

Still, The Children Are Here

Directed by: Dinaz Stafford

Length: 85 minutes

Produced by Mira Nair (*Vanity Fair*, *Salaam Bombay*) in association with the International Fund for Agricultural Development, *Still, The Children Are Here* is an exquisitely photographed portrait of an indigenous society that has maintained its culture in isolation from a rapidly urbanizing and westernizing India. But this intimate film not only describes an indigenous people and culture, but also speaks to the essential nature of man.

For many of the Garos of Meghalaya in North East India, cultivating rice is a way of life and worship. In the West Garo Hills, villagers still grow a diversity of ancient strains of hill rice in the same manner as humanity first did 6000 years ago. These strains are now highly valued by scientists studying sustainable agriculture and botanical genetics.

Of Tibetan-Burmese origin, the Garos' homes and just about all of their household goods have their origins in the lush bamboo forests that surround them. Their worries are both basic (having enough food and a roof over their heads) and universal (the women worry about whether their men are faithful and a couple mourns the loss of their child). Theirs is a society based on the natural order of things, but as the world changes around them, they begin to find this is no longer enough.

Shot over the course of an entire growing cycle, from the preparation of the fields to the harvest, *Still, The Children Are Here* is an elegant meditation on a way of life that to outsiders seems simple and peaceful, but is fraught with the same existential questions that plague us all.

Can purchase from: (<http://www.frif.com/new2004/still.html>)