



THE RESTORATION AND RE-GILDING OF THE YANTAJU SHRINE

PROJECT PROPOSAL | NOVEMBER 2011



KATHMANDU VALLEY PRESERVATION TRUST

136 WEST 21ST STREET, 11TH FLOOR

NEW YORK, NY 10011, USA

TEL: 212 727 0074

P.O. BOX 13349, KATHMANDU, NEPAL

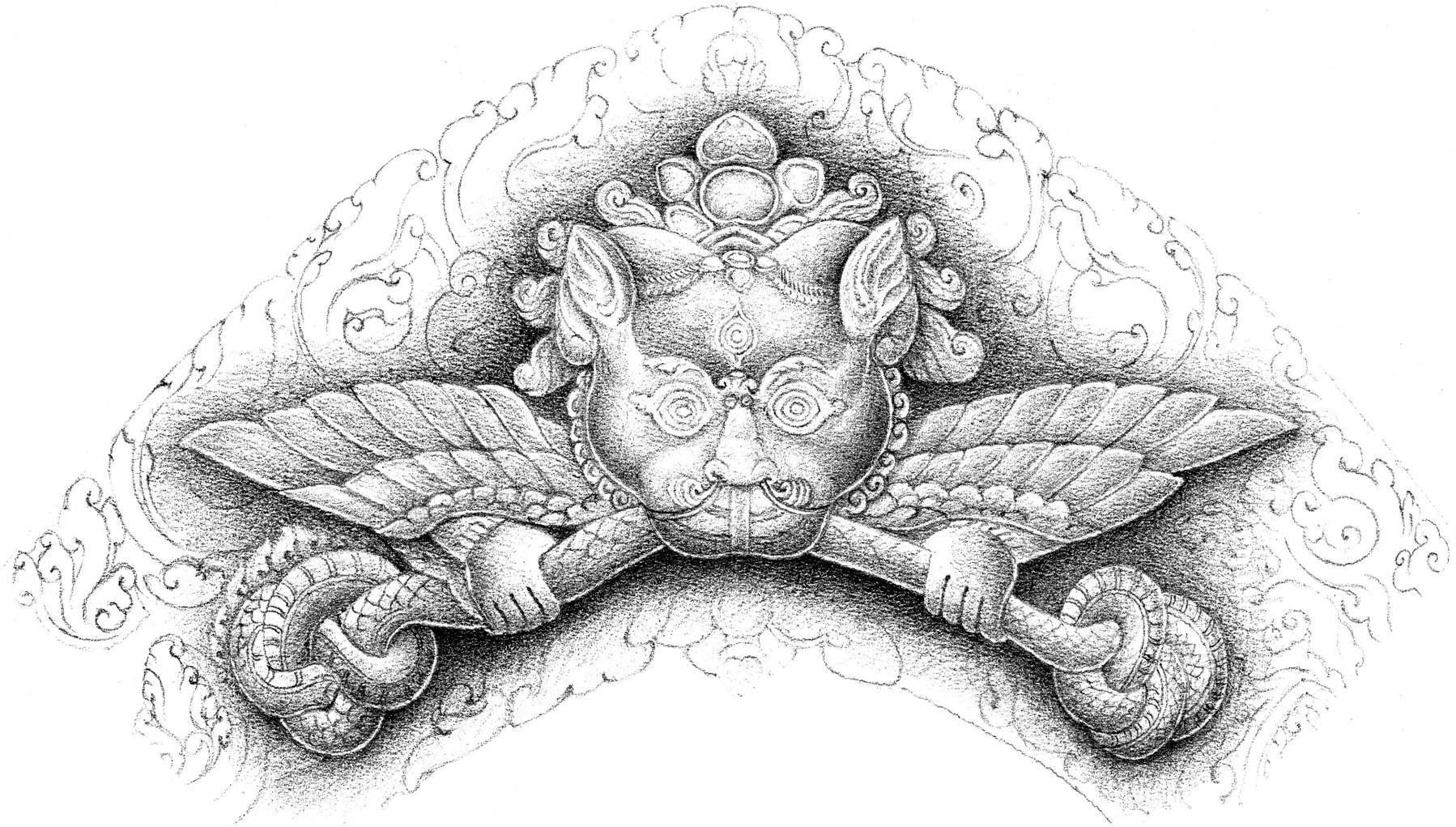
TRUST OFFICE: PATAN DARBAR SQUARE

TEL: (977 1) 55 46 055

info@kvptnepal.org | www.kvptnepal.org

Cover image

Mul Chowk courtyard photograph by Robert Polidori, 2007



Drawing of Yantaju shrine detail

This drawing depicts the head of a dragon devouring a snake, called a "*chepah*" in Newari. This drawing captures the great detail in the original repoussé work of Yantaju shrine in Patan palace's Mul Chowk.

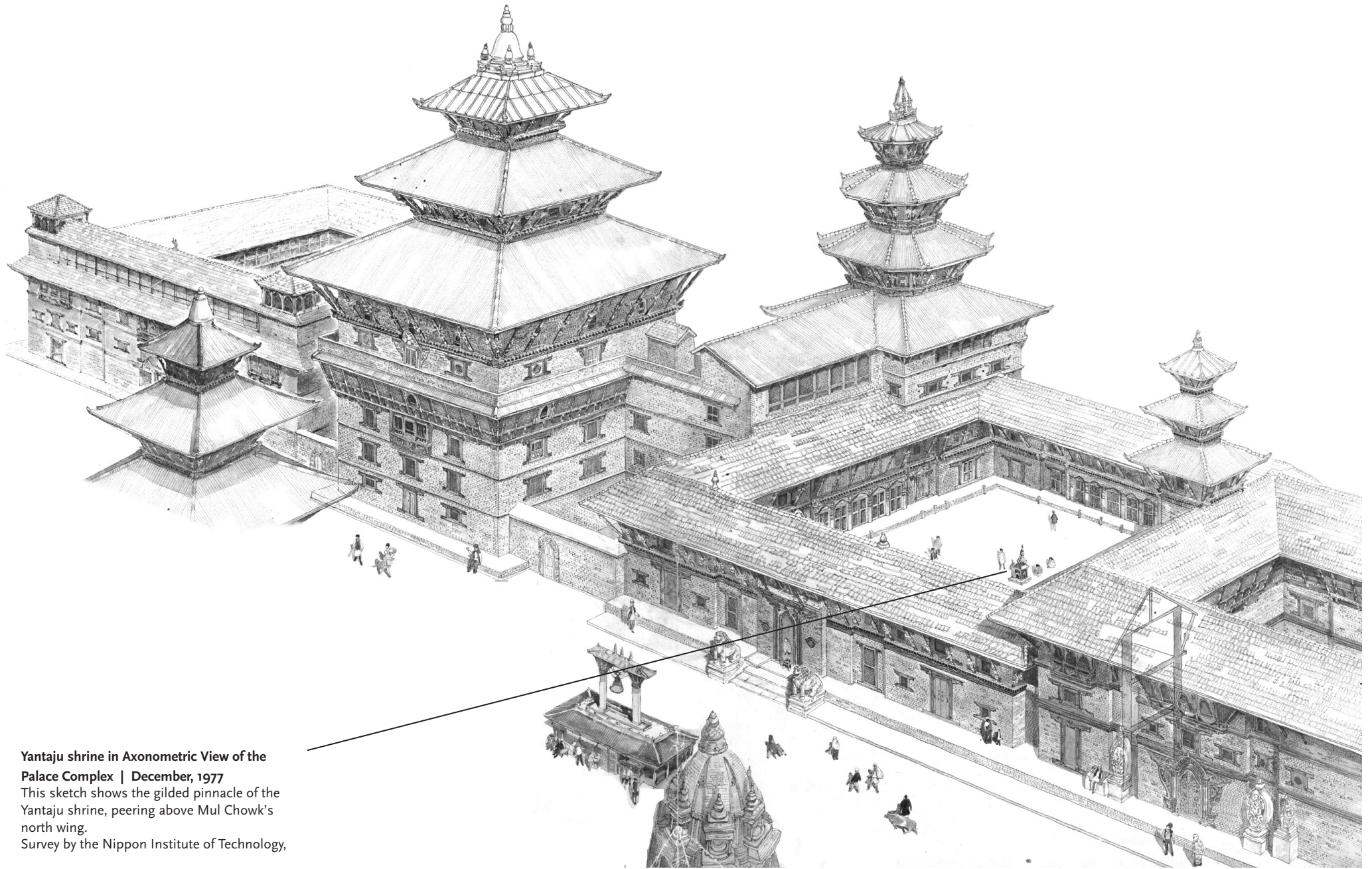
Drawing by Bijay Basukula, 2011



Location of Yantaju Shrine
Although the Yantaju shrine is obscured in this photo, it sits here in the center of the Palace's main courtyard, Mul Chowk.

Aerial view of the Patan Royal Palace Complex | July 2005





Yantaju shrine in Axonometric View of the Palace Complex | December, 1977
This sketch shows the gilded pinnacle of the Yantaju shrine, peering above Mul Chowk's north wing.
Survey by the Nippon Institute of Technology,





Yantaju shrine through the doors of Mul Chowk

The small, gilded, open-air shrine to the goddess of Yantaju can be seen here through the open door into the Mul Chowk courtyard. Here, the large bell dedicated to the worship of the Taleju goddess located directly in front of Mul Chowk's entryway, is casting its afternoon shadow onto the building's facade. Photograph by Mary Slusser, 1966



Historical view of Yantaju shrine

The Yantaju shrine can be seen in this photograph taken circa 1966. The shrine sits in front of the Taleju Temple, devoted to Yantaju's companion goddess Taleju. Photograph by Mary Slusser, 1966



HISTORY & ARTISTIC SIGNIFICANCE

“In the Malla Period, it may be noted, Taleju was long worshiped in close association with a deity known as Yantamonde and later Yantaju. Their temples stood side by side, and when gifts were offered to one they were offered in equal measure to the other. On more than one occasion the *Gopalaraja-vamsavali* records simultaneous gifts of flags to Talamonde and Yantamonde. [King] Srinivasa constructed a gilt shrine to Yantaju, his *istadevata*, in the middle of the Mul-chok near the temple of Taleju. The identity of Yantaju has long been a mystery, but it now seems probable that she is in fact Mahesvari, a form of Durga.

[Now] abandoned, the shrine was of profound significance in its time. Yantaju was an important *istadevata* (personal deity) of the Malla rulers, a goddess who with her companion Taleju presided for five centuries over their affairs.”

from Mary Shepherd Slusser’s *Nepal Mandala*





North elevation | Nov 2011

This is the only side retaining the original repoussé arch in its entirety. The gilded corner sheeting on the right is original. All other sheeting and decorative repoussé are later additions of inferior quality.



Detail of original chepa head | Nov 2011

The north-facing elevation of the shrine is the only side which still retains the original arch. The repoussé work on the chepa head is outstanding, and the newer replacement arches on the other three sides of the shrine do not compare in craftsmanship to the original.



Detail of original arch | Nov 2011

This detail shows the original copper repoussé work, still partly gilded, depicting twisted snakes and a makara, the mythical water creature. Behind the repoussé work there are new copper sheets, of much poorer quality than the original sheeting.





East elevation | Nov 2011

The east-facing elevation of the shrine is almost entirely new and in need of replacement. Only three small gilded pieces of original sheeting remain.



Detail of arch | Nov 2011

When compared to the arch detail on the opposing page, it is immediately obvious that this later replacement does not match the original 17th century craftsmanship.



Detail of decorative frame |

Nov 2011

Here, the shallow relief and simple repoussé work on the decorative frame below the arch lacks the detail and depth of the original.





South elevation | Nov 2011

This elevation retains an original gilded corner molding, and parts of the original arch. The face and the decorative framing are later new additions.



Detail of arch | Nov 2011
When the monument was repaired in the mid 20th century, replacement parts were not only poorly made but also not gilded, as is demonstrated by this detail. Here, the left part of the arch is original, while the center head is a later addition.



Detail of decorative frame | Nov 2011
The gilded part on the left is original, while the un-gilded part on the right is a later addition. This was affixed to the original using the crude method of fastening with nails.





West elevation | Nov 2011

This elevation is the only side retaining the original decorative frame and gilded corner sheeting. The arch, however, is a poor fitting replica.



Detail of original decorative frame | Nov 2011

When compared to the replacement decorative repoussé work on the opposing page, the original repoussé work is finely detailed and retains its gilding. In many places there are unsightly holes such as the one depicted here, which is likely the result of a recent attempt to secure the sheeting with nails. Typically sheeting is fastened with hidden rivets, not exposed nails.



Detail of new archwork atop original carving | Nov 2011

Here the original gilded metalwork can easily be compared to the later additions. This ill-fitting piece of copper is of low craftsmanship. The addition is not even gilded, and poorly fixed upon the missing original arch. Fortunately, the remaining original pieces serve as examples for modern craftsmen to replicate.





Plinth prior to pavement removal | Sep. 2011

The original quarter-round base stone is covered here by the tile pavement, which was laid in the courtyard in 1975. The tile pavement was recently removed to expose the original flooring, but because hard cement mortar was used to lay the tile, the original stone work of the shrine's plinth has been damaged.



Original base stone | Nov. 2011

After removing the 1975 tile pavement, the original brick flooring and quarter-round base stone of the shrine were revealed. However, approximately 60% of stones are damaged due to the use of hard cement mortar, and are in need of replacement. In some places, the stone work has been poorly repaired with brick fill-ins, which need to be removed and replaced with stone.



Yantaju Mandir in Mul Chowk

Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust

Cost estimate

November 17, 2011

s.n.	Description of works	quantity	unit	rate	amount	remarks
<i>General repairs</i>						
1	repair of original metal works including pinnacle	1.00	l/s	25,000	25,000	
2	repair of timber works inside metal	1.00	l/s	12,500	12,500	
3	stone nagol around the plinth	31.50	r.ft	400	12,600	
4	plinth repair in stone with brick work inside	52.50	c.ft	450	23,625	
					-	
<i>Copper repousse works</i>						
5	main central head (chhepah)	3.00	sides	35,000	105,000	only North side is original, three sides were lost
6	vertical sides on North, South & East	3.00	sides	18,000	54,000	only West side is original, three sides were lost
					-	
7	gold for gilding of whole temple	36.00	tola	55,000	1,980,000	30% increase in price of gold over past year
8	labor cost for gilding	36.00	tola	4,500	162,000	
9	installation of all the elements	1.00	l/s	5,000	5,000	
10	site clearance	1.00	l/s	3,500	3,500	
Total in NRs.					2,383,225	
Total in \$					\$ 29,790.31	



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