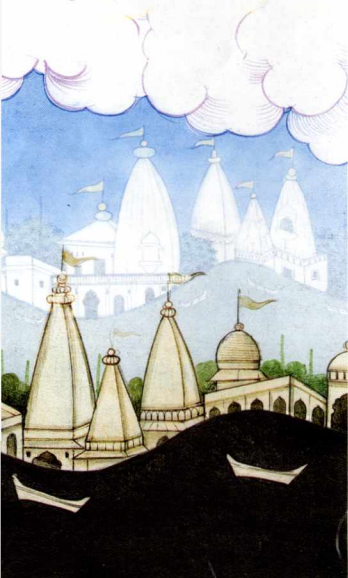




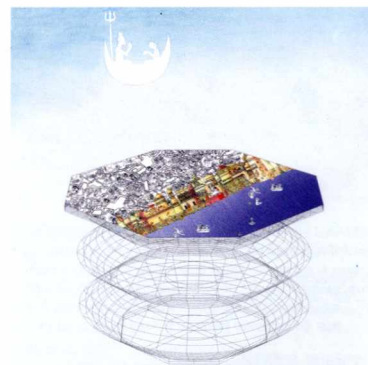
E-RICKSHAW

explore the Rickshaw stories
on the streets of Banaras by
steering the handle of a Rickshaw



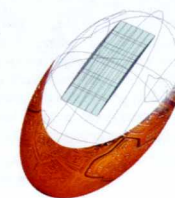
HYPER INSTRUMENT

explore the musical-scapes
of Banaras by plucking the
spokes of a Rickshaw wheel



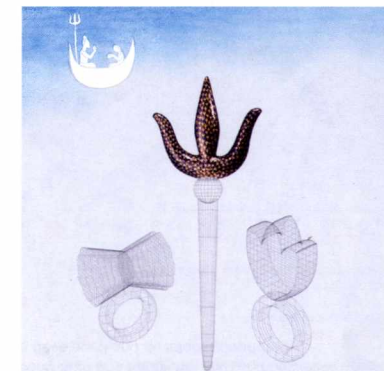
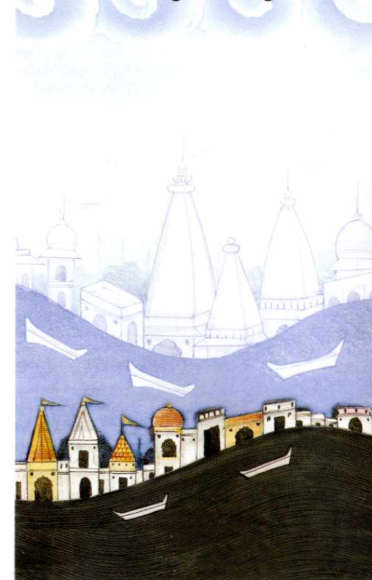
TILTY INTERFACE

tilt the display to scroll
through the streets of Banaras



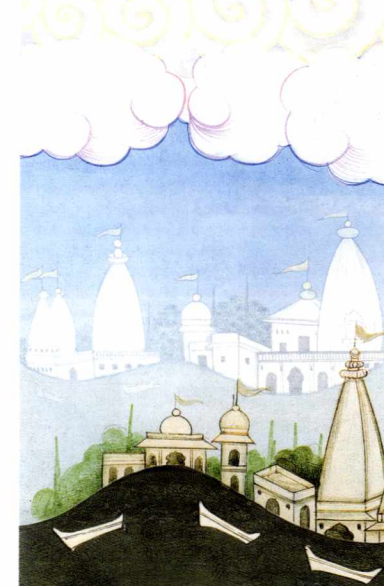
E-MAUJ MASTI EGG

hold the E-egg
in the palms of your hands
to explore the culture of Banaras
and see how people
delight in living



INTERACTIVE PHYSICAL ICONS

adorn your fingers with
the interactive icons to discover
Shiva's meta-identity





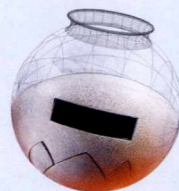
360° SWIVEL DISPLAY

swivel the display to explore
a panoramic view of the Banaras
temple spired skyline



ADI KESAVA BOX

click on the hotspots on the box
to explore the mythology
of Adi Kesava Ghat



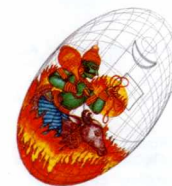
E-POTS

touch the hotspots on the pot
to explore myths and the
meaning of the river Ganges



E-JACKET

click on the hotspots on the
jacket and discover how the yogi
internalises the outer ecological
elements such as water, wind and
solar energy in his subtle body



E-KNOWLEDGE EGG

hold the E-egg in the
palm of your hands to learn
about the notions of death



The unique context of its past and its living present makes Kashi the most appropriate subject for exploration for future technology.

The Crossing exhibit consists of a collection of installations and interfaces that allow one to experience and access the multi-layered spaces of Kashi.

Cycle Jhala

Entering the narrow lanes of Banaras you are struck by the sound and rhythms of the two-seat bicycle rickshaw wheeling its way through bustling streets. Rickshaws ply in a single file or bustle in twos through the landscape, faithscape, and art-scape of Banaras.

This installation allows you to explore the geometry, sights and sounds, the order and chaos on the streets of Banaras, and the intimate bond that the rickshaw puller shares with his vehicle.

Mauj and Masti

The people of Banaras are famous for living in delight (*mauj*) and gay abandon. They exude a certain zest and passion for life which is best described as *Banarasipan*. They follow a way of life based on simplicity, carefreeness, contentment, and a love and addiction for some things typically Banarasi, such as chewing a mouthful of *pan*.

The Banarasis describe it as *mauj masti*, living and flowing on a wave of intoxication arising from sheer enjoyment of life. The street-sights, smells, colours, and textures reflect that Banaras is a city where life is relished to the fullest. This section allows you to enter the joyous maze of *samsara*.

Multiple forms of Shiva

From the here and now of daily life, we unravel the eternal city of Kashi, 'Luminous', so called because Shiva manifested here in his primal form as the Linga of Light. As a matter of fact, the whole of Kashi, is seen as a refraction of this light. Kashi, is the eternal dwelling place of Shiva where he resides in his multiple personifications. The installation allows you to see how artists interpret the icon, myths, and personifications of Shiva, together with the numerous ways in which the Shiva Linga is adored in Kashi.

Sacred Geography

The sacred landscape of Kashi is conceived of as a cosmic mandala and gathers together the entire pantheon of the gods. This section presents the place-specific myths, metaphors, and symbolic images associated with the magnificent *ghats* along the crescent-shaped river bank. Through especially developed browsers and displays we allow you to read the landscape as a sacred text, and explore the relationship of the *ghats* to the cosmic bodies and the elements.

Intellectual Heritage

Banaras is an eminent example of a city of learning. Throughout the ages, great philosophers, such as Buddha and Shankara, poet-saints such as Kabir and Tulsidas, pilgrims such as Huan Tsang, from far-off lands, travellers such as Mark Twain, and reformers such as Mahatma Gandhi, held debates, contributed to, and drew from the intellectual well-spring of the city.

In this section we trace the historical time-line of intellectual heritage of Banaras starting from the Jain *Tirthankara*, Parshavanatha (7 Century BC) and Buddha (5th Century BC) down to Gandhi in the 20th Century.

Ganga

Each wave of the Ganga, it is said, is a *tirtha*, a crossing place. Ganga is a life-line of Kashi's landscape. She is no ordinary river, but an empowering mother goddess who inspires reverence. She purifies and heals, and bestows fortune and salvation. We present the geoscape of Ganga, and interpretations on the mythical history of her descent from the heavens to the earth; the ritual interfaces of the Ganga from dawn to dusk, the life-cycle rituals performed at her banks, and the seasonal celebrations that celebrate her glory.

We explore some of the contemporary versus traditional 'mind over matter' debates on the pollution of the Ganga.

Death

To die In Kashi is liberation.
Skanda Purana IV.35.11

The notion of the good death is central to the sacred identity of Kashi. In Kashi, death is celebrated, is auspicious, and bestows spontaneous liberation. This section presents this unique notion of dying and liberation in Kashi. Together with this, eminent scholars, religious heads, and scientists interpret the theme of death, and conquest from the fear of death, from the perspective of their own disciplines.



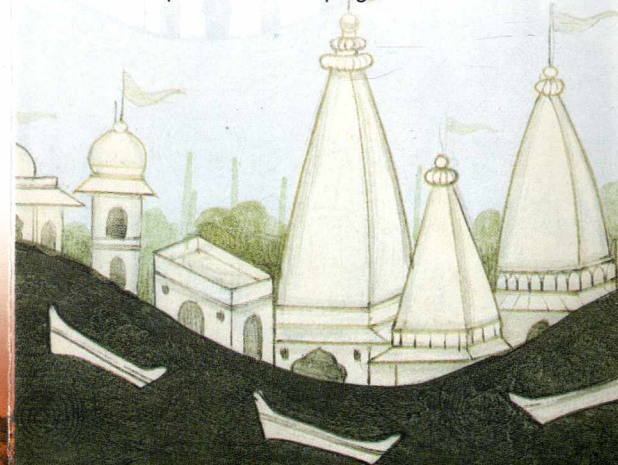
Ranjit Makkuni
Project Director - *The Crossing*

Ranjit Makkuni is a Xerox Palo Alto Research Center multimedia researcher, designer and musician. He joined the PARC Systems Concepts Lab in 1985 and became part of the visionary group which developed SmallTalk-80 Object Oriented programming language and the world's first Graphic User Interface.

His explorations in computer-aided design and research into new paradigms for interface and presentation led to an interesting research space, Active Learning. He applied that to The Electronic Sketch Book of Tibetan Thangka Painting, one of the world's first multimedia applications. In 1998, the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts and PARC collaboration, The Gita Govinda Multimedia Experience won acclaim.

Ranjit continues to explore non-button pushing, gesture based interfaces. His projects go beyond just demonstrating futuristic technology. In his current project, The Crossing, he brings to life the authenticity of traditional ideals on primal ecology, learning, and healing which are simultaneously contemporary. Participation of diverse artists, designers, and scholars preserves viewpoints of people whose skills face the threat of extinction.

Proficiency in multimedia technology as well as traditional art allow Ranjit to bridge multiple worlds -- between technology and art, the techno-man and traditional man and between the developed and developing worlds.



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Sangeet Natak Academy, New Delhi
Dakshinachitra Heritage Village
Madras Craft Foundation, Chennai
Tantra Foundation, New Delhi, Imperial Hotel, New Delhi
Ghalib Academy, New Delhi, Sanga Veda Vidyalaya, Varanasi
Rama Krishna Mission, Varanasi
Durga Kund Vridhashram, Varanasi, Kashilabh Mukti Bhavan
The Doms of Manikarnika Ghat
Til Bhandeshwar Temple, Varanasi
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Well Wishers

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Rajiv Gupta, Her Holiness Madhavi Ma, Shikha Ma,
Pandit Mahendra Pandey, Peeko Maharaj Singh,
Diana Chace, Cynthia Hirschorn, Rand Castile,
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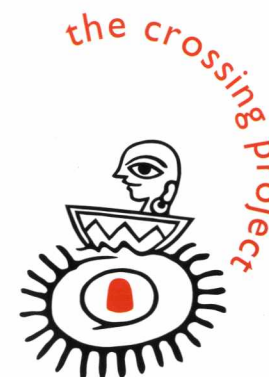


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Presents



The Crossing

**Living, Dying and
Transformation in Banaras**

*A Multimedia Experience Exhibition
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Interaction Design applied to India's
city of knowledge.*

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Xerox Palo Alto Research Center

parc

Set up in 1970, the Palo Alto Research Center (PARC) has played a distinct role in Xerox's research investment with transformative technologies for future business.

PARC invented distributed personal computing, established Xerox's laser printing business, and created the foundation for the digital revolution. Current PARC research aims at reducing mechanical complexity, lowering manufacturing costs, and creating new functionality in Xerox products.

For instance, DocuPrint NPS software designed by PARC drives Xerox high-end networked printers. Eureka knowledge sharing tool from PARC demonstrates the importance of the document in grassroots communication within the service community. Xerox product lines like the DocuTech, DocuPrint, and the Document Center use evolved laser technologies invented at PARC.

Today PARC continues to build on its capabilities, extending its vision beyond the physical office, to deliver a multitude of opportunities in the 'digital workscape'.

insight • innovation • impact

The Alto, the first personal computer, the laser printer and the Graphical User Interface (GUI) invented by Xerox Parc.



The Crossing Project: The Vision

We present a vision of Indian creativity and interaction design combining traditional and modern technology. As computing technology proliferates in the world, retaining identity becomes an important value in the new millennium. Hence, the time-tested visions of developing nations and ancient living cultures can shape the form of future information technology.

The Crossing Project is a pioneering effort bringing together futuristic, mobile, multimedia technology and archetypal content. With respect to technology, it questions the very form of a computing system and the Graphical User Interface paradigm, which has served as the substrate of modern computing systems for thirty years. The Crossing technology presents alternate paradigms of information access, integrating the hand and the body in the act of computer-based communication and learning. With respect to content, it brings to focus a traditional society's notion of eco-cosmic connections through mobile, multimedia technology-based connections. With respect to design, it incorporates the expressions of traditional arts and crafts in the design of expressive information delivery devices.

The Crossing Project demonstrates futuristic forms of information access in which the technology surrenders to the human hand. In this information age, in which our world has been progressively rendered abstract and learning concepts invisible, the Crossing Project has re-created forms that capture a civilization's primal symbols animated though embedded technology.

The Crossing

Throughout the world, lakes, forests, mountains, rivers have been seen as 'power spots' and concentrations of Nature's energies. Gradually, mythologies grew around these spots, and the union of myth and place creates a sacred geography. They became pilgrimage centres - Crossing Points - providing people with the setting to cross over into a world of learning and transformation. Banaras, lying by the banks of the Ganga is the Crossing Point that the Crossing Project examines.

Banaras

Banaras - Kashi - the oldest living city in the world, is described as a microcosm of Indian civilization. The multiple richness of Banaras invokes many different interpretations. The most significant of them is that Banaras is regarded as the greatest of all *tirthas*, Crossing Place, a 'transitional zone' to cosmic reality and a portal of spiritual liberation. The aura of divine presence envelopes Kashi much more than any other place. It is said that when Brahma weighed the sky with its Gods against Kashi, Kashi being heavier sank down to earth, and the sky soared above.

The countless myths, symbolic meanings, philosophical interpretations, and patterns of collective memory that have accrued around the city have given Banaras a distinctive personality, a city which englobes the whole of existence. It is a place where life is relished to the fullest, and fear of death is conquered, and where many choose to die to attain spontaneous liberation.



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