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## नेपाली लोकबाजा सङ्ग्रहालयको द्वैमासिक प्रकाशन

प्रधान सम्पादक

रामप्रसाद कँडेल

सम्पादक

नन्दा शर्मा

सल्लाहकार

कुवेर व. राउत क्षेत्री

मधुसूदन गिरी

चक्रपाणि शर्मा

चक्र खड्का

प्रेमदेव गिरी

आवरण/कम्प्युटर सेटिङ

विजय परियार

कार्यालय

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काठमाण्डौ

पो. ब. न. ४८२९

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# नेपाली लोकबाजा

मानव सभ्यताको सुरूदेखि अहिलेसम्म विकसित हुँदै आएका नेपाली मौलिक सबै जात-जाति र जनजाति, भाषाभाषीहरूमा जन्मनु पूर्वदेखि मृत्यु पर्यन्त आयोजना गरिने विभिन्न रीति-थिति र साँस्कृतिक चाड पर्वहरूमा बजाइने आ-आफ्ना जातीय इतिहास बोकेका, सबै जनको रोम प्रतिरोममा व्याप्त, दुःखसुखका साथीनै नेपाली लोक जीवनको मूल प्रवाह हो । अनेकौं ताल, बोल र स्वरहरू निकालेर मौलिक सीप सम्पदाका धनी पुर्खाहरूले आफ्नो समुदाय र आसपासका प्राकृतिक, खनिज पदार्थहरूबाट आफ्नै लोक प्रविधिद्वारा सृजित, नेपाली चैतन्य आत्मा झल्कने पुस्तौं पुस्तादेखि सजिलै सिक्दै सिकाउँदै आएका सुमधुर सङ्गीत निस्कने विविध आकार प्रकारका साधनहरू नै नेपाली लोकबाजा हुन् ।

— रामप्रसाद कंडेल

## 'Sati Ghatu' and 'Ghantu Deuta'

The dance takes place in many parts of Nepal and is mainly perpetuated by Gurung, Magar, Dura, Kusunda, Kumal and Tamang ethnic groups. The dancers perform in a trance induced by a mantra.

The terms '*Sati Ghatu*' and '*Ghantu Deuta*' are often used interchangeably but really '*Sati Ghatu*' refers to the whole performance including the story of Queen Amberwati's act of sati, the dance illustrating the story and the music whereas '*Ghantu Deuta*' refers to the spirits of the dead Queen and King. When the *Ghatu Guru* repeats the mantra, at the beginning of the performance, he is calling on these spirits to enter the girl's bodies. The girls then close their eyes and rise up in a trance to dance. At the end of the

dance the Guru must repeat a different mantra and the melody must be played in reverse to release the girls from the trance and at that time they get very emotional and upset and are crying. Ram says there are normally several girls taking part and always an odd number usually up to nine and all would be virgins and prepubescent. All but one, would take the Queens part and the other would take the Kings part. This reflects the custom of the time, when a King would have several Queens and a man would have several wives. It is still not uncommon in Nepal for a man to have more than one wife.

The museum has unedited footage of genuine *Sati Ghatu*, performed by Gurung girls, in its archive. Up to 20 hrs of recordings were made, about 8/9 years ago, over a period of seven days

in Chitawan District on the banks of the Narayani river. Each day the *Ghatuli* (girls taking part) will go into trance as the *Ghatu Guru* repeats the sacred *mantra* and then be brought out of trance at the end of the days performance. The *Ghatuli* get very upset each time they come out of trance but the last day is the most tragic for them; they are almost inconsolable, and such is the power of the trance that they don't want the spirits to leave and always try to resist the *Ghatu Guru's* efforts to persuade the *Ghatu Deuta* to leave the girl's bodies and return to its usual place.

**Bake Films C52 \_FO\_Nepal\_MMN.**

**Films to document.**

**Film documentation RPK = Ram Prasad**

## Kadel

**RPK has not attempted to document Indian footage as he does not feel qualified to do so.**

**The Filming location** of almost all Arnold A. Bake's 1931 films with the notable exception of Indra Jaatra, filmed in Kathmandu's Durbar Square, was the garden of the Royal Kathmandu Guest House, Tripureshwor, Kathmandu, Nepal, where Bake was lodged. It is now the Kanti Ishwori Primary School next to the newer building of the Nepal Eye Hospital. The garden and its boundary wall, recognised in Bake's films, still exist. If the boundary wall is not visible in the film (as with some of the Charya dances) we cannot be absolutely certain that the location is Tripureshwor.

**Nepali names of musical instruments** are given in italics; for descriptions see Musical Instruments of Nepal, by Ram Prasad Kadel, Published by Nepali Folk Musical Instrument Museum, 2007.

**Bake's comments** are taken from

The Nepalese Field-Work of Dr Arnold A. Bake: A Guide to the sound recordings. M.Mus diss., University of London, 1985. Unpubl. by Carol Tingey.

**Culturally sensitive films** are highlighted.

**Bala Chaturdasi,**

A communal annual festival in Mangsir (Nov/Dec) in remembrance of deceased parents. Sons and some daughters of each family will attend for 3 years after a parent's death. At evening time the rituals will start with the lighting of a Mahadipa (large oil lamp) for the Pitri (soul of the



deceased father or mother) which must stay alight all night with hymn singing; no one sleeps. Next morning the people, taking part will have a ritual bath in holy Bagmati River and afterwards offer one hundred varieties of seeds and grains for the ancestors on Kailash hill next to Pashputinath and in Pashputinath temple (Shiva's places). This offering symbolises the provision of food for ancestors in the next life. This festival stil continues.

### **Charya dance.**

There are many, many Gods, Goddessess and deities and each one has a different Charya dance and Charya songs in praise of him/her to please him/her with particular mudra (sacred and secret hand gestures), dance steps and asana (including sacred and secret body postures). Each Bajracharya (Vajriani Buddhist Preist) may

also add his own variations to the dance and songs in order to please the God. Some Gods/deities such as Manjushree will have several Charya dances written by different Vajrayani Poets, Siddhas or Maha Siddhas (great philosophers) mainly from 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Century. The dancer is hoping that the God will grant him nirvana if he is pleased by the Charya dance. Some Charya are performed by a single dancer/singer and some by a male and female (both would have received dikshya (teaching from a Guru or enlightened spiritual master)) in sexual union. Most Charya are (still) performed in secret inside the Vajrayani monastery. Without the audio track we can't recognise to which God/Goddess a particular Charya dance is dedicated but if we were familiar with all the Mudra we would be able to recognise the dance without hearing the songs.

## **Indra Jaatra, Kathmandu, Durbar Square.**

Kathmandu's major festival held over 8 days in August or September according to the Lunar Calendar; the Saita (most auspicious starting time) is discerned by a priest. Indra is King of all Gods in heaven and people also pray to him for rain. The legend recounts that Indra's mother needed Parijat flowers for a special worship and there were none in heaven so Indra came to Kathmandu to collect some. Parijat flowers are deliciously perfumed, considered sacred and should never be picked from the tree but only collected from the ground after they have fallen. We also should never take them without the owner's permission. When Indra was collecting flowers the farmer saw him, but didn't know who he was, and so captured him as a thief. He was tied with his arms outstretched to a pole and raised on a high

platform outside Kastamandap Temple, Durbar Square, Kathmandu so that everyone could see his shame. After 8 days Indra's mother came to plead for her son and he was set free. Every year Indra's punishment is reenacted and a golden image of Indra is tied to pole raised on a platform in front of Kastamandap for the 8 days of the festival.

All Kings are regarded as representatives of Indra and the real historical story from which the legend arose may relate to a King (an invader?) in the Lichhavi period who was not honest and not taking proper care of his people so was captured and ridiculed by being raised on a platform in front of Kastamandap. His mother then came and begged for his release and they ran to Indra Daha, Naikap, in the west part of the Kathmandu valley, before being chased out of the Valley with shouting and rice straw

torches. This episode is also remembered each year just after Indra Jaatra at Indra Daha.

The first day of the festival, called Lingo Thadaune, is when the Lingo (pole representing strength and success in war) is erected. The pole is cut from a single pine tree 32 hands (hand is measured from elbow to finger tip) long, cut in a forest near Bhaktapur. It is pulled to Kathmandu by rope and the journey takes several days. The Gurjus Pultan (special traditional musical regiment, pipe and drum band, with black and white uniform) wait for the pole in Bota Hiti and lead the procession to Kathmandu, Durbar Square. The Gurjus Pultan regiment has existed since the Saha period but the tradition of a musical regiment extends back at least to the Lichhavi period. Different castes of Newar ethnic group have different roles at Indra

Jaatra, eg. cutting the tree, erecting pole etc.

On the third day the **Kumari festival** begins. Kumari's (living goddess) golden chariot is prepared and she is lifted into it for the procession which takes 3 days mainly around the south of the city. Her chariot is followed by the wooden chariots of Bairab and Ganesha (living gods). In front of the Kumari's chariot the Mahakali dance and Laakhe dance is performed and many other main dances of many ethnic groups. The King (now deposed), Prime minister and all important heads of state come to see the Kumari's chariot, to pay homage to her and to receive her blessing. Crowds of ordinary people also come from far and wide for an opportunity to see the Kumari's chariot, to make offerings to her and to get her blessing and also to see the King. These are the only days of the year when anyone

can see the Kumari in her chariot and the only day that ordinary people could see the King.

At end of the festival the Lingo (pole) is lowered in the middle of the night and taken to Teku, Kathmandu and thrown into the river at the confluence of Bagmati and Bishumati rivers.

### **Laakhe dance.**

The Laakhe is a great protector not a daemon and his dance is used for exorcizing black spirits. He is said to represent calm Bhairav and protects children, in particular, from evils and daemons. When an evil spirit sees the dance and/or hears the music it will be afraid and must leave. There are still thousands and thousands of Laakhes in Nepal; every village and every Tol of cities

and towns would have their own Laakhe with his own variation of the dance and he would have the name of his village or Tol attached to him e.g. Majipat Laakhe (Majipat is a Tol in the south of Kathmandu city) but there are now many less Laakhes than there used to be in Kathmandu. Laakhes go into a trance while they dance; we can recognize the Laakhe's lineage and place of origin by the style and colour (7 different colours) of his mask and by his costume. The shatkona, on his chest, the symbol of Shiva and Shakti represents the unity of one God neither male or female and shows that he has good power not evil. He wears a wig made of sacred yaks tails; black and white and sometimes dyed different colours. The hair of the Laakhe's wig is often made to stand on end so that he appears more frightening to evil spirits. The Laakhe always wears *Laakhe Peti*, *Paairaa* and/or *Chaanp* and *Haate Chaanp*.



## Lord Krisna's Charitra

A play, with dances illustrating scenes of Lord Krisna's life.

**Mahakali dance** (Nepali = Mahakali Naatch, Newari = Mahakali Pyakhan).

Mahakali means Great Kali; she has a very strong protective power for human beings and in this dance she is accompanied by 2 other Goddesses and several ganas (followers or disciples). Mahakali slays a daemon with a sword which she holds in her right hand and drinks the daemon's blood from a Kapal (skull) in her left hand and also shares it with all ganas; she never drinks human blood. Before and after this dance the dancer's Guru and the priest must carry out very perfect rituals and puja (worship) because if the God is not happy something terrible may happen and the

dance cannot be completed. The ganas always appear before Mahakali appears and make sure that the environment is safe for her and they also dance to entertain Goddess Mahakali. The lion and lioness are Mahakali's mounts and are also ganas as well as the Khayaks (skeletons) and Bhuts or Yakshyas (hairy costume). The dance originates from Bhaktapur and Thimi and is still performed there each year but is also performed annually in front of the Kumari's (living Goddess) chariot at Indra Jaatra in Durbar Square, Kathmandu. All dancers are men or boys to avoid the possibility of offending the God with menstrual blood. Goddesses have a shatkona symbol (six pointed star formed from two interlocking triangles) on their breast.

**Mahakali stick dance** (Nepali = Lauro Naatch), (Newari = Maka Kathi Pyakhan)  
This monkey masked stick dance is part of the Mahakali dance and is also performed annually in front of the Kumari's (living Goddess) chariot at Indra Jaatra in Durbar Square, Kathmandu.. The *Maka Kathi* is a musical instrument for keeping the rhythm of the dance. Dancers are traditionally boys 6 – 12 years old and wear feta (turban).

### **Maruni Dance.**

The dance originates from the mid-hill area and is normally danced in winter, after Dasain festival (Sept/Oct) and up to Phalgun (Mar/Apr). People believe that if they sponsor this dance to be performed in their courtyard then it will bring prosperity to the household by protecting their family and animals from disease and bringing good rain. This dance is still performed but

less frequently than in the past. Maruni means male dancer dressed as a woman. The dancers carry out a complex ritual and puja to various guardian deities as they don each item of dress and ornamentation and there is also an important ritual before taking up the *Maadal*. Some rhythms (Thakan) of the *Maadal* induce trance in the dancers and the reverse rhythm will bring them out of the trance. The Maruni may represent the Goddess Saraswati who is Goddess of music and learning.

### **Matayaa festival, Patan, Durbar Square.**

This Buddhist festival takes place on the day before Gai Jaatra. People take a circumambulatory route visiting many stupas and small temples and shrines lighting butter lamps and making offerings, in each, in remembrance of their ancestors. It is an ancient festival dating back to the

Lichhavi period and traditionally the *Neku* (wild buffalo horn) is the main instrument played along with others.

**Rato Machindranath's Festival,** Patan (Lalitpur) and Bungamati.

Rato Machindranath is another God to whom people pray for rain. In the Lichhavi period there was a time when the rains failed and this God was brought from the Kamaru Kamaakshya temple, Asam, India. The legend tells that when Gorakhnath first came to the Kathmandu Valley he felt that the king and people didn't respect him enough so Gorakhnath captured 8 Naga (serpent gods) and sat on them; when the Nagas are not free there can be no rain. The royal priests tried to appease Gorakhnath but to no avail so as a solution they sent for Rato Machindranath who was Gorakhnath's Guru. They realized that Gorakhnath would

have to stand to greet his Guru and the Nagas would then be freed. When Rato Machindranath arrived in Kathmandu the rains came and this festival has been held every year since. Rato Machindranath resides in Patan in the summer months and his winter residence is the main temple in Bungamati, Lalitpur, Kathmandu Valley. He is taken in procession twice annually from one place to the other in a small charriot carried on shoulders. The procession is always led by a Dungya (tall bamboo pole with sacred yak's tails and other auspicious items that only appears at important festivals and which is held vertically and with great strength and skill is constantly moved around the body of the carrier. The Dungya is always accompanied by a *Maa Dhime*) and the Gurjus Pultan (a special traditional music regiment) pipe and drum band. The Gurjus Pultan regiment has existed since the Saha period but the

tradition of a musical regiment goes back at least to the Lichhavi period. Every twelve years Rato Machindranath is taken in his large wheeled chariot instead of the small carried chariot and is accompanied by his guru Minnath in a slightly smaller wheeled chariot.

## **Sati Ghatu**

A dance in remembrance of Queen Ambawati and King Pashramu; Queen Ambawati committed Sati (cremated herself on her King's funeral pyre). This dance which takes place over several days (5-7) begins on the Chandi Purnima (full moon) of the month of Baisak (May approx). It takes place in many parts of Nepal and is mainly perpetuated by Gurung, Magar, Dura, Kusunda, Kumal and Tamang ethnic groups. The dancers perform in a trance. There are 3 different

varieties of Ghatu, Sati Ghatu, Kusunda Ghatu (variation with less ritual performed by the Kusunda ethnic group) and Baramase Ghatu (based on the same story but without ritual and only for entertainment).

**Seto (white) Machindranath's Festival,**  
Kathmandu.

This festival is believed to bring adequate rain for farming. Seto Machindranath resides in Jana Bahal, Kel Tol, Kathmandu and once a year is taken in procession in his small chariot, supported by bamboo poles and carried on shoulders, to Jamal. In Jamal the God is transferred to his large chariot, which is then pulled by thick ropes to Lagan Square, Lagan Tol, Kathmandu via Asan Chowk where it remains at least one day. The chariot stays in Lagan for several days after which the God is transferred back to



his smaller chariot and taken back to Jana Bahal. The chariot is several stories high and buildings should not be taller than the chariot (4 floors maximum called chhili, chotan, matan and buiga) as the God may be displeased. The procession is always led by a Dungya.

### **Tamang Budhist's Masked Devi (Goddess) dance.**

We believe that Arnold Bake was mistaken in identifying these dancers and musicians as Tibetan. As far as we are aware there was no Tibetan colony at Boudenath until after 1960 but the dress and culture of the mountain area of Sindhupalchoke, (near the Tibetan boarder) where these Tamang dancers probably originated, is very similar. The dancers and musicians wear warm heavy Tamang Nepali dress typical of this mountainous area and all belong to the

Bouddha Ghyang Guthie, Kathmandu, under the Chiniya Lama (a Tamang Nepali appointed by the Nepal government to be responsible for relations and correspondence with China) who translated all Chinese correspondence. All dancers are men. This type of dance is still performed.

### **Tripurasura Badha play.**

Tripura (3 pura i.e Hell, Earth and Heaven) asura (daemon) badha (killing); the meaning of this play is that the asur (daemon) has captured the 3 pura and consequently the Gods have lost their power. In this dance the Goddess fights the daemon and returns power to the Gods. All dancers are men (to avoid any possibility of offending the God's by menstrual blood). Before the dance begins the priest would always performs a ritual to invite the God to attend and then the musicians begin to

play. The dancers don their costumes and the music induces them to enter a trance. They are then guided by the music alone. It was an annual dance which lasted several days (7-9) and at the end of each day the Priest performed a farewell ritual, the dancers removed their costumes, came out of the trance and return to 'normal'. At the end of the last day the priest would perform a special ritual called the Kshamaya Puja asking God to forgive any mistakes or imperfections in the performance and to please come again next year and honour the dance. He also requests all dancers to forgive each other if they have accidentally bumped or hurt another dancer. The final part of the programme will consist of a feast for all. As far as we are aware this play and its dances are no longer performed.

**NB. Tripurasura Badha play and Lord Krisna's Charitra** may be connected because some dancers from the same group are involved in dances from each and some of the costumes are the same or very similar. Sometimes the players in a long performance might decide to refresh themselves by performing a different dance for a while and then revert to the original. Without the audio track we cannot decide what is happening and although we can still see Lord Krisna's Charitra the Tripureshwora Badha play is no longer performed.

Normally, once past puberty the girls never go into this trance again but on the last day, of the dance that the museum recorded, a very powerful and unusual thing happened . An older woman, already married with children and who was a former *Ghatuli* also went

into a deep trance.

Many young girls aspire to be *Ghatuli* but the power only comes to a few. Those to whom the *Ghantu Deuta* comes are then taught the dance and practice before the actual 'performance', which begins on the full moon of Baisek month. They are therefore in and out of trance many times and often in trance for long hours (up to 7). When in a trance the girls are unaware of anything else, e.g. if their nose is running or their dress disarranged, and helpers care for them. The *Ghatuli* consider themselves a very privileged elite and usually start dancing at around seven years old, going on until puberty at 12 or 13 years. The dance always takes place on the river bank at the area of the funeral Ghats where the *Sati* would have perished on her husbands funeral pyre, hence the name *Sati Ghatu*. On the last

day a ritual is performed called *Ghatu Salauni*, to say farewell to the *Ghantu Deuta*; offerings are made to the river, including flowers, in a purification ritual.

## **Dhwanipaatra**

In Nepali artworks, Lord Buddha and all Buddhist monks or Lamas and especially Medicine Buddha carry a begging bowl; this traditional brass bowl was and is also used for healing as well as for collecting their daily food. The bowl was placed on the part of the body that was sick and was made to resonate by beating with a stick or by chanting healing mantra across it.

Interestingly in Nepal the traditional flat-bottomed Thaali (rice plate) is also made of a brass alloy albeit of a simpler composition and is frequently used as a healing

instrument.

In Nepali art works we don't see actual playing of Dhwanipaatra (or Dhonipaatra) with a stick but we can see it used in healing mainly in Thangkha paintings or in Paauwa (Newari scroll paintings)

We haven't so far been able to age these old paintings accurately but in some ways the actual date of the painting is immaterial because we know that the images and subject matter have been passed down through many, many generations of monks and lay painters to the present day. My knowledge is mainly of Nepali Thangkas and of Pauwa rather than Tibetan Thangkha paintings; many of the modern day Nepali artists are laypersons and frequently female.

I have recollections of two old paintings in particular. The first was a Pauwa depicting the naming ceremony of an old man who had reached the auspicious age of 77 years, 7 months, 7 days and 7 hours. The ceremony is known as Janku and is also called Bhim Rathaarohana; it is the corollary (if one lives long enough) of the Nwaran or first naming ceremony of a baby at 11 days old. The old man is supported by a walking stick and a Buddhist monk is placing his Dhonipaatra on the old man's head while chanting healing mantra for his long life. In the second painting a sick person is laying on a bed and a healer is placing his Dhonipaatra on the sick person's chest. He is not beating the bowl but is making a sign of blessing and may be chanting healing mantra as well.



The Dhwanipaatra is frequently used in trying to heal the lymph system and thereby boost the immune system. If a persons lymph circulation is poor and his/her immune system consequently depressed then it is believed that resonance and vibrations from the Dhwanipaatra produced by beating or chanting mantra can be used to stimulate the fire element in the human body thereby reactivating the lymph system and promoting healing. It is also believed to be efficacious for treating joint problems, mental illnesses and nervous complaints.

In Ram's book 'Musical Instruments of Nepal' I don't think he actually wrote 'that these bowls can be seen being played in ancient statues'. In Nepali artworks Lord Buddha and all Buddhist monks or Lamas and especially Medicine Buddha carry a

begging bowl; this traditional brass bowl was and is also used for healing. The bowl was placed on the part of the body that was sick and was made to resonate by beating with a stick or by chanting healing mantra.

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Ram has collected some more material about Dwanipaatra but he has not written it up yet. He knows of a woodcarving and some metal statues but has not found dates yet.

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human body thereby reactivating the lymph system and promoting healing. It is also believed to be efficacious for treating joint problems, mental illnesses and nervous complaints.

The Dwanipaatra is said to connect us with the Sun's rays, which heal us by their 7 colours. Even today in Nepal there are many spiritual healers using music therapy. These Jhaankri are found in every village and heal the sick by playing the Thaali with a stick.

The resonance of a Dhwanipatra (beaten or stroked around the rim

with a stick) also helps us to experience the 'Naada' or 'Aum' the cosmic or sacred sound. This is the Ahaata Naada produced by physically playing the instrument rather than the Anahaata Naada, which is the cosmic sound of the universe given by God. Listening to the Naada leads us to Anandam or a state of bliss

The making of a true Dhwanipaatra requires a special day (Saaita) decided by a holy man with the aid of astrology and is said to require a special composition of seven or eight metals. After completion it must be blessed and purified by a

holy person and it should be imbued with energy for 12 months over 12 years. Every 'Janai Purnima' (the full moon day once a year when Brahmin's replace their sacred thread) the Dhwaniapatra player needs to recharge the energy of his singing bowl from his holy master or guru. The Dhwaniapatra is the best musical instrument in Nepal for musical bathing and musical healing and for exorcising the effects of evil but other Nepali musical instruments beside the Dhwaniapatra and Thaali are also used for therapy and healing, these include the Kaagling, Theyadi and Jhaankri Dhyaangro.





## FOLK MUSIC INSTRUMENTS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Traditional culture and folk lore are unseparable parts of the cultural heritage of nations and, in a continuously changing form, they are an actual part of their present culture.

The beginnings of museum collections of

European music instruments date back roughly to the mid-19th century. At that time, the folk music instruments found themselves at the margin of the interests of collectors. Ever since the beginning to the 19th century, at which time ethnological museums were established in Europe, the musical and other instruments of non-European cultures enjoyed great attention and estimation.

The establishment of the National Institute of Folk Culture at Strážnice is closely connected with the International Folk Lore Festival that originated in 1946. The expert activities of the Institute included the development of museum exhibitions.

The exposition at Strážnice, under the name of the "Musical Instruments of Folk Music in the Czech Republic", provides not only a review of the development of folk music instruments but also of the

importance of musical tradition in human life from birth to death.

Unique in central Europe, the exhibition occupying almost 500 meters square presents over 400 musical instruments, supplemented by sound records of the various specimens.

The exhibition of photographs showing instruments shown in the above exhibition and shown see here in Kathmandu attempts at least partly to make you acquainted with the folk music traditions in the Czech Republic and to contribute to an unbiased understanding of the cultural differences but also to point out numerous shared facets as well as an international co-operation between Nepal and the Czech Republic.

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