The Art Gallery
of Western Australia

Yeahnahnesia

Artwork Labels

Copyright
© The Art Gallery of Western Australia 2022
© The Government of Western Australia 2022

Yeahnahnesia

Welcome to a small slice of Yeahnahnesia, a remote island that we have access to thanks to the fantastic escapades of Yok & Sheryo. Fuelled by their adventurous spirits, this artist couple have travelled extensively, shaping their world view through diverse cultural experiences and personal encounters. Leaving their creative mark from New York to New Delhi, and many places in between, Yok & Sheryo were brought to Yeahnahnesia while seeking an escape from the busy cities of the world. They invite us to experience the culture of this wonderful place, and their story goes something like this...

On a recent tropical getaway, Yok & Sheryo were out on their jet skis looking for surf when distant clouds parted revealing a volcanic peak on the horizon. The ocean current shifted and a perfect swell carried the carefree pair to the pristine shores of Yeahnahnesia. Leaving their high-vis watercraft on the fine white sand they set off up the beach towards the jungle. Peeling back the large tropical foliage, Yok & Sheryo left their real-world responsibilities behind and stepped into an enchanted realm rich in culture and folklore. As though the island divined their love of surfing and drew them in, Yok & Sheryo's search for the perfect wave brought them to a haven of temples and totems layered with fantastic and familiar icons.

...continued on next page

Near the edge of the jungle, Yok & Sheryo found the semi-abandoned Heatstroke Hotel where they met a local Elder who took them on a tour of the island. The pair expressed their affinity for the animistic culture of Yeahnahnesia. This prompted the Elder to ask Yok & Sheryo to share artefacts from the island with the world, spreading the philosophy of tops surf, double-pluggers, good beers, no fear, and devotion to peace, love and relaxation with a laidback party vibe.

Spirituality of Yeahnahnesia

The animistic belief systems of Yeahnahnesia see all objects as vessels for spirits of the universe, with the plants, totems and creatures all having desires and intentions that impact upon the world.

Yeahnahnesia Official Flag Display

The national coat of arms on the Yeahnahnesian flag presents many symbols important to this island nation.

Yin/Yang: Balance is key

Slug: Live the slow life

Tiger: But go for it like a tiger

Sad Banana: Failure is nothing; be able to laugh at yourself

Maybe Flower: Maybe, a vast space of possibility between yes and no

Palm Tree: Resilience and strength

Pay Coconut Tax:
Because cocos ain't free around here.

...continued on next page

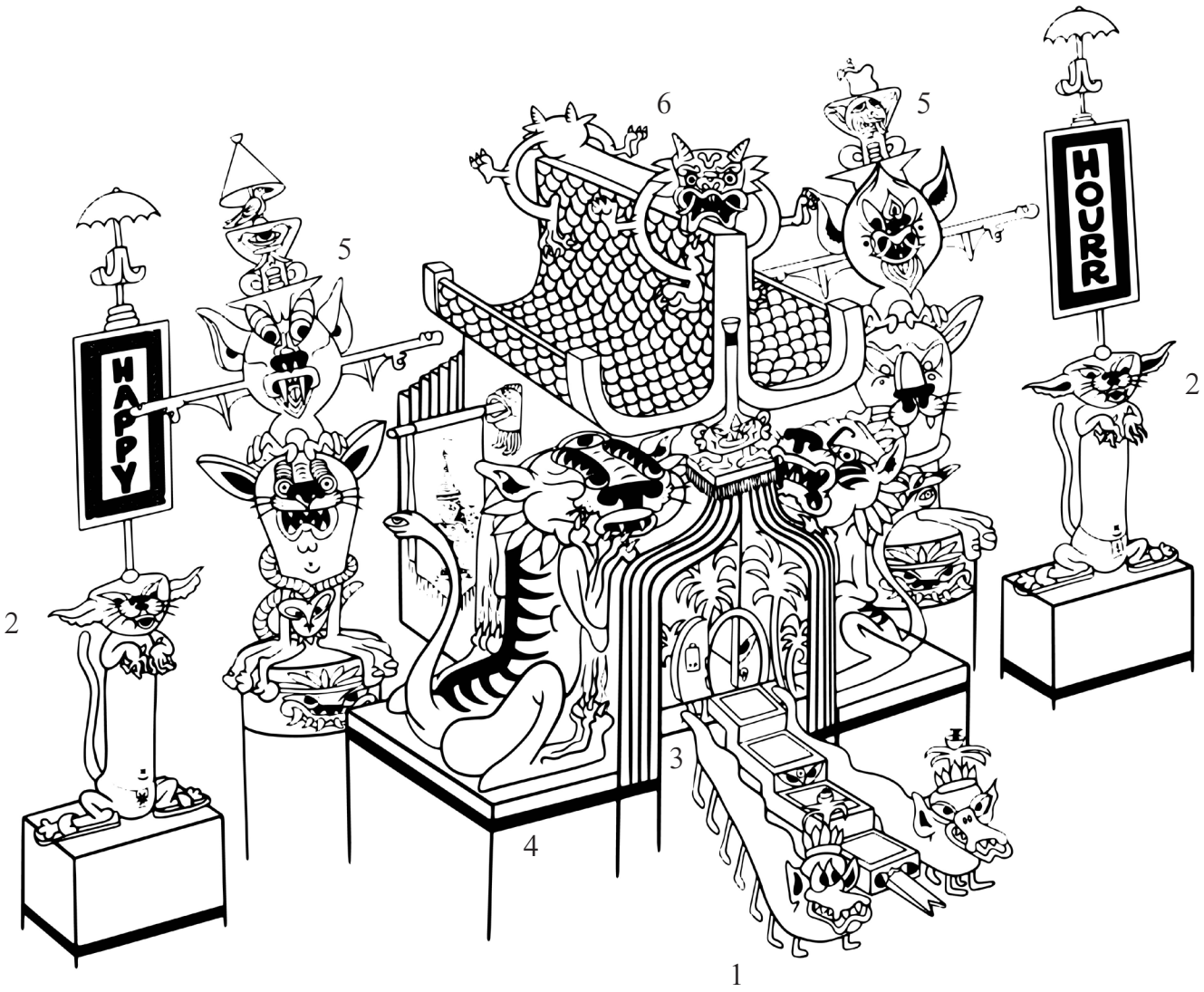
The Temple of Yeahnahnesia

A central gathering place where locals meet for prayer and the granting of frivolous wishes, this temple provides shelter from the swelter and maintains a good supply of middys and chiko rolls.

One of the best-preserved examples from the Yeahnah kingdom, this temple is a prime example of classic Yeahnah architecture. Made from white limestone common to the area, the temple is admired for its many sculptural elements, totems and embroidered flags. Thought to be built at the height of the Yeahnah empire in the early 12th Century, an accurate date of creation is unknown due to blurry record keeping owing the islands abundant psychotropic plant life.

Archaeologist and renowned Yeahnah expert Dave Pinkus admires the structure for: “its restrained monumentality, its finely balanced elements, and the precise arrangement of its proportions. It is a work of power, unity, and style.”

...continued on next page



1

PlatyNaggy Guardians - AKA: The Stoop

The stoop, formed by the grand steps leading to the Spirit House, invites temple visitors to leave an offering, well wishes or maybe a spare durry on arrival. The stoop is guarded by the Yeahnahnesian PlatyNaggy, a creature resembling a hodgepodge of a platypus and a naga (snake).

...continued on next page

These good fortune guardians proudly wear crowns and bling bling chains signalling prosperity. A classic male and female pair, the embodiment of Yin/Yang and balanced wigglyness, temple visitors shimmy and shake as they pass, activating the Naga to wash away troubles. Locals love having a coldie and chilling out the front on the stoop playing music and talking about anything under the sun (but mostly surf).

2

Sausage Cat Guardians

The Sausage Cat Guardians are semi-domesticated/ semi-ambivalent beacons of Happy Hour. Created from classic white limestone, they flank the spirit house and bring good news. The beaming red eyes of the guardians can be seen through the dense jungle to help you find your way to refreshment.

These cat guardians act like a notice board for the kingdom, using flags to relay important messages. Happy Hour is a frequent message sent out from the temple, as Yeahnahnesians always enjoy a cold one and a laugh on the temple steps. Nikmati, which means to luxuriate, is a popular ideal celebrated by the people of Yeahnahnesia and forms a part of Happy Hour festivities.

...continued on next page

3

Spirit House

The temple's main Spirit House is said to contain the spirit of the ocean (when it's not out surfing). Being an island nation and in line with Yeahnah notions of balance, locals fear the ocean and worship it in the same breath. Given this, cultural events and rituals are often planned around the ocean's many moods, storms and tides. One such age old ceremony starts on the full moon at the highest tide, when locals use the tide to send lavish offerings out into the ocean.

4

Double Yeahnah Tigers

The Spirit House is heavily guarded by Double Yeahnah Tigers, the fiercest animals on the island. Like, you know those guitars that are like double guitars? Double Tigers are more meaningful and challenging than single tigers. Always travelling in loyal pairs, Yeahnah Tigers have distinctive stripes that appear to move spelling out "yeah" and "nah" as they slink through the jungle.

...continued on next page

5

Cobra, Bat, Dingo Totem

This totem is crafted to honour three iconic animals of the island, the dancing cobra, the fruit bat, and the loyal dingo dog. The protective Magpie Bombies, or Koolbardie birds, can be seen above these totems ready to swoop at temple visitors who might need a reminder to leave their troubles at the door. These territorial birds are an important part of the local ecosystem and wherever you find the most relaxed creatures, you are also likely to find a Magpie Bombie nesting nearby to maintain the islands emotional stability.

6

Double Headed Dragon

Floating nice and high, so high, atop the Devil's Day Off Cabin, the Double Headed Dragon protects the temple from above. This creature's harmonising twin abilities diffuse the noises of the island allowing the sounds of the ocean to filter through and permeate the cabin beneath. While fiery in demeanour it has a warm heart that beats to the rhythm of classic rock and iconic party anthems. The Dragon's current mixtape includes hits such as:

...continued on next page

Side A

Run to Paradise by the Choirboys

Like Wow - Wipeout! by Hoodoo Gurus

Surf's Up Tonight by Midnight Oil

(I'm) Stranded by the Saints

Devil Inside by INXS

Welcome to the Jungle by Guns n Roses

Highway to Hell by ACDC

Side B

Relax by Frankie Goes to Hollywood

Get High Tonight by Busta Rhymes

Party Up by DMX

Gin and Juice by Snoop Dogg

Gangsta's Paradise by Coolio

Ruff In The Jungle Bizness by The Prodigy

Sandstorm by Darude

Some important artefacts you might see around the temple are detailed below.

Pisang Goreng Lamp

Yeahnahnesians place the Pisang Goreng Lamp (Fried Banana Lamp), on their verandas when loved ones are out after dark. The lamp provides a guiding light to help late night revellers find their way home if their vision gets blurry in the dense tropical jungle. The banana is also a symbol for humility and hilarity, encouraging Yeahnahnesians have a good giggle at their own expense.

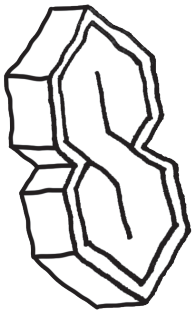
...continued on next page

Lean on me Dragon Vase

The Lean on me Dragon is there for when you're not strong, it'll be your friend and help you carry on. Containing a fearless spirit and brotherly understanding, locals of Yeahnahnesia call on the Lean on me Dragon Vase for a helping hand in times of pain or sorrow.

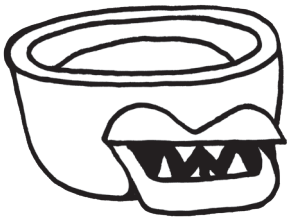
*The Chinese writing on the dragon says "Fearless", so it can be fearless for you.

...continued on next page



The Cool S

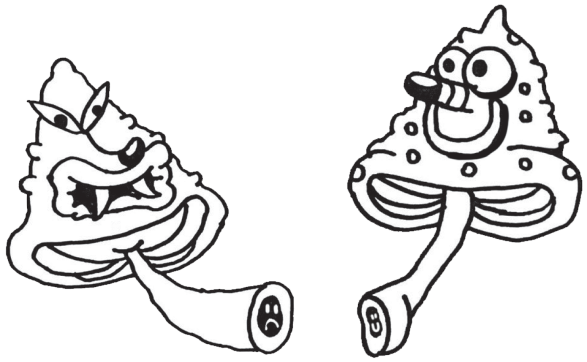
Seen outside of Yeahnarnesia in the margins of school books, on bus stops and in blue pen on the forearms of bored teenagers (or elders with a youthful spirit), Cool S erupts from its drawn reference and into the third dimension to materialise in Yeahnahnesia in its true object-based form.



Don’t Fear Me Bowl

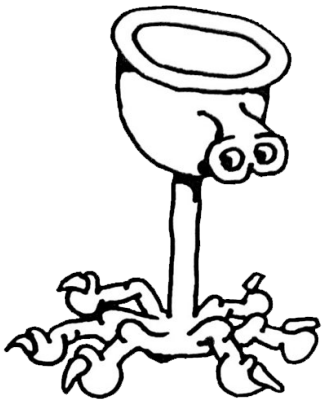
‘No fear’ - a mantra heard from the same drongos who might yell ‘just send it!’ - is a central belief in the wave riding culture of Yeahnahnesia. This small Don’t Fear Me Bowl serves as an offering vessel. When filled with sauce from the Devil’s Day Off Cabin it is laid at the feet of the Sausage Cat Guardians to bring good surf, ward off dangerous creatures, and protect locals from sauceless pies and sausages.

...continued on next page



The Angry and Happy Fungi

The Angry and Happy Fun Guys can be found growing throughout Yeahnahnesia. Gathered by the locals, it is a risk to eat these psychotropic fungi without checking with trusted Elders first.



Pig-nose Dragon Cup Thing

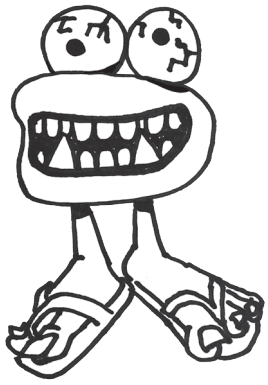
The Pig-nose Dragon Cup Thing is a ceremonial drinking vessel found in the Heatstroke Hotel and used to bring on Happy Hour, which is all day every day, so yeah, nah, it's ceremonial but all the time.

...continued on next page

Namaste Frog

The Namaste Frog welcomes visitors to the temple and maintains balance in Yeahnahnesia. Channelling spirits and cultures of the universe, this mellow lily pad dwelling totem exists in dynamic equilibrium between air and water, light and dark, yeah and nah. Carrying the Yin/Yang symbol of dualism and opposing equality this frog is always the most chillest at the party. Select locals who embrace the ways of the Namaste Frog are tattooed with this symbol on their sunburnt shoulders or ankles as a rite of passage. Due to its diet of psychotropic plants and bugs, if you lick the Namaste Frog you too will fall into his trance of Mucho Relaxo.

...continued on next page



Double-plugger Chomper

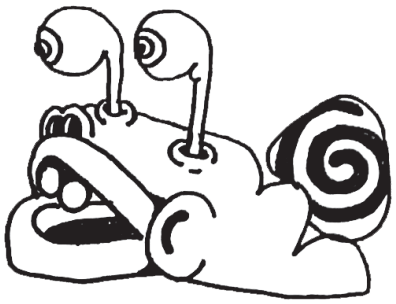
Feeding on double-pluggers that wash up on the shores of Yeahnahnesia, this small totem of the Double-plugger Chomper wards off busted double-pluggers as well as temple visitors with close-toed shoes.*

*Except Nikes, Adidas, you know that sort of thing. They're allowed.

Alien of Extraordinary Ability

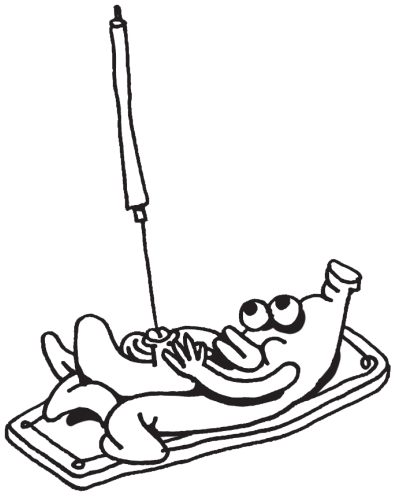
Aliens, they have abilities, they are extraordinary. Sometimes they go to Yeahnahnesia too... because it's a vibe. This Alien senses something coming in the air each night, this feeling builds up as though its been waiting its whole life. When the Alien gets this feeling it knows it's time to abruptly turn up the drum 'n' bass.

...continued on next page



Psychotropic Snail

These slow moving Psychotropic Snails are common throughout Yeahnahnesia. Consumed by locals during festive events, they bring about a mellow whole body buzz that develops into intense feelings of love and affection. After consuming these snails locals will dance through the night then wash away sins of the night with a surf at sunrise.

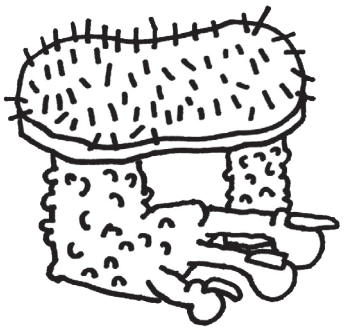


Lucky, Oops Banana Boner Incense Burner

The ritual of burning incense made from the psychotropic plants of Yeahnahnesia is common throughout the island.

...continued on next page

This particular incense burner is often used after the midnight hour at beach parties, with smoke from the burning stick drifting over lovers to ward against sand in intimate places.



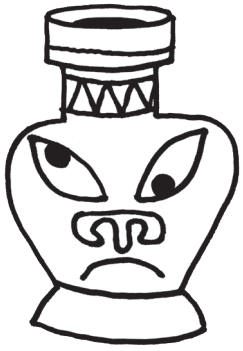
Sticky Icky Bench

The Sticky Icky Bench provides place for Yeahnahnesians to rest and air their sweaty feet. Because the bench is sticky, and a bit icky, you can get stuck here if you luxuriate too long. The bench has been known to get up and start walking you away to isolated scenic locations. Yeahnahnesians embrace this, however the bench might get lost if it starts walking around Perth so please make sure you don’t get stuck to it.

...continued on next page

Call your mum Smiley

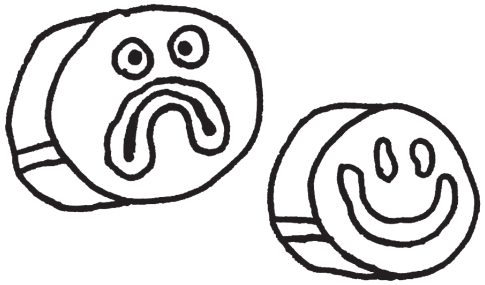
Yeahnahnesians are known to get lost in the moment, forgetting to check in with loved ones while talking about prime surf spots and who makes the best satay. The Call your mum Smiley is a friendly reminder that family just want to know you're safe and are keen to hear about your latest jungle adventures.



Baby Dragon Vase

The Dragon Baby Vase holds small things like dragons tears, toenail clippings, and in this case, the little aluminium tab thingys on the top of beer cans.

...continued on next page



Not in touch with my feelings, Face

Happy and sad at the same time, the not in touch with my feelings face feels a lot without knowing how to be in those feelings. The Elders of Yeahnahnesia wanted this object to be brought to AGWA for you to see, but the deeper meaning of this face is secret. The Elders suggest that if this object resonates with you that you spend some time in a relaxo zone.

Devil's Day Off Cabin

The Devil's Day Off Cabin at the rear of the temple aligns with the morning sun and the spring equinox, with a view down a lush tropical valley to the rolling waves below. The four pillars face north, west, east and south and provide a reliable forecast for incoming wind, swell and weather.

...continued on next page

Today, the islands Elders refer to these shacks as “cabins of maximum luxuriation” and are known to adopt the same rituals and daily routines that have been carried out within these walls for centuries. Such rituals include surf checks, ding repairs, board and bikini waxing, arts and crafts, yoga and meditation sessions.

Yeahnah scholar Daryl Mitchington states that: “the temple’s alignment, as well as the cabin’s contents and sculptural elements, all lead to the conclusion that the Devil is a shredder.”