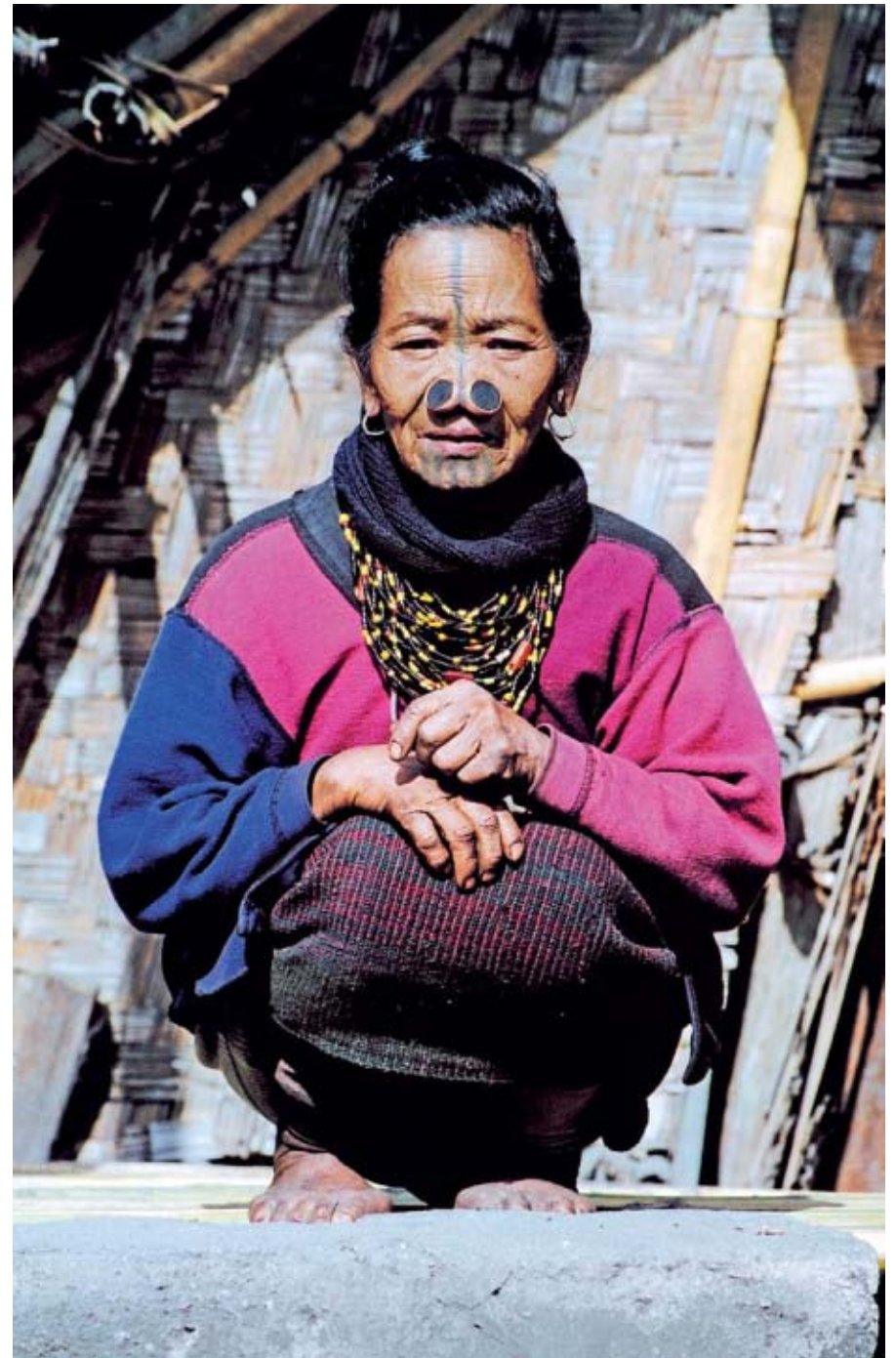
Most Apatani women work in the fields or the market place, except the ones with young children. In addition to being encouraged to be physically active and play outdoors, the children are also taught to be responsible from an early age. They often look after their younger siblings and assist in minor daily chores. They require very little, compared to the children in the city, to be content

Apa Tani child
Reru village, Arunachal Pradesh

Apa Tani woman and child, Reru village
Arunachal Pradesh



Apa Tani woman, Reru village
Arunachal Pradesh







“I discover some remarkable Apa Tani living traditions, the most important being their belief in Donyi-Polo, a faith based on Donyi – the sun, and Polo – the moon. They are the symbolic powers through which the supreme spiritual being is manifested. This practice holds that all life is sacred and that the universal spirit resides in every being, in rocks and stones and trees. It is a way of life that involves a close and harmonious relationship between man and the natural world. Donyi-Polo worship has no written scriptures, no idols and no fixed place for prayer. The only symbol is a bamboo altar found outside most homes; while the village Shaman, called the Nyibo, is their link to the divine.”

--Anu Malhotra, *The Apa Tani of Arunachal Pradesh* (2000)

Apa Tani man, Reru village,
Arunachal Pradesh



Apa Tani boy, Hija village
Arunachal Pradesh



Apa Tani Nyibo (Shaman)
Reru village, Arunachal Pradesh



Two Apa Tani Nyibos (Shamans) conducting
divination, Reru village, Arunachal Pradesh





Apa Tani man, Reru village
Arunachal Pradesh

“Legang explains that Apa Tani society is divided into clans and their sense of relationship is very strong. ‘We have a very interesting institution called the “buning,” which is a relationship of friendship. It is a network of friends spread across villages, who are there to help you with anything from a mithun to rebuilding your huts.’ Ekha himself has eight “bunings” and tells me that the Apa Tani consider it their moral duty to provide for their buning’s needs. That is how this wonderfully networked society puts someone back on their feet after an accident or a fire; houses are collectively rebuilt within days and materials for rituals arranged in a jiffy. ‘What an amazing support system,’ I think. Their strong bonds of friendship are certainly enviable.”

--Anu Malhotra, *The Apa Tani of Arunachal Pradesh* (2000)

Apa Tani woman, Reru village
Arunachal Pradesh

“The Apa Tani concept of beauty is very different from that projected in contemporary mainstream media. Women take pride in their healthy and active body, and do an equal share of arduous physical chores. Their aesthetic of clothing and jewellery derives from natural colours and fabrics. The skirt is often woven at home on a back loom, and their beaded necklaces are family heirlooms handed down over generations.”

--Anu Malhotra, *The Apa Tani of Arunachal Pradesh* (2000)





Apa Tani woman, Hija village
Arunachal Pradesh



SOUL SURVIVORS

The Konyak of Nagaland
A few sample photographs and texts



Konyak man
Longmein village, Nagaland

"The night is cold and dark, yet I see them. Stealthily creeping through the gate, with spears and daos gleaming in their hands, the men wear loincloths and tattoos and carry cane baskets adorned with monkey skulls. They spot me and abandon their stealth tactics. With a blood-curdling 'Aaaaouh!' they charge towards me, even as I cower in absolute terror. My head is slashed in an instant and tucked into the basket. 'Blood on the dance floor,' sings Michael Jackson..."

"Hold on! Hold on! It's just a bad dream!" I think, with an accusing look at the book by my bedside, Naked Nagas by Furer Christopher von Heimendorf.

Later, between Mon to Wanching, my local guide and interpreter, Pong Tao laughs at my dream, 'Yes, that's just the way they would have done it a hundred years ago. Even today, you will meet old headhunters who remember this. You'll recognise them because their faces are tattooed and they may wear a neckpiece with heads, denoting how many heads they had once taken.'"

--Anu Malhotra, *The Konyak of Nagaland*, 2001

Konyak Headhunter of yore
Longwa village, Nagaland





“Former headhunters stand out with their brass medallions consisting of two to five human heads (corresponding to the numbers they have hunted) in the past. Many have tattoos on their faces and on their chests, an indication of the fertile power they brought to the clan. I know that I am filming the last generation of ‘actual’ headhunters, but whose images will remain forever...”

From *The Konyak of Nagaland* (2001)

Konyak Headhunter of yore
Aoling Spring Festival
Longwa village, Nagaland

Konyak Headhunter of yore
Longwa village, Nagaland





Konyak boys dressed in ceremonial costume
Aoling Spring Festival, Longwa village, Nagaland







"I have realized that though the practice of headhunting is buried in their past, the Konyak still retain an innate sense of pride in this tradition. As Kem Angh [the village headman] explained, 'So, why should we feel ashamed about our ancient head hunting practice? After all, today when countries go to war they kill thousands by modern weaponry. For us, head hunting was a sacred practice and in any case we would have killed a minor percentage of people killed by modern warfare.'"

From *The Konyak of Nagaland* (2001)

Konyak men, Aoling Spring Festival,
Longwa village, Nagaland



Chui Queen, Konyak women and their grand daughters,
Aoling Spring Festival, Chui village, Nagaland

Konyak ceremonial dress and ornaments are more than just a matter of aesthetics, they define identity and status. Traditionally made with bone and ivory, animal horns and skulls, today, most have been replaced with buttons, coins and shells. But every accessory and their favoured colour red are all living traditions of their headhunting days and powerful symbols of fertility.

Konyak Headhunter of yore
Longwa village, Nagaland





SOUL SURVIVORS

The Nomads of Tibet
A few sample photographs and texts

“The Tibetan plateau widens and the rapture begins as we drive through expanses of golden green plains, earthy mountains of amazing shapes and colours and several passes, honoured by colourful prayer flags flapping sacred wishes across this stark land. The view from the top reveals unending vistas fringed by purple and blue mountains, textured by the shadows of fluffy clouds, with the snow peaks of the Himalayan ranges beyond. The vastness of the scale is awe-inspiring and I can feel my spirits expand and soar.”

--Anu Malhotra, *The Road to Nirvana*, 2001



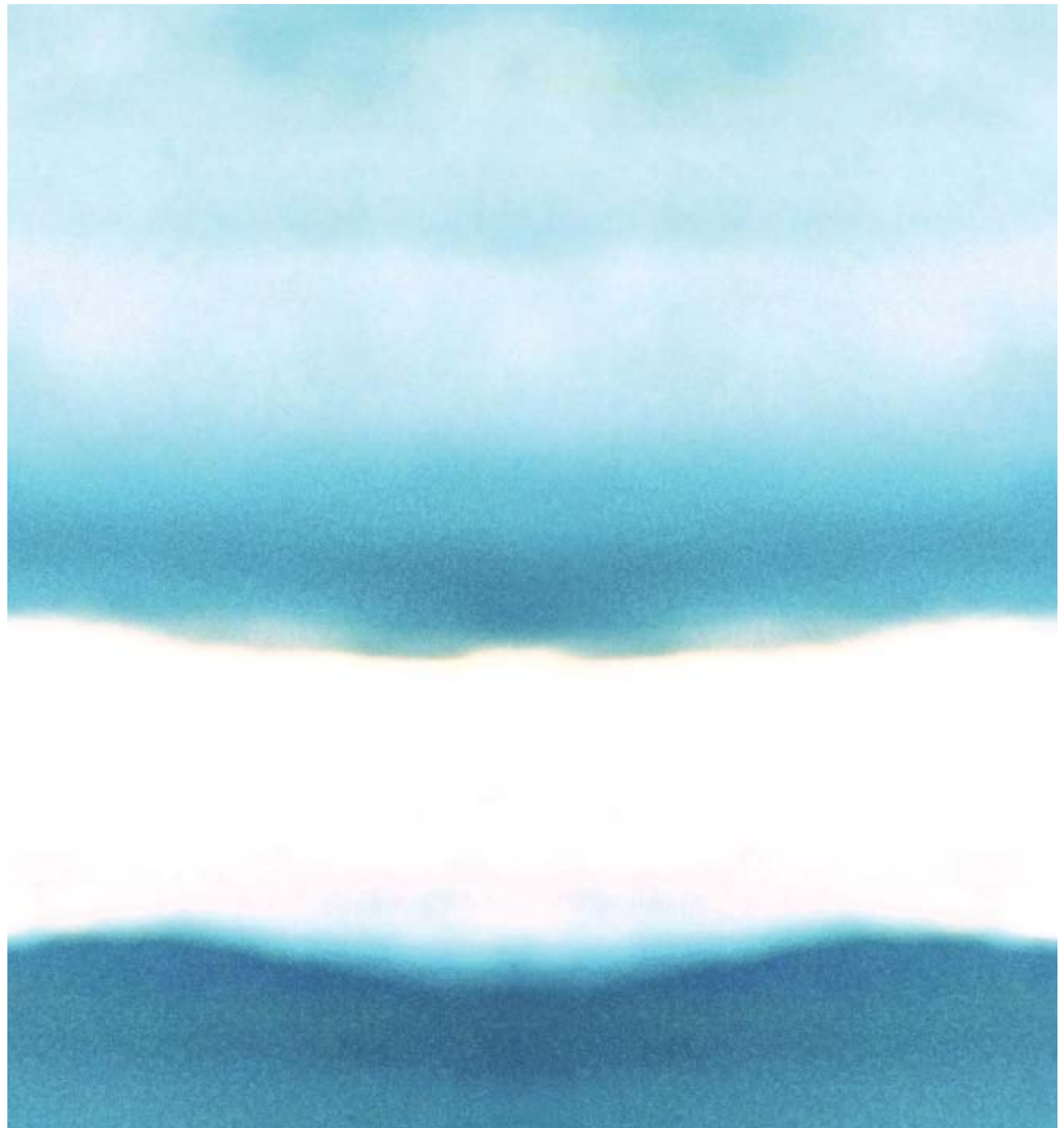
Tibetan Plateau, Tibet



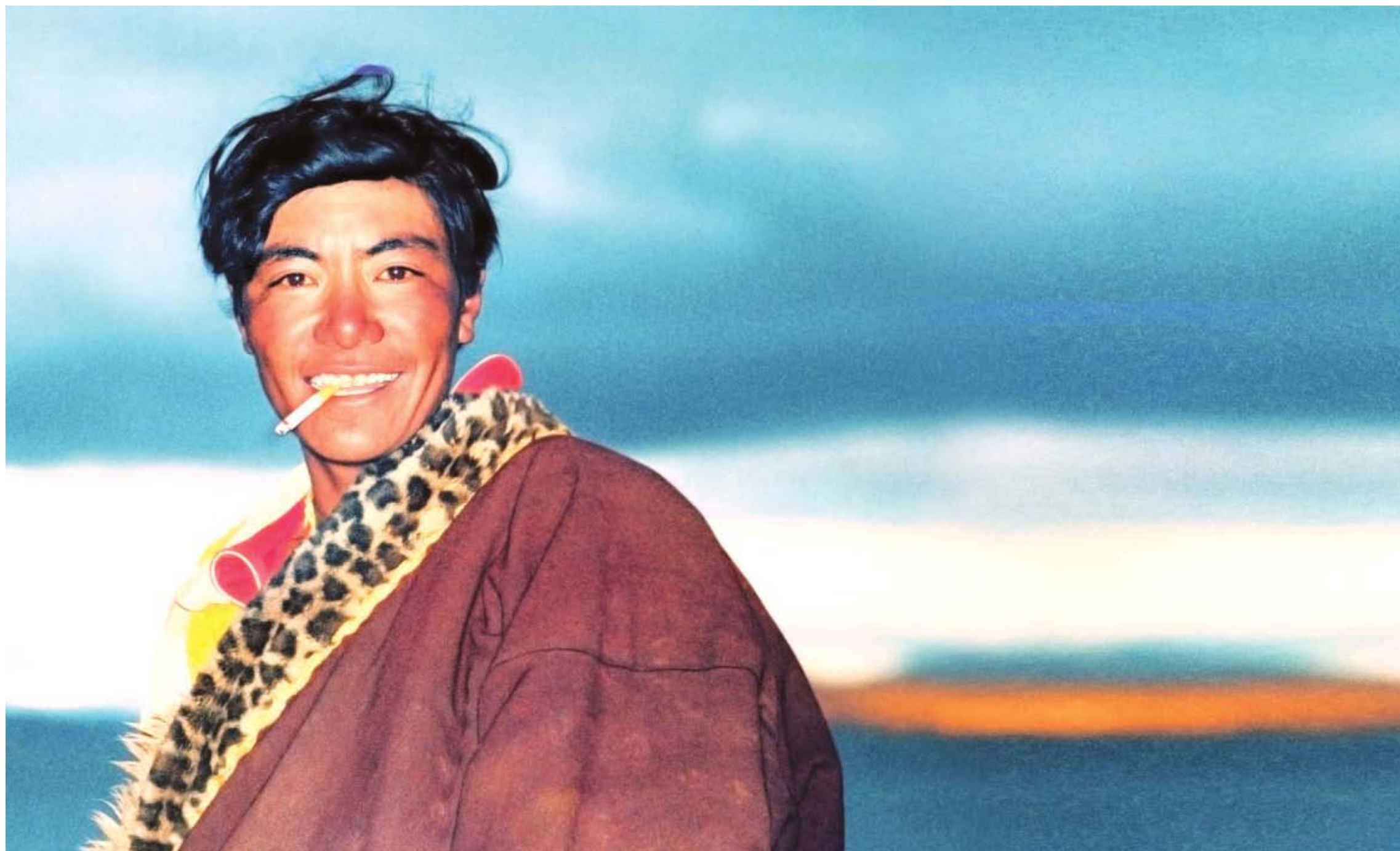
Tibetan Nomads, Tibetan Plateau, Tibet

“We drive past the groups of Tibetan nomads, Drogpas (people of the high pastures), with their yak and sheep. The Droga wander in small groups of a few families. The summer months are spent grazing their livestock on these highlands with constant movement to fresh pastures. With the onset of winter, they move to urban markets for trading. Tibetan nomads also gave me a different insight into ownership and acquisition: they travel about freely, content with just a bag full of “things” but owning the infinite sky above and the vast land around.”

--Anu Malhotra, *The Road to Nirvana*, 2001

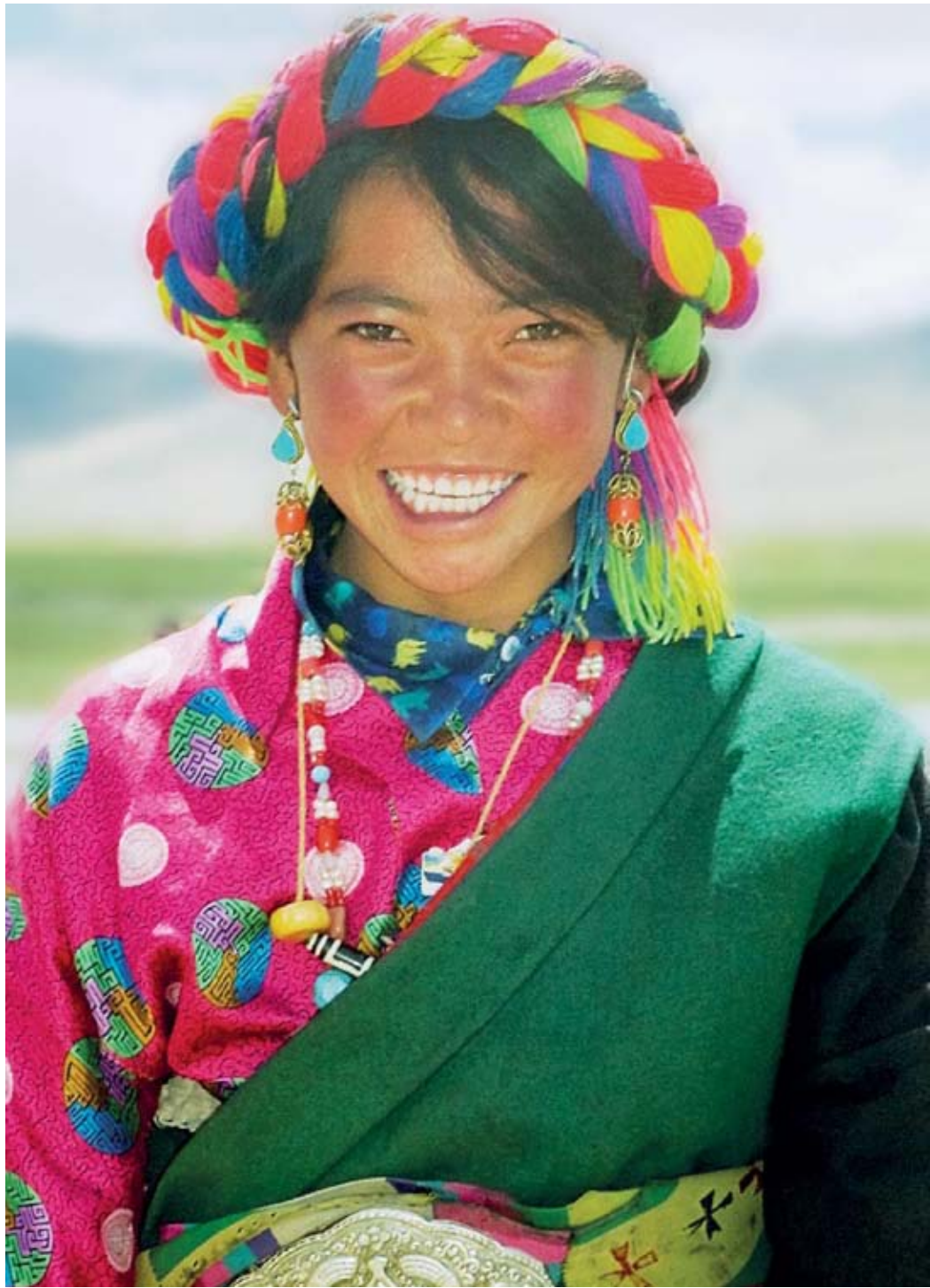


Tibetan Nomad, Mansarovar lake, Tibet





Tibetan Girl, Paryang, Tibet



Tibetan Girl, Paryang, Tibet



Tibetan Nomad, Tibetan Plateau, Tibet



This elderly man from Saga brims with energy and vitality, and his animated face and posture are a result of his active life outdoors which involves hard physical work and a spirit of oneness with nature. The wisdom and experience contained in his wrinkled face is greatly valued in Tibetan society, where the elderly, as seen in the picture, quite literally steer the course for the young. The shape and texture of his cap are reflective of his region and status.

Tibetan man, Saga, Tibet, 2002



Tibetan man with Horse-cart and kids, Saga, Tibet

“Dhamma,” or “dharma,” travelled from India and made Tibet into a Buddhist kingdom, an identity it strives to retain to this day. Tibetan Buddhism is a unique fusion of shamanism and ideological faith, encompassing a path of moderation, devotion to the power of natural places, undertaking pilgrimages and the worship of fierce and protective deities, and forms the basis of its architecture, music, attire, and institutions of education and governance.

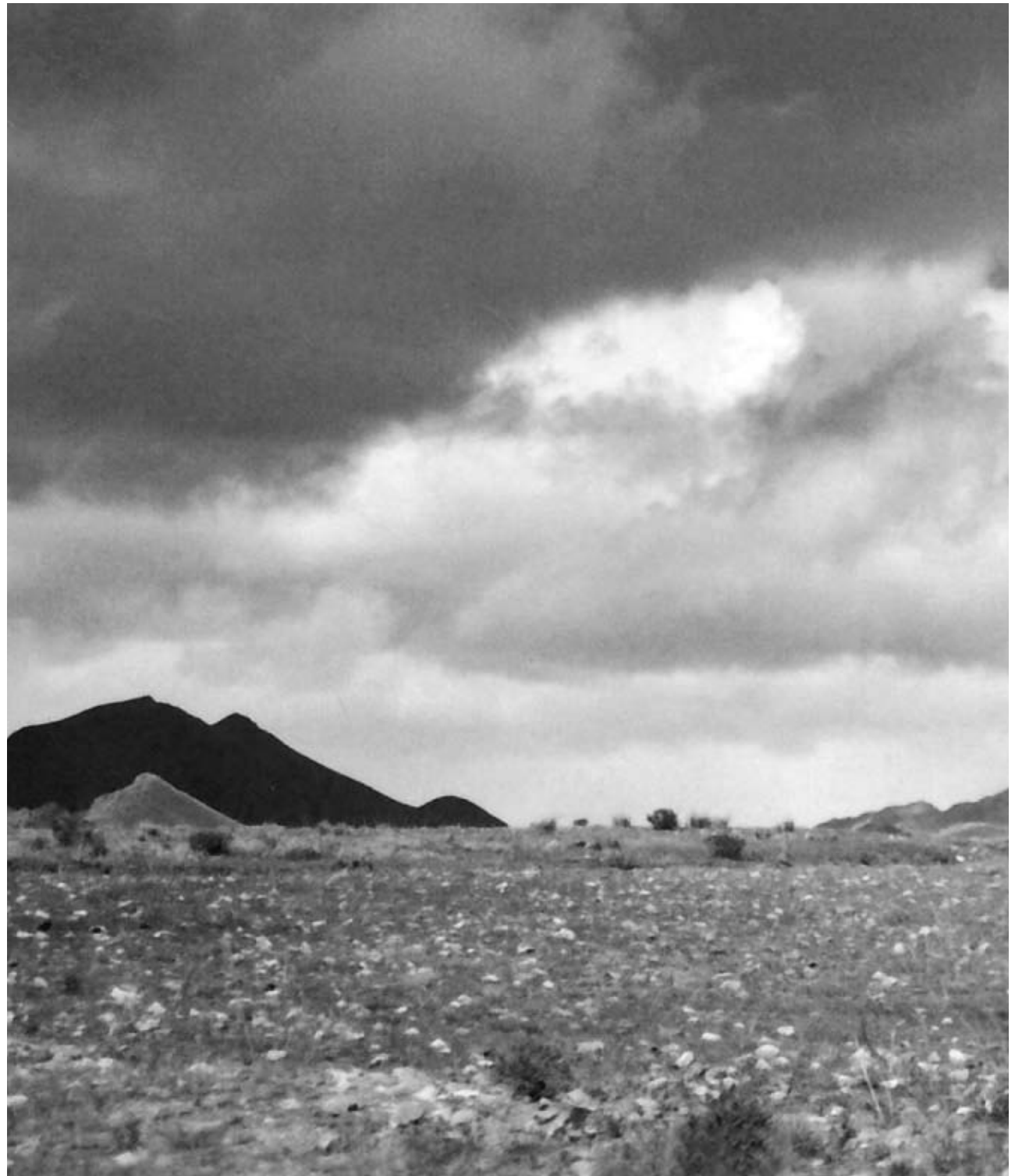


Tibetan woman
Jokhang Temple Square, Tibet, 2000



“We are all feeling completely worn out from our bone-rattling and dusty drive from Lhasa. Suddenly, our driver halts on top of a ridge and points ahead- “Mapham Yum Tso,” the precious lake, a lake created in the mind, the manas, of Brahama – Lake Mansarovar. The sheer beauty of this natural wonder takes my breath away and instantly energises me. This magical lake shimmers, gleams and changes colours and moods constantly.”

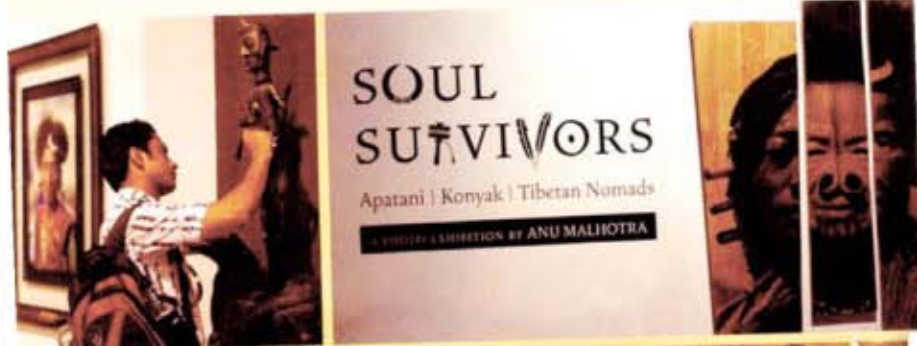
--Anu Malhotra, *The Road to Nirvana* (2002)



Tibetan Nomad, Tibetan Plateau, Tibet



society event



Media Reviews

The exhibition was covered in English, Hindi and regional language media alike. It's visual appeal and attention to detail received the appreciation of several journalists, art critics and academics. Here is a sample of the reviews:

Go Now

It is an exhibition worth going to - not only for Malhotra's photographs but also to soak in extraordinary, faraway cultures often mocked in the twisted beyond belief Indiana Jones movies.

Go Now

and their concept of community farming - that is on the verge of extinction.

The other thing was the idea of bringing the far-away North East closer to mainland India and bridging the knowledge gap. With its videos and a rich collection of installations - handicrafts, artifacts, furniture, various kinds of unusual trinkets - 'Soul Survivors' had it all. Speaking at the inauguration, Malhotra, a noted documentary and travel filmmaker who had photographed the tribes nearly a decade back said: "These people live in harmony with nature. I learnt many wisdoms from them but things have changed since I last interacted with them 10 years back. I know that I am filming the last generation of 'actual' headhunters but these images will last forever." The Apatani tribe had banned the wearing of gigantic nose rings for women and also the tattooing of their faces many years back. So, what remains are only the photographs.

Malhotra clicked the tribes while she was making a series of films called Tribal Wisdom. She later realized that many people were the sole survivors in their communities who were practicing these customs. Malhotra says: "I found Apatani customs very wholesome, healthy and simple. Their sense of commitment to their relationships, bonding with each other and sense of togetherness is awesome. All of them work on the fields of an individual as a group and then move on to the next individual's farm and so on. Where do you get to see such camaraderie these days?"

Regarding the isolation of the North East, Malhotra says: "There is no doubt that these people are isolated but then geography also takes a blame for that. If you have to reach these people, it may take up to three days even from the nearest airport in that state. At the same time, I suppose their culture is so different that one cannot really help it. But as a nation, we have not put much develop-

ment effort into the North East as we should have." Malhotra who proudly wears the motif - the journey is the destination - on her sleeve is the recipient of as many as 16 national and international awards for her documentaries on people, culture and travel.

It is an exhibition worth going to - not only for Malhotra's photographs but also to soak in extraordinary, faraway cultures often mocked in the twisted beyond belief Indiana Jones movies. With 85 photographs and 10 videos, antique pieces, spears, bamboo wind chimes and pots and vases of unique shapes and sizes on display as well as for sale, Anu Malhotra's 'Soul Survivors' is not to be missed.

by RAHUL KUMAR

Soul Survivors
The National Museum, Jangpeth, Delhi
Multi-media Exhibition by Anu Malhotra
Date & time: May 4-12 10am to 5pm
(Closed on Mondays)

FOOT NOTES

A soul-searcher's chronicles

Documentary film-maker Anu Malhotra's travels pave the way for social initiatives for tribes in the North-East

By AKINDITA GHOSE
anindita.g@livesmint.com

On one of her trips to Arunachal Pradesh, documentary film-maker Anu Malhotra came across a man from the Apa Tani tribe carrying a cane flask so ingeniously woven that it could be used to carry liquids. After she had a sip of the rice beer it held, she launched into an hour-long plea to buy the flask off him. He refused. Nobody in his village knew how to make them any more.

This was one of the many instances that led the way for Malhotra's *Soul Survivors* project, which documents the customs and quotidian rhythms of tribal life. The project is an appreciation of alternative wisdoms; of ways of life that stand in contrast to the urban mainstream.

Her multimedia exhibition will showcase around 70 large-format photographs which were

shot while she filmed *The Apa Tani of Arunachal Pradesh* and *The Konyak of Nagaland* in 2000-01, and during her personal travels across Tibet in 2002. Excerpts from her films and installations of handicrafts, such as shawls and baskets, will

accompany the photographs.

The photographs are a corollary to and embedded within Malhotra's wide-ranging documentary work—which stem out of a curiosity rooted in her days as one of India's first travel show hosts for Zee TV's *Namaste India*

in the early 1990s.

Malhotra tries to show the local cultures in as much detail as she can, and succeeds. Her pictures do exoticize their subjects, but this is balanced by an arresting joie de vivre. "I'll leave the bickering and criticism to the foreign correspondents," she says.

Given that the Apa Tani have rarely been documented because of their inaccessibility, Malhotra was surprised by how nonchalant they were about the presence of her four-member crew. What drew her to the particular tribe from among the 26 in Arunachal Pradesh was the story of the legendary beauty of the Apa Tani women. Legend has it that they were so beautiful that the tribe would fall prey to neighbouring tribals, so nose plugs (called *jap-pin-hoollo*) were devised to make them appear unattractive to other tribes. Village councils banned nose plugs in the 1970s; now, only the older women in the village

still wear them. The other sociological aspect—not so visibly represented in her photographs—is the institution called the "*Run-ing*", which is a network of friends spread across villages, who are there to help you with anything from a *mithun* (a bovine species) for a feast to rebuilding your huts. "That is how this wonderfully networked society puts someone back on their feet after an accident or a fire," says Malhotra.

The other big leg of her exhibition is on the Konyaks of Nagaland. Malhotra took to the tribe that is known to be one of the fiercest because it has been less documented than the dominant Ao Nagas.

The Konyaks were headhunters (this too was banned 50 years ago). Academics theorize that the practice stemmed from the belief that the head contained "soul matter" which could be harnessed through its capture. But the primary lesson for her was the high status accorded to village elders. Malhotra's images show Aoling, the Konyak spring festival when men deck up in the traditional headhunter's gear.

All profits from the exhibition will go to two non-profit development organizations that work for the Apa Tani and the Konyak tribes. Apart from the photographs, priced between ₹30,000 and ₹1 lakh, Malhotra has merchandise such as T-shirts, scarves, saris and stationery inspired by motifs from the two tribes on sale. The idea is to brand a sustainable initiative that will work in a twofold manner: help popularize indigenous culture and channel the proceeds back to the community.

Soul Survivors will run from 23-25 April at *The Stainless*, Mathura Road, New Delhi.



Instincts: Konyak boys in Longwa village, Nagaland, during the Aoling festival; and (top) Malhotra (right) with an Apa Tani woman at Rera village in Arunachal Pradesh.

Mail Today

TRIBAL TREAT ONE HOUR

Lessons from the nomads

Through her images, ANU MALHOTRA explores tribal life in Arunachal Pradesh and shares some interesting facts about different communities with ILA SANKRITYAYAN

Did you know the women from the Apatani tribe in Arunachal Pradesh are considered to be the most beautiful among the 26 tribes in the state. And to protect them from the male members of the neighbouring tribes, they wear huge nose plugs to look unattractive. Though the practice was banned by village councils in 1970, the older women still wear them. Or are you aware that there exists a tribal community, Buning, when they need to hunt animals or build huts, everyone in the village shares the workload. Like these, there are loads of other interesting stories from the tribal belt of Tibet, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland that this documentary filmmaker can share with you. Now, Anu Malhotra has compiled her travel experiences in a photo exhibition, *Soul Survivors*.

"The exhibition aims to introduce the world with interesting traditions, rituals and festivals of the tribes," she says. "Each of the 70 photos here depict the local culture in detail and introduce tribal rituals to the world. I organised this exhibition as I realised our future generations have no evidence or informative documents to help them know about the country's ancient traditions. It is important to integrate our age-old traditions and heritage with the modern world," says Malhotra, adding, "Despite being poor, they remain happy. They have not sacrificed their peace and happiness to earn a social status in the society. Their simplicity impressed me the most."

One of her photos explains death rituals in a tribal village in Arunachal Pradesh. It shows a dead woman lying on the ground and is surrounded by all the goods including alcohol and tobacco. "As per the belief, the deceased requires food and other stuff for the final journey. To make it convenient, the villagers bury it all with the dead body. They also sing *penge* or songs of lamentation and recollect the memories spent with that person," explains Malhotra.

The filmmaker also reveals some facts about Konyaks, one of the most famous tribes from Nagaland. The Konyaks were earlier headhunters (it was banned 50 years



ago). "Konyaks got famous after Professor Heimendorf wrote a book, *Naked Nagas*, on them," says Malhotra. The photographs depict tribal men draped in a loincloth and a few pieces of jewellery. "Though the practice was abandoned a decade back, I still find some remnants of traditional customs and attires like heavy brass and bead jewellery, black teeth and tattooed legs. During my visit, I met an elderly woman who was grinding tea leaves with her feet. She hurriedly covered herself with a blouse when she saw me coming. I was told the community doesn't appreciate wearing clothes till now. In earlier days, black teeth were considered a sign of beauty so women used coal to turn them black," shares Malhotra.

Some of Malhotra's images show celebrations during the Konyak spring festival of Aoling when men deck up in traditional headhunter gear. "Konyak spring festival is considered as the beginning of the agricultural year. They still revere the natural cycle of fertility and celebrate it with

animal sacrifice, feasting and dance. I went to meet a family in the village where the roasting of a pig and the coming of me with black tea and banana animal, hung on a bamboo pole, was right before us and then cut into pig fat distribution among family and Aoling keeps alive the spirit of shai togetherness," explains Malhotra.

The last section of the exhibition cases Malhotra's journey to Tibet, landscapes, installations and nomads are a highlight here. "In husband and I went for a three-to Tibet with 11 others. A trip to Kailash had been our desire for I was delighted to finally visit. My photographs celebrate the rich richness of this land and there was a lot to learn from the nomads who travel freely and with just 'a bag of necessities', lessons and wisdom I acquired includes Malhotra.

"I did travel shows in the 90s, and then when I revisited the places I had visited while working on the show, I realised that many age-old traditions were being wiped out. This exhibition is a collection of pictures that I had clicked a decade ago and is a reminder of what consumerism has stolen from us," says Malhotra.

Her images depict the cul-

Archiving the cultures and traditions of North East

SHWETA SHARMA

The rich indigenous culture of North East India, originally known for being a land of ethnic diversity, is losing its charm while being caught in the sway of modernisation. Documentary filmmaker Anu Malhotra has tried to capture the traditions and sights of the India that was in her exhibition, *Soul Survivors*. In the exhibition, Malhotra takes you on a journey through the North East with images that were taken while filming her documentaries on the Apatanis of Arunachal Pradesh, the Konyaks of Nagaland and her journey in Tibet. Her images provide a rare peek into the lives of the locals there.



The Queen of Chui Village: Konyak women and their grand daughters

tures of the Tibetan nomads, the Apatani children of Arunachal, the head hunters of Nagaland and other communities in North East India in their traditional attire that according to Malhotra has now been swapped with jeans and other modern day dressing.

"The pictures have an archival value; they will remind us of our heritage in the future. They are a record of many things that are no more," Malhotra told *Guardian* 20 referring to the Konyak men

who earlier would tattoo their faces and the traditional Apatani women who used to wear large nose-plugs.

With 75 prints ranging from Rs 30,000 to Rs 1 lakh, and installations in the form of home-grown merchandise, masks and wall-hangings, all profits from the exhibition will be donated to an NGO working with children, women and youth in the North East.

"I plan to popularise their handicrafts and help them earn a livelihood. This is my

little way of keeping their culture alive," Malhotra says.

A documentarian by profession, Malhotra feels that though moving images are stronger, art forms are more resilient, and plans to convert a few of the images into pop art. "Pop art is especially for the youth of today who are clueless about the culture of their country. I want to make them aware of the real India," she concludes.

The exhibition is on till April 25th at The Stainless.

The Pioneer

It is important to integrate our age old traditions and heritage with the modern world.

My photographs celebrate the unmistakable richness of this land and its people.

Sunday Guardian

HOT LIST *Art and Design*



From left: Artefacts and photos at the *Soul Survivors* exhibition; (below) Screen-printed merchandise



Anu Malhotra

RETURN TO THE ROOTS

Documentary filmmaker Anu Malhotra is bringing into focus the crafts of the NORTH-EASTERN tribes with her range of APPAREL and DÉCOR products

When television producer and award-winning documentary filmmaker Anu Malhotra made her first set of documentaries more than a decade ago on the tribals of north-east India, one thing struck her: their innate sense of happiness that made one question one's own life values. So she began to capture life among the Apatani, the Konyak, and the Tibetan nomads, this time as vibrant, aesthetic, still photographs. This was 2000. Years later, a newspaper editor who noticed her photos (she was writing a column at the time), suggested she do an exhibition. *Soul Survivors* was born.

This exhibition of landscapes, portraits, and images of life among these north-east tribes that recently concluded at the National

Museum, New Delhi, was no regular photo exhibit. Malhotra, who calls herself a "communications expert" went a step ahead and made it experiential, with videos and installations—huge earrings, antique Naga beds, grain pounders, woven baskets from Arunachal Pradesh, wall hangings, masks, artefacts, jewellery, and shawls.

And now, people can take something from *Soul Survivors*, while giving back as well. To reach out to a younger audience and make them aware of the north-eastern tribes' beauty and values, Malhotra is creating products—from digitally printed stoles, saris, shirts, and cushion covers, to frames, tribal-chic jewellery, mugs, stationery, and even a soon-to-be-launched *Soul Survivors* website. "*Soul Survivors* will be a social network with a value

system, where people can opt to be part of a community that can help any time."

As for the merchandising, it has two aspects: the first is traditional, like statues, baskets, shawls, and furniture. "You can place an order for a chair from Nagaland, so it will be made over there. The wooden statues I have are all antiques, and once there is a demand for them, you can place orders. So you encourage regional arts and crafts," says Malhotra. The second type of products are contemporary. "I converted some of the images to pop art, and did a range of designs that are funky. So that if someone is wearing a headhunter T-shirt or necklace, it's a conversation-starter," she says of tribal 'headhunter' motifs one saw at the exhibition. The profits all go to a charity in the north-east that works with the visually- and hearing-impaired.

Currently retailing out of Delhi's National Museum shop, Malhotra is also in talks with the city's popular homestore Ishatvam to retail the furniture and furnishings line, and CMYK for the paper products (recycled and eco-friendly). She is also in discussions with designers to bring out a clothing line, handbags, travel bags, and quilts.

As for the exhibition, you may just catch *Soul Survivors* at the V&A in London, via Mumbai, or even New York. The north-east has never been this fashionable. ■

By Priya Kumari Rana

COURTESY ANU MALHOTRA

SHOWCASING THE SOUL SURVIVORS

Documentary filmmaker Anu Malhotra is holding her first solo photo exhibition entitled *Soul Survivors* from April 23 to 25 at the Stainless Steel Gallery, New Delhi. The multimedia exhibition will showcase about 75 large-size photographs which Malhotra had shot while filming her documentaries, *The Apatani of Arunachal Pradesh* and *The Konyak of Nagaland* in 2000-01, and during her journey in Tibet in 2002.



Of soul, survival and style



PHOTO: PRADEEP MEY

HOLD ON TIGHT: Sarika Gupta with Anu Malhotra



HAR CHC: Kavita Bharti

Delhi's best-kept secret is the tiny, no-frills gallery at the Stainless Steel Gallery in the Okhla area. The exhibition was inaugurated by General JJ Singh, the governor of Arunachal Pradesh, who was accompanied by the director of the film *The Apatani*, Anu Malhotra. Also in attendance was the minister of water resources and minority affairs, Salman Khursid.



WHITE'S MY COLOUR: Salman Khursid



I LIKE THAT SO MUCH! Anu Malhotra with Priya Jain



HELLO, THERE: (L-R) JJ Singh and Annu Singh with Rita Kumar



POSING PRETTY: Ravi Jethva with Annu Singh

The Sunday Standard

The Hindustan Times

wideangle



SOUP FOR THE SOUL

Having already redefined the landscape of documentary cinema with her path-breaking and thought-provoking films, producer-director Anu Malhotra turns photographic. True to her belief that 'the journey is the destination', her portraits pay tribute to India's infinite diversity, unveiling a country to itself and the world.



THE APATANI OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH: The Apatani people, who are known for their unique culture and traditions, are the focus of the film *The Apatani*. The film captures the daily life and traditions of the Apatani people in Arunachal Pradesh.

by ANURAG K. SINGH

wideangle



NOMADS OF TIBET: Somewhere in the Tibetan plateau, where the air is light enough to make you giddy, a people lives - quiet, beautiful, nomadic. Beyond their nomadic life, there is a rich tapestry of traditions, customs and of course, a deep belief in their religion. Anu Malhotra's photographs capture the essence of their life and their connection with nature.

Anu Malhotra's photographs will be displayed in her first solo exhibition, titled *Soul Survivors*, at the Stainless Steel Gallery in New Delhi, from April 23 to April 26, 2011.

APRIL 2011 EXOTICA 11

Exotica



Lest We Forget the Northeast

IN one photograph, young boys from Nagaland wear headdresses made of horns and feathers, a proud symbol of their tribe, in another, Apatani women of Arunachal Pradesh flaunt their large nose plugs and tattoos, in yet another, Tibetan nomads are shot against a vast mountain-scape. These photographs, by documentary filmmaker Anu Malhotra are a part of her ongoing solo exhibition, 'Soul Survivors'. Currently being held at the Stainless Gallery, the exhibition will shift to the National Museum in May.

Of course, each picture also tells a story. "The Apatani women were so beautiful that they would fall prey to neighbouring tribals and, therefore, nose plugs called *yappin hooloo* were devised to disfigure them," says Malhotra, whose documentaries like *The Apatani of Arunachal Pradesh* and *The Konyak of Nagaland* have dealt with the Northeast.

Apart from 70 photographs on display, there are also slickly produced postcards, installations and merchandise like saris, pants, T-shirts and scarves that carry prints of the images shot by Malhotra.

While the 72x15 inch prints in Malhotra's show, are technically superior and aesthetically pleasing, they do have a feel of the exotic about them. For most Indians, the Northeast India is an unknown region and images from there have a touristic appeal. All the more reason why Malhotra, who has travelled widely in the Northeast, should have displayed some everyday images of tribal life rather than ceremonial postcards.

EFS



A headhunter from the Konyak tribe of Nagaland (above); Tibetan nomads

Gallery Time & Space

Name: Soul Survivors by Anu Malhotra
Venue: Stainless Steel Gallery, Mathura Road, New Delhi
Dates: April 23 to April 26

Documentary filmmaker Anu Malhotra presented her solo exhibition of 85 photographs and ten videos in Delhi recently. Malhotra, who has won over 16 national and international awards, showcased a part of her encompassing documentary work on traditions. While her films on indigenous cultures presents the larger cultural life of peoples, the still images capture individual manifestation of these cultures in more intimate and spontaneous moments.



Femina

PHOTOGRAPHY

In Light of Mexico, Instituto Cervantes, 48, Hanuman Road, CP, on till June 30, 11 am-7 pm

A showcase of 50 short-listed photos by Manuel Álvarez Bravo, a world renowned Mexican photographer who produced masterpieces in the 20th century. The show also has 32 poems by Octavio Paz, Noble laureate and former Mexican ambassador to India. The exhibition is titled, 'In Light of Mexico' after the much acclaimed book by Octavio Paz titled *In Light of India*. Also see a set of 25 freshly rediscovered images of Octavio Paz in India, from private and public archives.



Soul Survivors

Soul Survivors, Stainless Steel Gallery, Mathura Road, Apr 23-26, 11 am-7 pm

For documentary filmmaker Anu Malhotra, films have always been her first love. But this time she is showcasing her collection of photographs based on the Apatanis of Arunachal Pradesh, the Konyaks of Nagaland and nomads of Tibet. See her breathtaking landscapes and the vast cultural diversity of India in her photographs as well as on celluloid. Her films on indigenous cultures showcase the cultural life of people in a large context, while her photographs capture individual manifestation of these cultures in intimate and spontaneous moments.

art mart

From the harsh truths of power to the tender notions of travel, to striking imagery and artfully intimidating hounds... art exhibitions this summer get a fresh coat of quirkiness.

Diminishing boundaries



Mixed emotions
After 100 years of the Indian independence movement, the artist Anu Malhotra addresses the contemporary Indian reality through her photographs and large-scale installations. The show, 'Soul Survivors', is a collection of 85 photographs and ten videos, capturing the lives of indigenous communities in India. The exhibition is held at the Stainless Steel Gallery, Mathura Road, New Delhi, from April 23 to April 26, 2015.



Powerplay
Curated by contemporary artist Anu Malhotra, this show explores the power dynamics in Indian society. The exhibition is held at the Stainless Steel Gallery, Mathura Road, New Delhi, from April 23 to April 26, 2015.

Subtle landmarks
The artist Anu Malhotra presents a collection of photographs and videos, capturing the lives of indigenous communities in India. The exhibition is held at the Stainless Steel Gallery, Mathura Road, New Delhi, from April 23 to April 26, 2015.



Phantom and Migration
The artist Anu Malhotra presents a collection of photographs and videos, capturing the lives of indigenous communities in India. The exhibition is held at the Stainless Steel Gallery, Mathura Road, New Delhi, from April 23 to April 26, 2015.



When the journey is the destination
The artist Anu Malhotra presents a collection of photographs and videos, capturing the lives of indigenous communities in India. The exhibition is held at the Stainless Steel Gallery, Mathura Road, New Delhi, from April 23 to April 26, 2015.

28
THURSDAY

dance
6.30 pm
FESTIVAL, CLASSICAL AND CONTEMPORARY MUSIC.
Presented by Eladana.
SHEKHAR (1910) with Nisha Singh, Meera Mehta, Ph. 20274802

music
7 pm
HINDUSTANI MUSIC FESTIVAL BY BANARSI BANARASHIYAS.
The performance is a blend of Hindustani and Western music.
HABITAT WORLD India Habitat Centre, Delhi Road, Ph. 40021111

lecture
6.30 pm
NORTH AND SOUTH: KALYAN AND VIKRAM, MARGARITA IN INDIA.
A series of eight interdisciplinary lectures.
HABITAT WORLD India Habitat Centre, Delhi Road, Ph. 40021111

SOUL SURVIVORS
This is an exhibition of photographs and videos by documentary filmmaker Anu Malhotra. They were taken while she was filming her documentaries on the Apurva and Kumbha of Kashmir, Punjab and Nagaland and her journey in Tibet, and are planned as a tribute to her past encounters with the subjects. While her films on indigenous cultures showcase the larger cultural life of people, her photographs capture individual, everyday lives of those cultures in more intimate, intimate and sometimes humorous ways. She has written 16 books of art and international awards and put up 400+ photographs in a museum production house in 2004.

THE SCHWITZ Art Concept
Salon, 3.8.2.100 Delhi Road
Habitat Centre, Delhi Road
Ph. 40021111 April 21-24

EXHIBITION
"Soul Survivors" photography and video exhibition by acclaimed documentary filmmaker Anu Malhotra at Stainless Art Gallery, 1-2, Mira Corporate Suite, Mathura Road, Ishwar Nagar. The works are on display till April 25. Anu Malhotra has won over 16 National and International awards and her first love has always been documentary films. Her films are in fact seminal works showcasing remote cultures.

शेष होती परंपराओं के छाया चित्र

जनपथ रोड स्थित राष्ट्रीय संग्रहालय में लगी अनु मल्होत्रा की छाया प्रदर्शनी सोल सरवाइवर्स में भारत की उन परंपराओं को बखूबी दिखाया है जो लगभग खत्म होने की कगार पर हैं।

किया गया है। इनमें मुख्यतः द अण्डमान और अण्डमान प्रदेश, द कोनकाक और नागालैंड, रोमन और हिमालय आदि शामिल हैं। कलाकार ने अपनी इस प्रदर्शनी के माध्यम से लोगों के सामने उस संस्कृति को लाने का प्रयास किया है जो कि लगभग खत्म होने की कगार पर है। साथ ही उन्होंने अपनी डॉक्यूमेंट्री और फोटो के जरिए विविधता के अद्वितीयता का जीवन लोगों के सामने लाने की कोशिश की है। आज के अर्थव्यवस्था में जो किस प्रकार से अपना जीवन व्यपन कर रहे हैं और अभी भी किस तरह से जो अपनी लोक-संस्कृति को जीवित रखे हुए हैं। प्रदर्शनी को देखने आए निमित्त आर्य ने बताया कि अधिकांश लोग भारत की व्यापक संस्कृति की वजह से सभी राज्यों की संस्कृति, परंपरा और यहां के जीवन को जान नहीं पाते। पर इन डॉक्यूमेंट्री और फोटो को देखने से स्पष्ट पता चलेगा कि यहां का जीवन कितना कठिन और चुनौतियों से भरा है। और किस प्रकार से यहां के लोग चुनौतियों से भरा जीवन जीते हुए भी कितने खुश हैं और अपनी लोक-संस्कृति को जीवित रखे हुए हैं।

प्रदर्शनी के द्वारा अनु ने प्रदर्शनी में आए दर्शकों को विविधता, नागालैंड और अण्डमान प्रदेश के जीवन से रुचक कराया है। इनके द्वारा ली गई सभी तस्वीरें बहुत जीवंत और भावनाओं से पूर्ण लगती हैं। प्रदर्शनी में लोगों के खींचने के कुछ समान भी रखे गए हैं जिसका सौ प्रतिशत साथ उत्तर-पूर्व और विविधता की एक निर-संशय संस्था को जाए जो उत्तर-पूर्व भारत के विकास के लिए कार्य कर रही है।

पंकज सेंसर

PHOTOGRAPHY

Kabul: Through the Eyes of Afghan Youth, IIC, on till May 9, 11 am-7 pm
An exhibition of photographs taken by 32 young women and men who took to the streets of Kabul, Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif and Jalalabad in the winter and spring of 2010 to document the lives of Afghans, their hardships and joys.

Moody Blues, The Stainless Gallery, Mira Corporate Suites, 1&2, Old Ishwar Nagar, Okla Crossing, Mathura Road, May 11, 5 pm onwards
Renowned homopath Mukesh Batra and his son Akshay Batra capture the spectacular beauty of the Maldives in a collaborative photographic exhibition. All proceeds will be donated to People For Animals.

Simply I Cities, CMYK Bookstore, 15-16, Meharchand Market, Lodhi Road, on till May 17, 11 am-7 pm
Documentary filmmaker Ajay Govind exhibits a collection of photographs that add a new meaning to life. The pictures cover a wide range of cities across India — Aligarh (UP), Kupwara (J&K),

Netlampathy (Kerala), Shukla Ganj (UP), Delhi, Kolkata, Bangalore and more.
Nako — Living Cultural Heritage in the Western Himalayas, IIC, May 11-17, 11 am-7 pm
An exhibition of photographs by Stefan Oláh, an Austrian, who explores the Nako Gumpa, located high up in the western Himalayas in the Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh. Oláh has captured the ruggedness of the remote mountain area that continues to hold on to the cultural heritage of Tibetan Buddhism.

Soul Survivors, The National Museum, Janpath, on till May 17, 11 am-7 pm
Documentary filmmaker Anu Malhotra captures breathtaking landscapes and the vast cultural diversity of India in her photographs and video exhibition. The Apurva tribes of Arunachal Pradesh fascinate her as do the Konyaks of Nagaland and the nomads of Tibet. Her images showcase the inner beauty of the people who are deeply connected with their social and natural environments. Take a look at their boundless spiritual energy and glorious landscapes in her photographs.

CREDITS

SOUL SURVIVORS EXHIBITION

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