



Project III

Understanding the Naga cultural identity through interactive narrative

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The Nagas

- Nagas inhabit the North-eastern India state of Nagaland.
- There are 16 officially recognized tribes.
- Each tribes has their own dialect, customs, attires and traditions.
- Have a strong oral tradition, no written script.
- Known as headhunters in popular culture
- A few tribes are extensively documented by anthropologists and ethnographers in the past.





The dissolving Identity

- Misconceptions littering the internet
- General stereotypes on the naga culture
- Lack of information
- Modernity

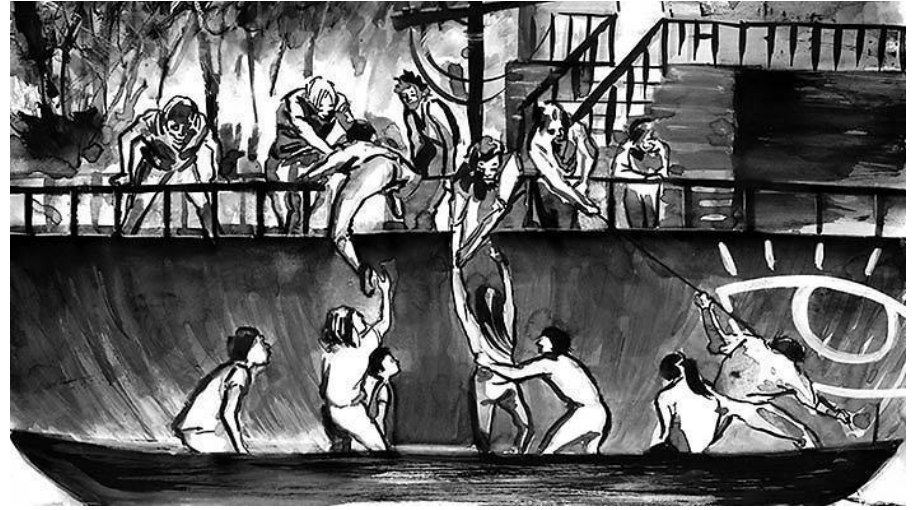




How to help better understand the naga culture?

Interactive narratives

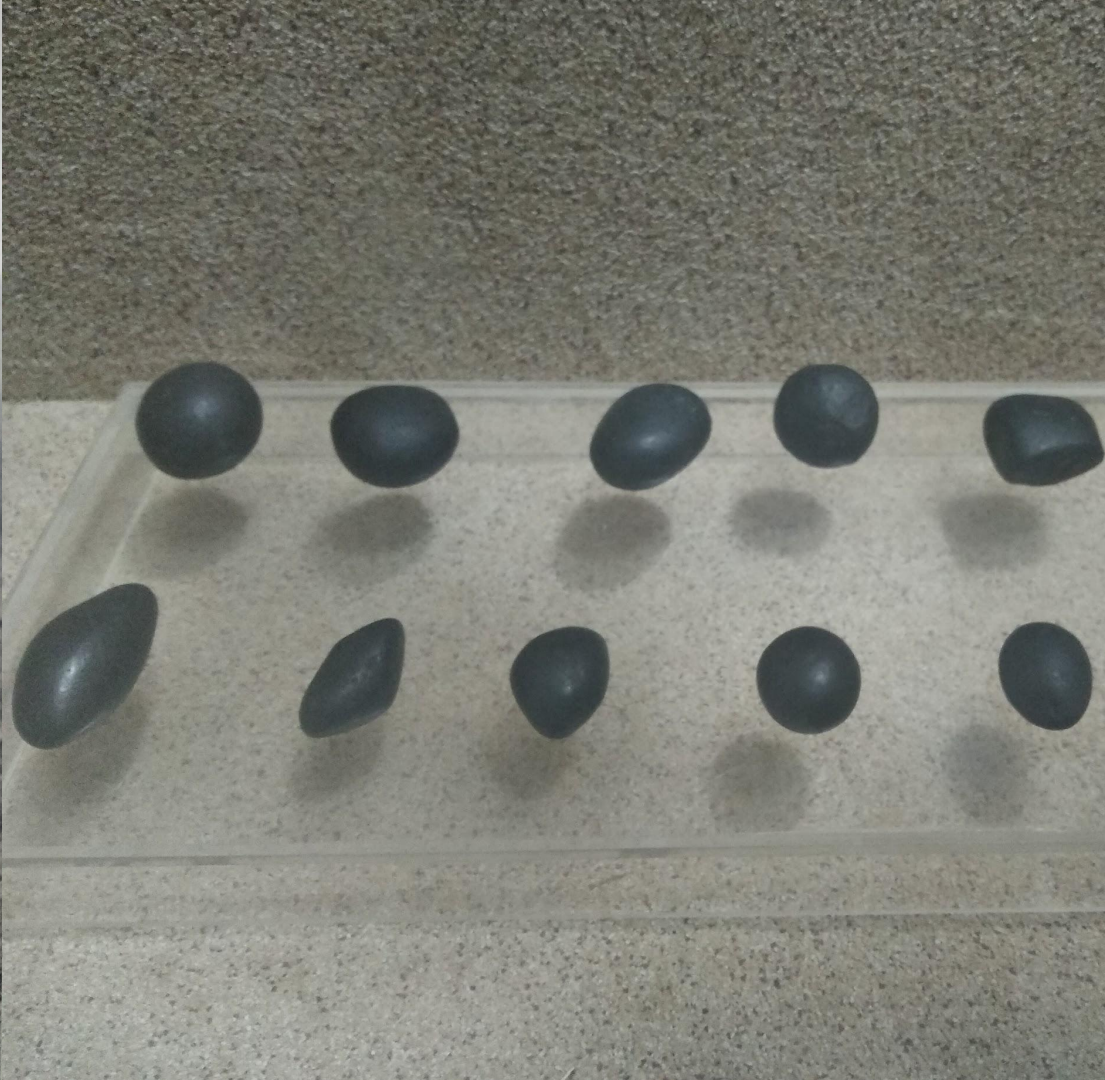
- An appropriate solution
- A novel and immersive way of telling stories
- More engaging and fun





Primary research

- Collect resources for a narrative
- Understand the local's point of view
- Narrow my focus and clarify my narrative subject



Findings

- **Dwindling** practise of storytelling amongst present-day Nagas
- The **Naga contemporary way of life**: How while embracing modernity the Nagas are still trying to hold on to their traditions and customs
- The need for documentation against preservation.
- **What should be covered?**
- Sources and establishing a **credibility criterion**



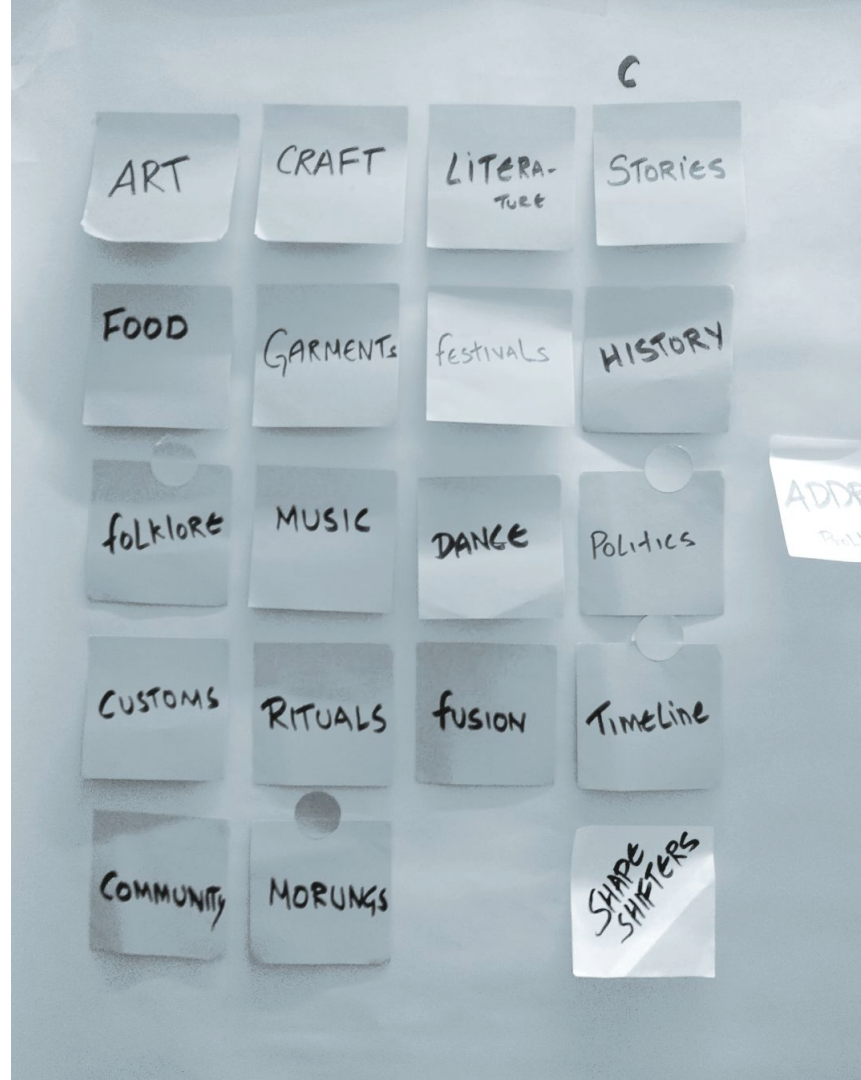
Narrative subjects

The narrative subject cannot be contained within a single focus area to encapsulate a culture.

Creating a single narrative would not justifiably touch upon all the areas.

Multiple narratives could be the solution.

A digital medium allows ease of accessibility and reach.



Objective

Based on the insights gathered from research, the objective of the project is to create a digital platform incorporating multiple interactive narratives that would help people better understand the Naga culture.

Goals

The goals of the project are as follows:

- To create meaningful narratives incorporating folklores, and real life contemporary stories that would best represent the Naga culture | Incorporate research findings to create meaningful narratives that would best represent the Naga culture
- To create a platform where the users can experience these narratives in an engaging and immersive manner.
- Chalk out the system through which these narratives can be collected, curated, treated and then disseminated to users.



Ideations

PAST

The migration



The settlements



The community

The strife
The Growth.

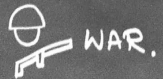
PRESENT



Missionaries
Arrive.



Education
Schools



WAR.

PROBLEM
AREA

WHO ARE THE
NAGAS?

Medium

A STORY

statistat

PRIMARY RESEARCH

MUSEUM - Collection of artefacts
Clothing, Diaramas, Excavations
Way of life, photographs

PEOPLE
Conversations - TRIBAL IDENTITY. Adaption
Contemporary fusion

EXPERT - "We don't intend to revive it
Our past need not be preserved
it can be documented."

ELDERs - folklore
'Interested in our past
'How things came to be

FINDINGS

RESOURCES

1) Books -

Ideas -

① Human Library



② Artefacts
& Stories



(Weave your
own stories?)

③ Every Naga
tells you a story.
Collaborative. > Starting a conversation
Investigative

A Resident.

A Collage



Story.

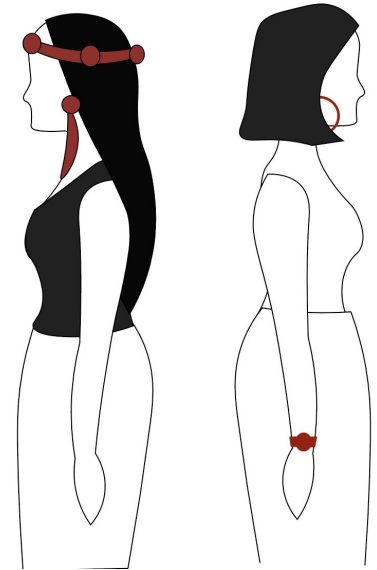
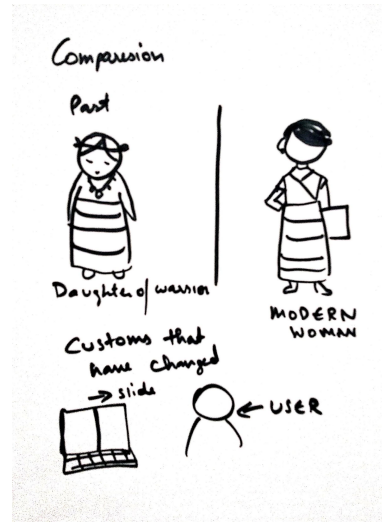
④ A village.
Idea life

RPG like

TONOTO
NONOTONOTO

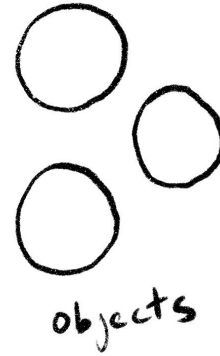
Concept and Ideas

1. The Human library
2. The Naga Artefacts
3. The Collaborative narrative
4. An Interactive Collage
5. A Contemporary Comparison
6. A Community life



Chosen Concept

The final concept is a combination of multiple concepts described. The final idea is the creation of a digital tool wherein the user can choose from a range of narratives.



Sources

“On being a Naga” by Temsula Ao

“A terrible matriarchy” by Easterine Kire

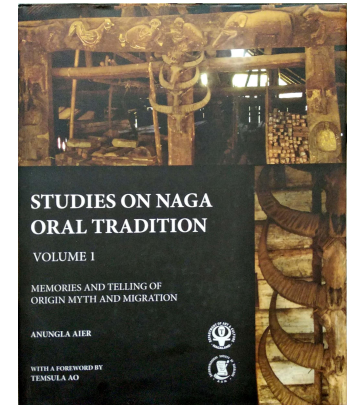
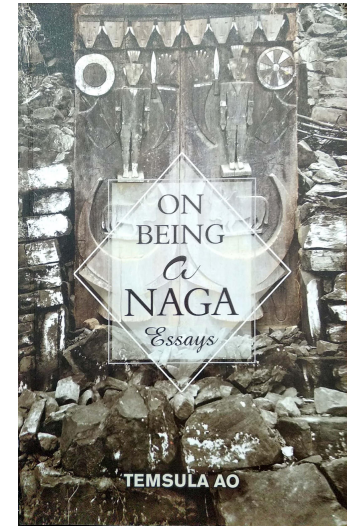
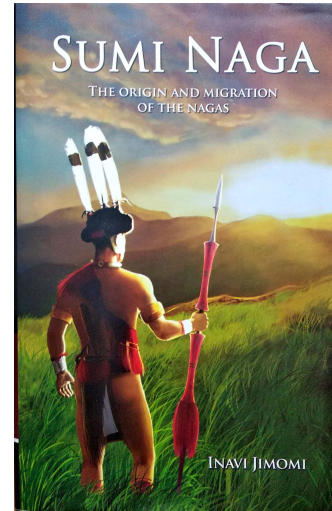
“Sumi Naga: The origin and migration of the Nagas” by Inavi Jimomi

“Studies on Naga Oral tradition” by Anungla Aier

“The Naga Saga” by Kaka D Iralu

“Taboos, Myths and Legends” by Visakhounu Hibo and R. Chumben Ngullie

Correspondence with experts and elders.



Curating the narratives

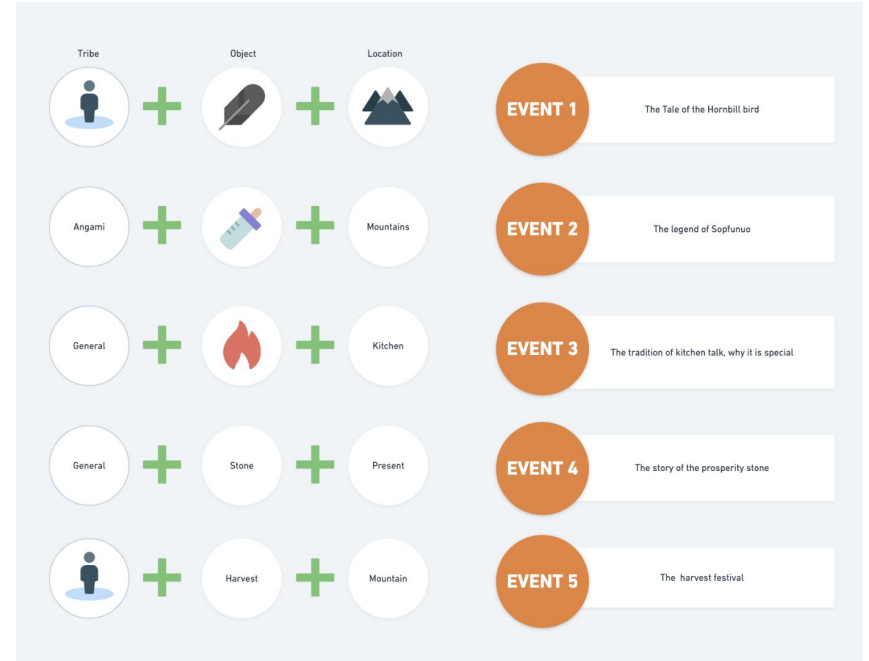
Building a repository.

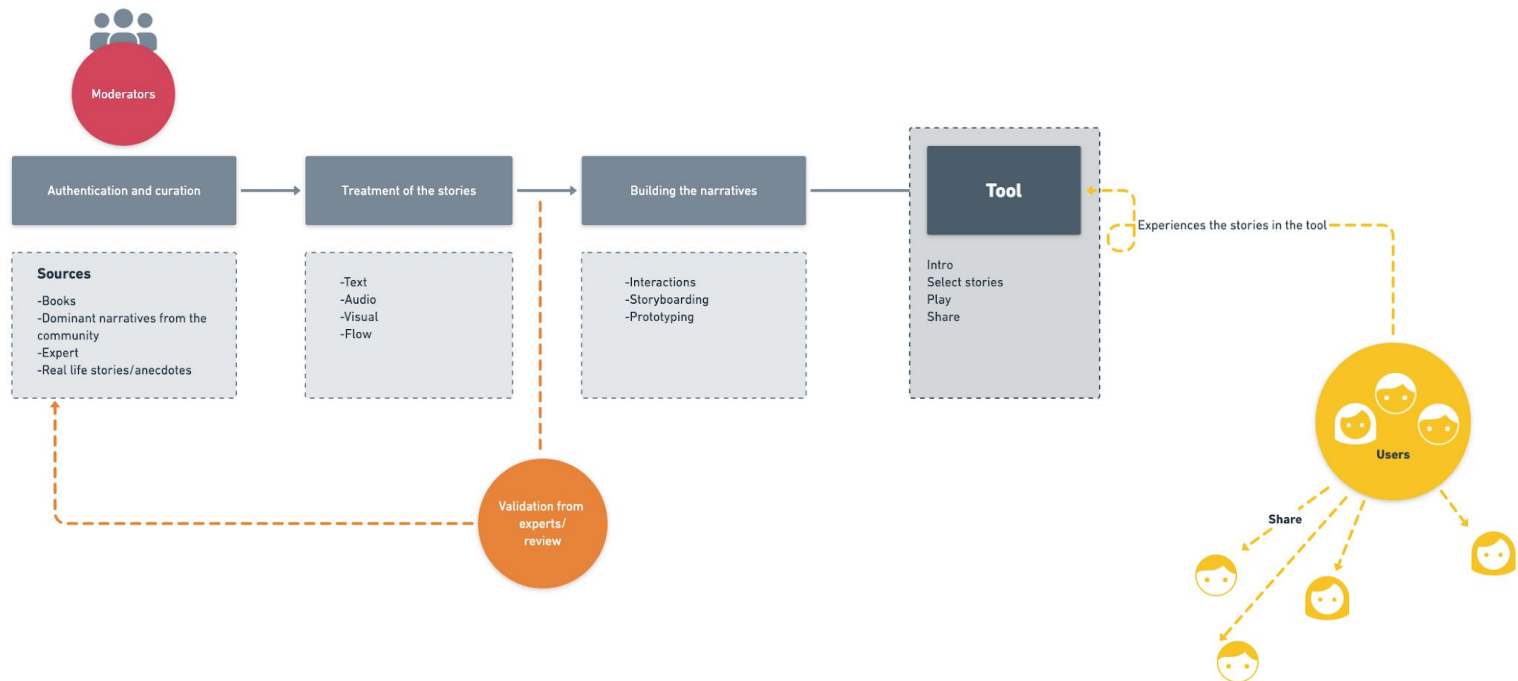
Title	Category	Keyword	Theme	Objects/ places	Tribe	Description	Sources	Verified
Pottery	History, way of life	Labour		Pots, clay,	Ao	An ao woman's retelling of why they don't do pottery anymore.	Museum	Yes
Discovery of Chilli	Folklore	Cooking	Sisterhood	Chilli	Sumi	Two sister's come across a strange fruit	dominant narration	Yes
Lightening axes	Telltale	Explanation		Axe stones	General	Stones believed to be what lightening is made up of	dominant narration, museum, experience	Yes
Prosperity stones	Folklore			Prosperity stone	General	Owner of such stones are presumes to become rich without working	dominant narration, museum, experience	Yes

Making combinations

The stories were categorised into broader categories which could act as pivots to traverse through a range of narratives. These broader categories are Tribe, Object and Time

- A tribe
- An object
- Condition: Past and present.
Setting the stage to tell stories of the current state and of the modern naga. Allowing comparisons





The system

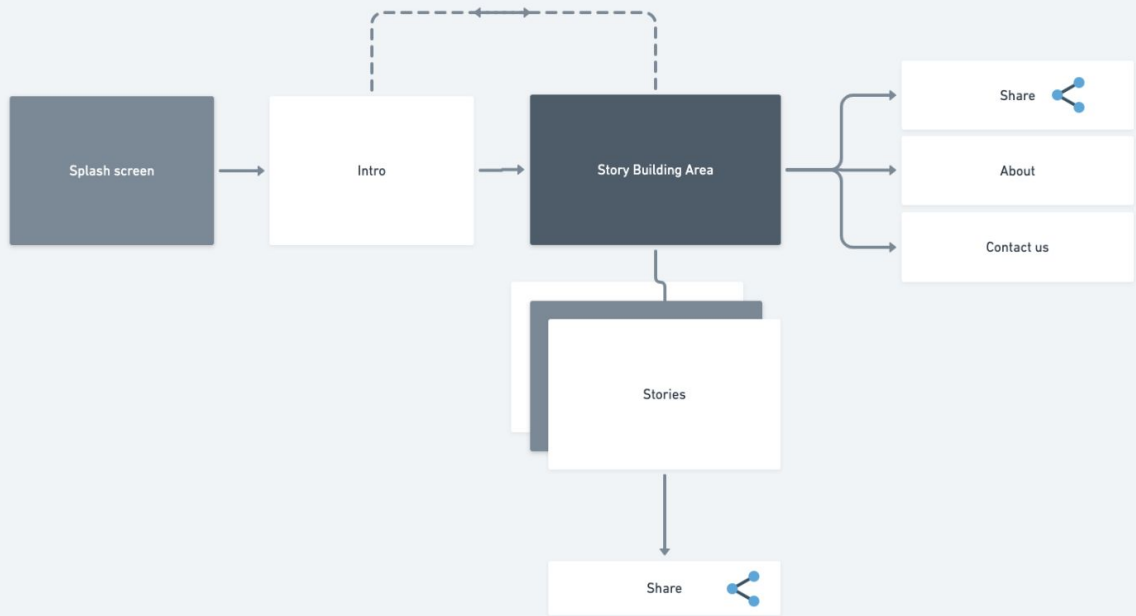


The Tool

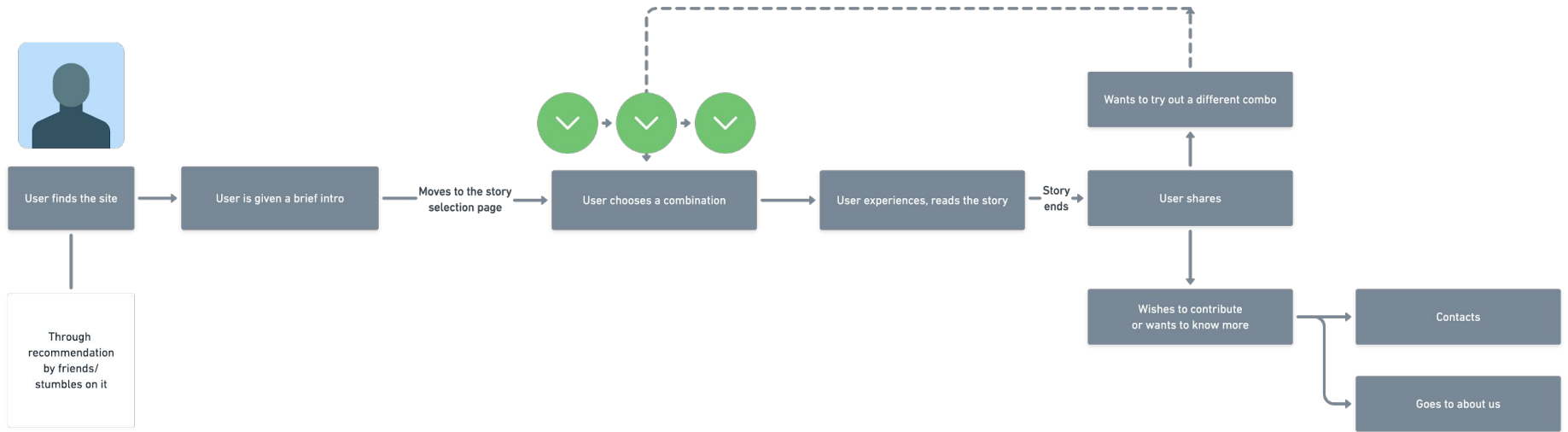


NAGA STORIES

An interactive platform that allows users to experience narratives about the Naga culture by choosing through a combination of elements based on their interest. The platform acts as an access to a growing repository of narratives that is managed in the backend.



The Tool IA



The user journey



Stories

Kitchen Talk

Key theme: Traditions

Selections: Tribe- Sumi, Object- Fire, Time-Past/Present .

Story: It tells of how since olden times stories have been passed down from generations and will be passed down. This narrative lays down the foundation of the reverence the Nagas have for community and storytelling, wherein the family/ friends gather round the kitchen fire to pass down knowledge and continue their strong oral culture.

Textual treatment

The narration flows in the form of poetry, leloh-le.

A traditional Sumi song sung in accolades for an individual, villages or achievements. The song is also a form of storytelling where the village folk will gather round compose a song and sing together of the subject matter.

This one chooses the subject of telling stories around the fire.

In the warmth of the fire
Bathed by the orange of the embers glow
The elders sit around

A long practised tradition of passing down knowledge
For we have no script but we have our voices
We tell our stories around a fire

The embers flare and dance when disrupted
And takes us away, to teach us
Of the old ways

Of brave warriors, and clever women
Souls that turn into tigers and spirits that grant gifts
Unmovable stones that were imprinted upon by man and spirit

It is these tales, these talks that keep the past alive
Tokens of knowledge the present does not provide.

What stories do they share over the warmth of the orange glow?

Of the hornbill bird whose feathers we adorn ourselves with

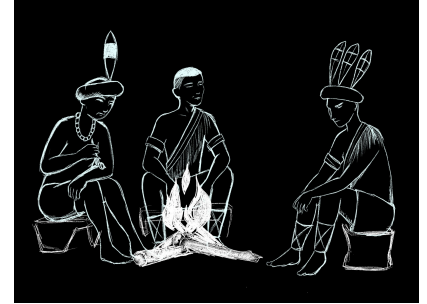
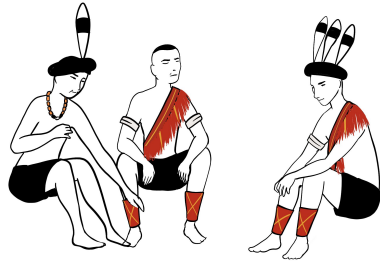
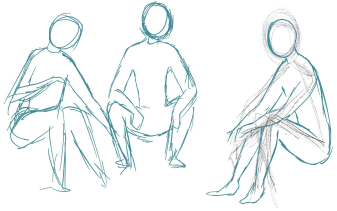
Of the lycanthropes, men who have the spirit of the tiger and
would transform into a tiger at night

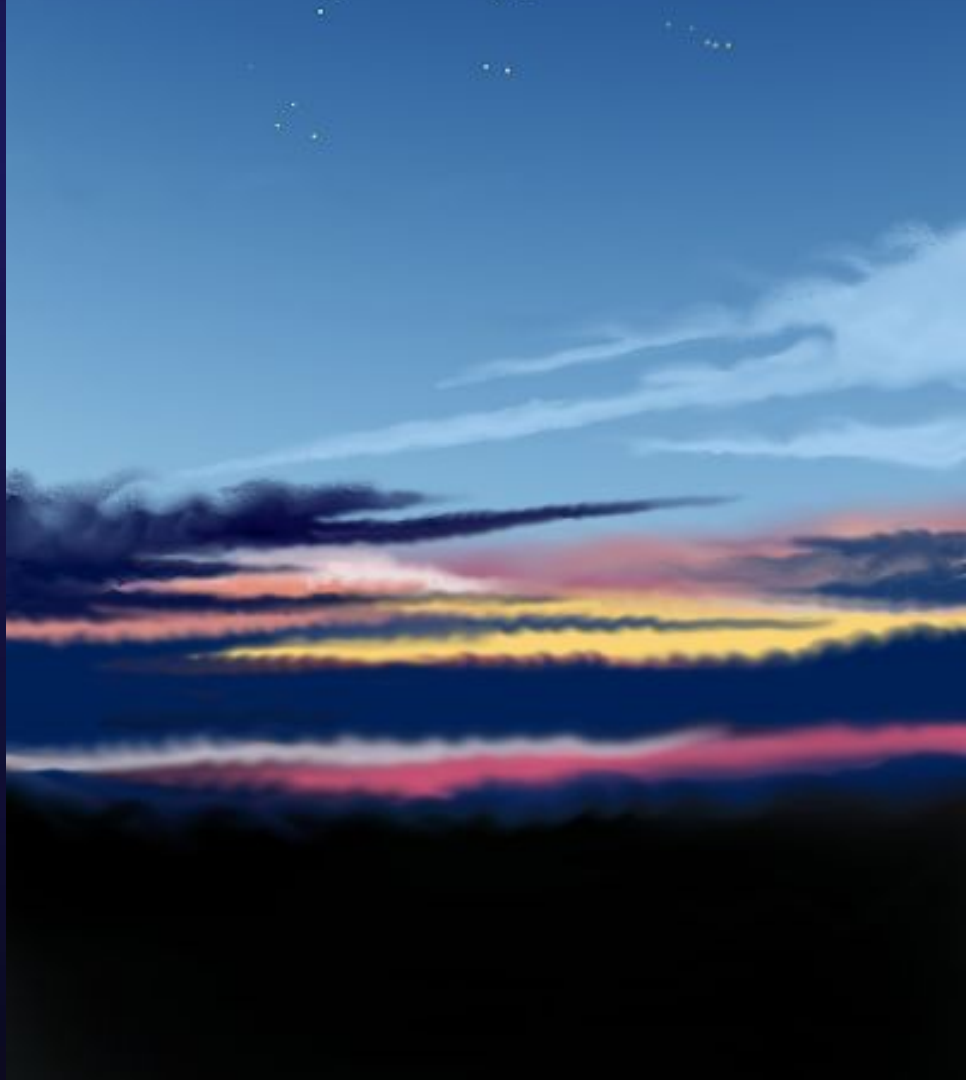
Audio Treatment

Le-johle soundtrack + Crackling fire



Visual treatment





Flow and Storyboarding

Flow 1- Slider timeline

Flow 2- Looking up and sharing stories.

Aim: Give a sense of stories being shared. What will one learn while sitting round a fire.



Kichen talk.
Community
Oral tradition
Stories
Family
Friends
Fire
Work
Night

Kichen talk

The
Kichen
talk
is

STUDIES ON NAGA ORAL TRADITION

VOLUME 1

MEMORIES AND TELLING OF
ORIGIN MYTH AND MIGRATION

ANUNGLA AIER

WITH A FOREWORD BY
TEMSULA AO



up with
the fire



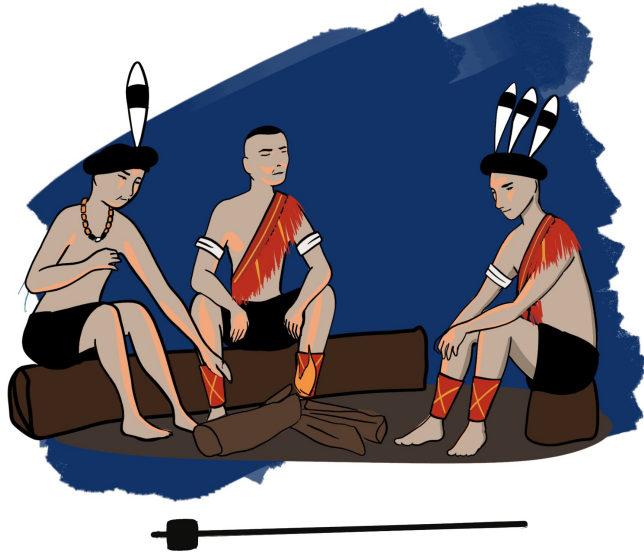
we tend
the fire
still

Keep it warm & burning
so when
~~you~~ the young
ones come



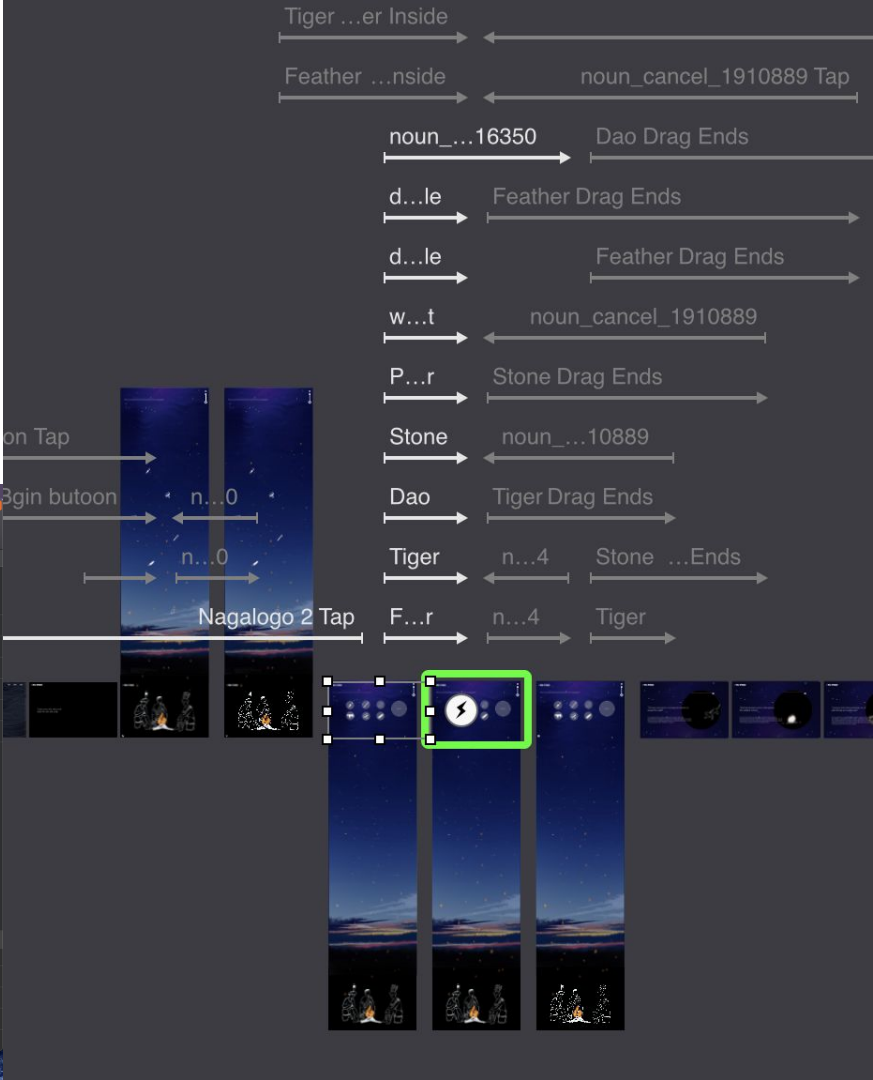
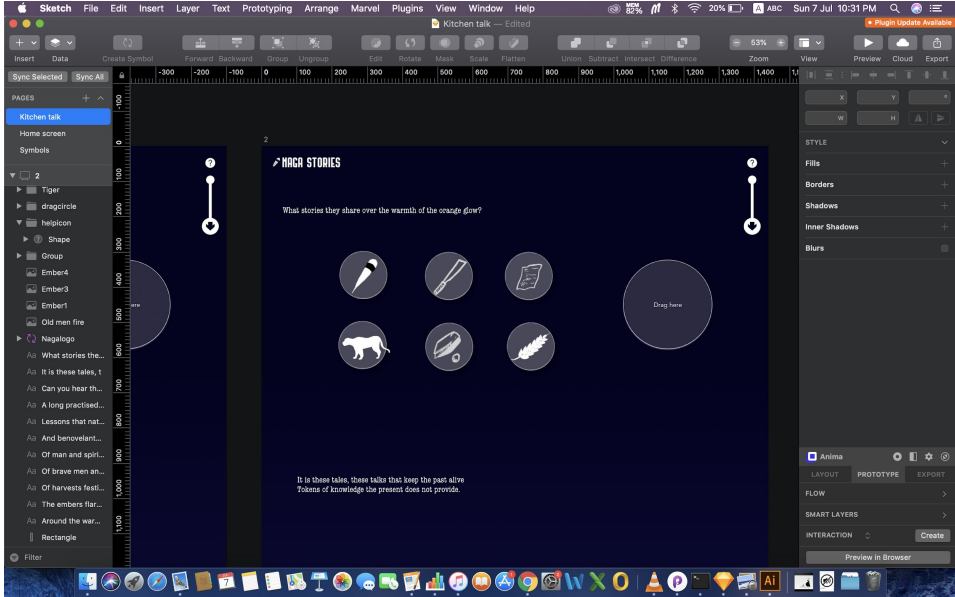
we pass
down the
stones

Interactive elements



Drag, scroll, touch

Prototyping



Stories Prototyped

- Sopfunuo
- Kitchen talk
- Asu's Story
- Weaver's daughter

Evaluation Protocol

Users: The user evaluation will be conducted with both Nagas and non-Nagas. The evaluation with non-Nagas will attempt to gauge the general interest and awareness that the platform can provide. The evaluation with Nagas will attempt to get validation from the Naga users on whether it can represent aspects of the Naga culture.

What:

- Whether the platform is able to generate interest and engagement for the users
- Whether the users will gain new knowledge about Naga culture after going through the interactive story.
- Are they able to retain the information they have gained through the Naga story.
- Whether they effectively represent the Naga cultural identity
- Find usability issues

Evaluation Protocol

Method:

- The users will first be asked about their familiarity with Naga culture and what their general perception is.
- Then the platform will be presented to the users
- The users will be asked to navigate through the platform and view the stories
- The time the users spend on the platform and the stories they view will be noted down.
- Post this, questions will be asked to them

Evaluation Results

- The general feedback from the non Nagas were that it was interesting. One suggested wanting to find out more about the culture after the story.
- The Usability issues were quite clear, most of it caused by the limitations of the prototype
- The Nagas were concerned about the authenticity of the stories but were accepting and warm about the idea of the tool existing