

## Naga Tribal Adornment: Signatures of Status and Self

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Naga traditional adornment exhibits a variety, profusion and complexity of beads and natural elements – rarely found in tribal Asian, or even African societies – that combine to create a vibrant, distinctive aesthetic. For time immemorial, among the many distinct Naga Tribes, ornaments were not merely accessories, but powerful symbols that defined both the self individually and within the tribe, connoted status and signified martial exploits. Social change brought to this remote, rugged, northeast corner of India by British and then Indian rule, Christian missionaries, and Western education, gradually eroded their perceived relevance. As modern Nagas seek a renewed sense of who they are, they are embracing the past to shape the future. *Naga Tribal Adornment* complements an exhibition of the same name at The Bead Museum of Washington D.C., the first public showing of material drawn from the Harry L. and Tiala Marsosang Neufeld Collection, perhaps the largest private holding of traditional Naga art and artifacts.

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

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