

## Final Kodachrome photos to go on display

By Stuart Low



*National Geographic* photographer Steve McCurry regularly works in the war zones of Afghanistan and Lebanon and other global hot spots. He's off to Spain on Tuesday. He'll have an exhibit in Rome in December.

Today, he and Eastman Kodak Co. will present a historic set of his photos to the George Eastman House archives. They are the photos shot with the last roll of Kodachrome film.

Kodak announced in 2009 that it would stop making the film, known for its vibrant and durable colors. Leaders at the Rochester-based company were eager to have McCurry, a veteran photojournalist, shoot a final set of Kodachrome photos during a six-week trip last year.

Kodachrome color film enjoyed a long run from 1935 to 2009 and was manufactured for still and movie cameras. McCurry has used it throughout his career and keeps a collection of 800,000 Kodachrome images in his studio.

McCurry lives in New York City and has traveled widely in India, so those locales soon became central to his project with the last roll. He decided to seek out iconic people — entertainers from both Hollywood and Bollywood, and the Rabari nomads of India.

"In Manhattan, I thought about shooting Woody Allen, Martin Scorsese or Robert De Niro," said McCurry, 61, on Sunday after a presentation to Kodak and Eastman House professionals.

"It turned out that De Niro was available," McCurry said. "I chose the Rabari because they have a noble way of life. Noble but vanishing: These nomads' lives aren't viable where cities, fences and roads block their way."

The film's intense colors work to good advantage in his Rabari photos, where rich purple and red robes accentuate tough, weather-beaten faces. These tribal scenes recall McCurry's 2003 George Eastman House exhibit, "Face of Asia."

His gift for frank portraiture enlivens even a familiar subject like De Niro, shown in his Tribeca screening room. Devoid of makeup (or a good night's sleep), his leathery face shows every bit of the actor's 67 years.

Bollywood actors such as Amitabh Bachchan and Shenaz Treasurywala exude a little more glamour: Skin-deep beauty, after all, is their stock in trade.

McCurry even takes a wry shot of himself, standing next to a Manhattan cab while clutching a Kodachrome box.

George Eastman House, which in 2003 featured an exhibit of McCurry's works, will feature all of the images in a projection show starting July 9.

Alert visitors will count 31, rather than the 36 usually found in a Kodachrome roll. Some frames were duplicate images, and at least one exposure was not all that McCurry hoped it would be. Next year, prints from this set will go on an international tour.

Meanwhile, *National Geographic* will give you a glimpse of McCurry's globetrotting life. A crew from the magazine followed him on his Kodachrome voyage and shot a half-hour documentary. It already has aired in Brazil and Italy, and should appear soon on American television.