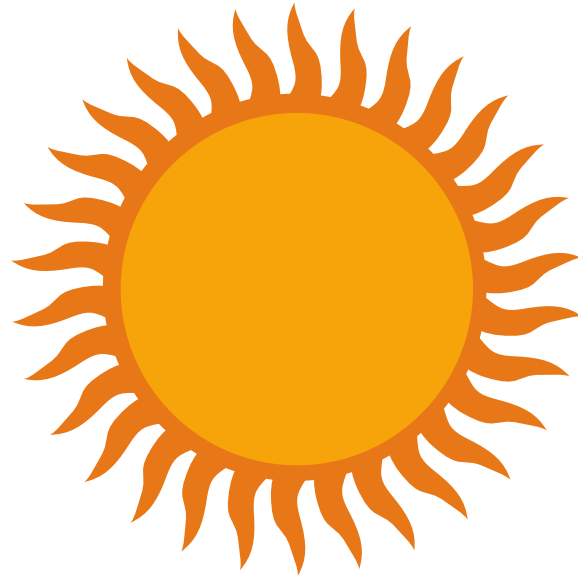


**ADITYA**  
**the Sun in the Indian Thought**  
**- an Exhibition**



A Visual Communication Project III

Submitted by:  
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Under the guidance of:  
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Submitted in partial fulfillment of requirement for the  
**Master of Design in Visual Communication**

IDC  
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Then gazing at the Sun, I could see countless radiant  
molecules glittering in its rays.....  
revolving at incredible speeds..  
dispelling the darkness of the world....  
inspiring thousands of streams of energy ....

What would happen if these molecules failed to appear  
even for a single day?

*Translated from the book  
Mrityunjaya by Shivaji Sawant*

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## CONTENTS

In India, since ancient times there have always been explanations about the Sun's activities in the fields of astronomy, philosophy, religion, cultural traditions and rituals. A brief study of these subjects proves the depth unto which people have given meaning to these phenomenons, occurring in their every day life.

Aditya, Sun in the Indian Thought is a documentation of the influences of the Sun in the daily life of the people in India and how they have perceived, understood and explained these influences. This fascinating subject of documenting the Sun has not been attempted before on these lines and will prove to be an awakening to the role played by this Supreme force which has been forgotten in many aspects.

An exhibition has been visualized to present this documentation to the general public. The presentation method attempts at the 'experience' approach in a manner which would involve the participation of the visitors. While this would by no means make understanding of concepts simpler, it would also help me explore better ways of presenting information to a larger target audience.

**NEED and OBJECTIVE**

## THE SUN in the INDIAN THOUGHT



With the break of dawn, a new day begins and the Sun begins its journey. With every passing hour it reaches out into the life of people, becoming an integral part of it.



**AIM**

People from different cultures respond differently to the environment around them. This response is in direct relation to their levels of observations and interpretation of what they perceive around them. In India, people have been distinguishing patterns in these observations and giving meanings to them. By doing so they assign roles to these influences in the order of the importance that these influences have on them. This project aims to make aware some elements of this response to a larger audience. The attempt of this documentation is not to 'revive' or 'preach' but to make people know and understand better of what has been and is around them.

**OBJECTIVE**

To conceptualize an exhibition which will be based on the findings of the study, the Sun in the Indian Thought. The exhibition shall present the Sun in its different forms to the general public.

### **DOCUMENTATION**

The content to be presented in the exhibition has evolved as a result of my personal attempts at understanding the subject.

No prior classification has been followed in developing the content. A list of possible areas of influence was made and possible classifications of this were then attempted. Information was then collected, reviewed before putting them into the different categories. These categories helped to explore the subject and also to present the documentation.

While the initial classification included the areas of influence from all over the world and in space too, the topic was then specifically focused to the area covering the -

**Sun in the Indian Thought.**

Information when collected in a context personal to the user always is more interesting while also evoking sensitivity of people towards their immediate surroundings.





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## **CLASSIFICATION**

The study has been broadly classified in eight categories. These classifications attempt to cover the varied manifestations of the Sun in the Indian Thought. The classification has been produced in the form of a booklet to give an idea of the nature of these topics. The topics shall be dealt in detail along with the conceptual approaches. Following themes were developed to cover the topic

**Sun as Energy**

**Sun and Time**

**Sun and Astronomy**

**Sun and the Navagrahas**

**Sun and Moon**

**Sun as God**

**Sun Worship**

**Representations of the Sun**

Information was gathered from the following

Meeting Subject Matter Experts

Books

Internet

A visit to the sun temple at Modhero



## **CONTENTS OF EXHIBITION**





## Sun and God

The Sun has been referred to as Surya and revered as a supreme being, as the Maker of the day, as the source of Light and Knowledge, as a healer and many other such associations. The Sun as God in itself shows the different spheres of influence of the Sun and their importance to man.

## Possible Exhibit Areas

Personification of Sun as Surya  
Attributes of Surya  
108 names of Surya, 12 Adityas  
Other deities with Surya  
Explanations of Solar activities  
Surya as healing power

The exhibition shall cover the eight section described earlier in a manner that he can relate to their nature individually and together as a whole

This exhibition will be unique in the sense that it will 'harness energy of the Sun' to explain the subject.

The exhibition shall try and 'reflect light on the Sun' by using the dynamic forces of light and heat as a communicating medium in the exhibition.

Direct involvement and participation of the visitor.  
The visitor can interact with the exhibits and experience the forces to understand the concepts clearly.

## DESIGN GOALS

The main intention being to let each visitor undergo his own personal experience, of getting to understand and feel the Sun. A variety of experiences shall be provided to the visitor, which he can control and thereby alter as per will. The exhibition will thus become a platform on which every visitor can build his own personal experience

In an attempt to facilitate the visitor to be able to relate to the eight sections distinctly and yet have one wholesome complete experience, two concepts were developed.

**Concept 1**

**A day with the Sun**

**Concept 2**

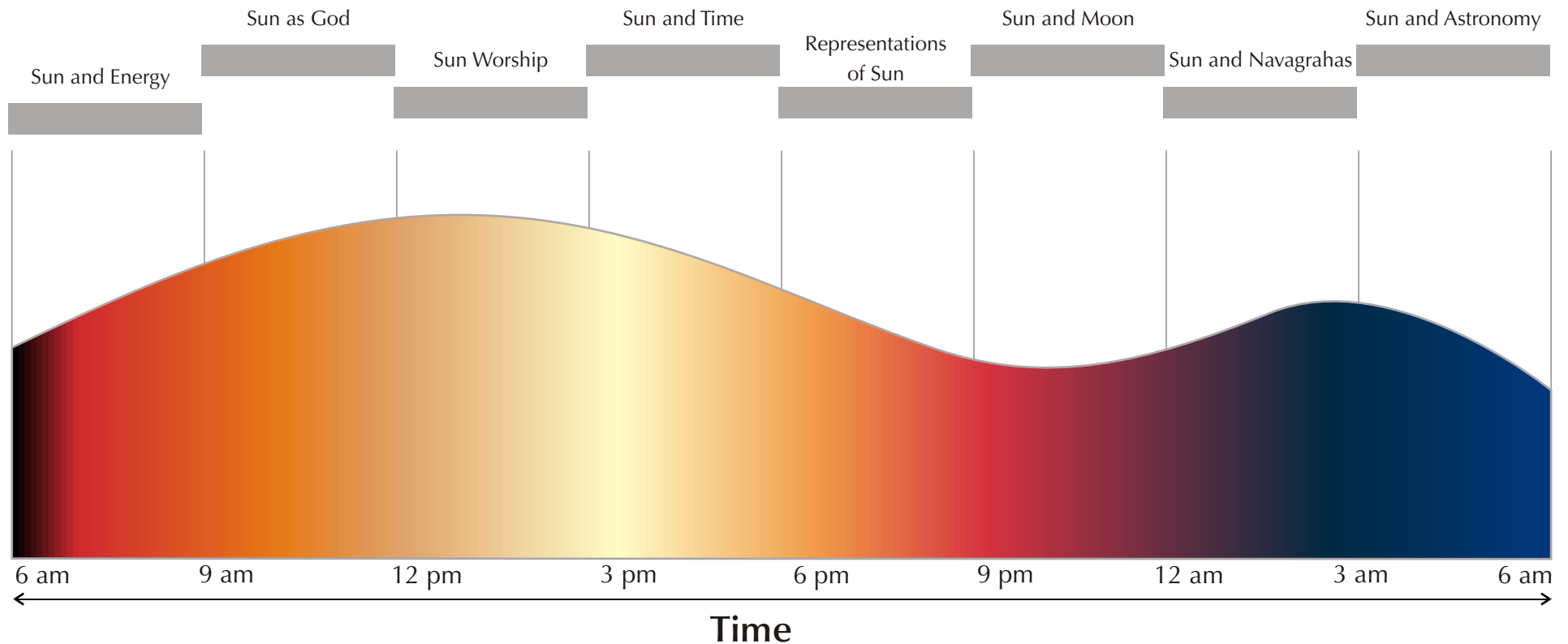
**Colours of the Sun**

These concepts would then decide how individual sections would develop based on the nature of the main concept.

## CONCEPTS FOR THE EXHIBITION

### CONCEPT 1 - A Day with the Sun

This concept attempts to create the experience of a visit to the exhibition as spending a complete day with the Sun. The eight sections are spread over the expanse of a day as per the character of each section. The feel of the day would in particular be emphasized by the treatment of space and light conditions inside the exhibition hall.



## CONCEPT 2 - Colours of the Sun

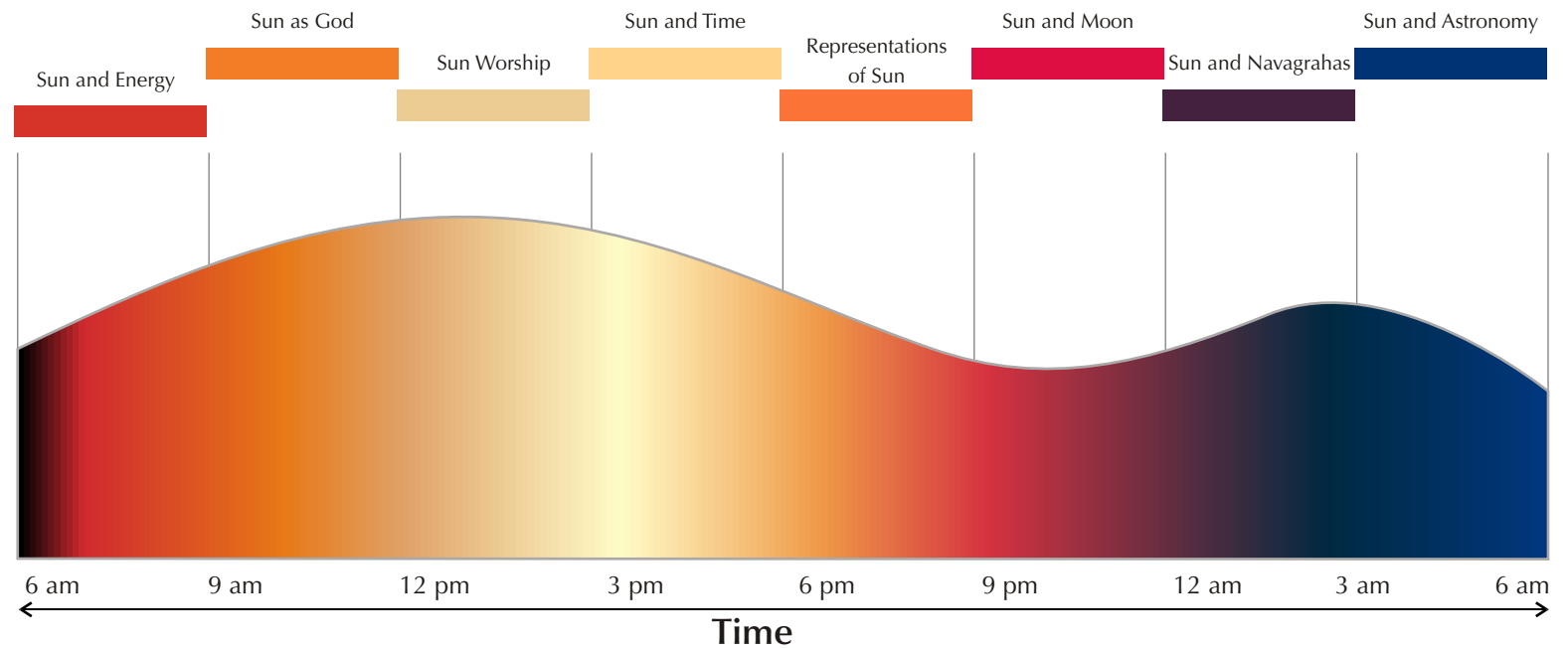
This concept attempts to associate each section with one of the seven colours of sunlight. This would depend on the nature and character of the section.

While at some level this forces the section into the available spectrum, it also lends itself to the possibility of exploring colour as a medium for defining character inside a given space. The particular hue then depending on its character could dictate norms for further development of the individual sections.





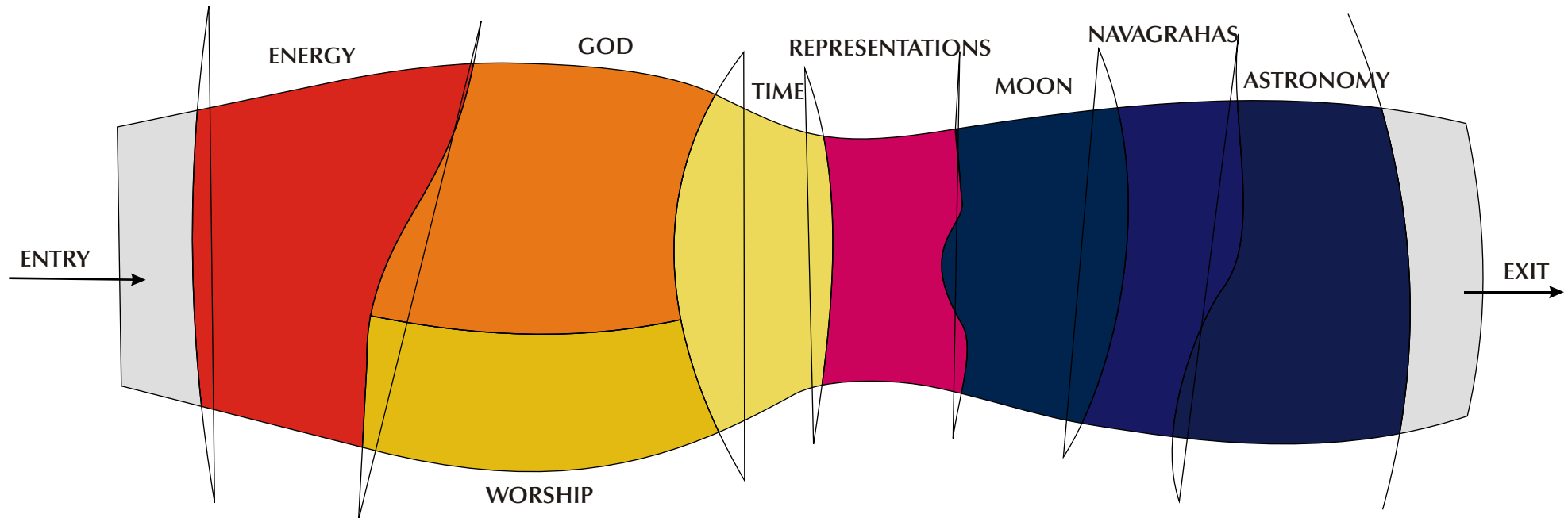
After evaluating both concepts, the first concept- **A Day with the Sun** was taken for further exploration. While the association was more better, the possibility of exploring lighting conditions was appropriate with the feel of the exhibition.



FINAL CONCEPT

## A DAY with the SUN

Spending the day with the maker of the day, the Sun. The event of a day marked physically by changing light conditions is also characterized by certain activities. The exhibition attempts at using associations to these activities and building an experience around them. By making the visitor participate and change the information that is being viewed, every visitor gets to have a very different and personal experience within the exhibition hall.



The circulation in the exhibition tends to a linear flow of movement. At dawn, the realization of the Sun as a source of ENERGY is felt. This energy is then revered as GOD and WORSHIPPED. By afternoon when the shadows are hard, the section on TIME where the use of these shadows due to their cyclic nature is visited. The colours of the setting Sun in the evening brings to light all the visible manifestation of the Sun in the REPRESENTATIONS of the Sun.

The section on the MOON marks the visitor's experience into the night and the dual nature of the day and night is felt. Further into the night the NAVAGRAHAS with their mystic powers and explanations hold the visitor's interest until the midnight finally creeps in with the dark sky and ASTRONOMY teaches the knowledge of the stars before the day is over.

## CONCEPTS FOR INDIVIDUAL SECTIONS

### DESCRIPTION OF THE THEME

This section where Sun is asserted as the source of all energy, marks the beginning of the exhibition and is located in the 1st paher (6am-9am) portion of the exhibition hall. The section shall attempt to make the visitor realize the most essential aspect of the Sun as a superior force of energy influencing all life forms.



### EXHIBIT CONTENT: #1

The **eight forms of energy** as mentioned in the *Sastras* which source from the Sun.

### EXPERIENCE TO BE CREATED

The visitor feels energy as closely as possible in its true or simulated form. Associations from the physical environment can then be evoked to create a better understanding. By providing a graphical or real life association, the connection is retained by the visitor even when he leaves the exhibition.

## SECTION 1- SUN and ENERGY



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### **Red Room**

A room which generates energy to all parts of the exhibition hall. The eight energy forms are simulated and explanations provided to understand the difference.

### **Energy Tunnel**

The visitor walks through a helical tunnel which initially begins with zero energy and then one by one each energy is introduced which guide him out of the tunnel.

## SECTION 1- SUN and ENERGY



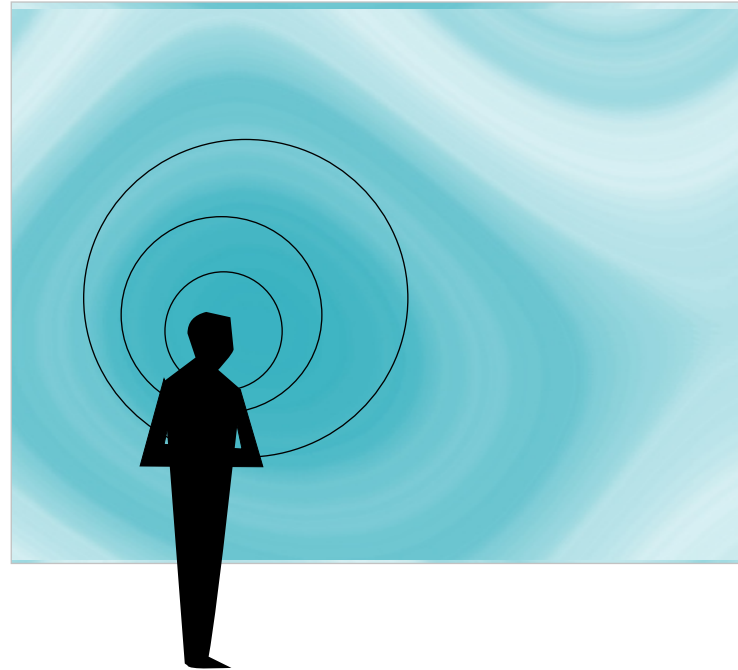
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### **Energy Generator**

The two concepts were combined. Two interlocking tunnels are created with a generator room in the center. As one goes towards the center of the interlock which is the source, the intensity of the energy e.g light and heat increases.

The visitor first feels the absence of energy. Later by additive method, he is introduced to each energy in isolation and then cumulatively.

## SECTION 1- SUN and ENERGY



## **EXHIBIT CONTENT: #2**

Solar energy and the human body.

**Solar energy and speech.**

**Energy points in the human body.**

## **EXPERIENCE TO BE CREATED**

Energy is always there in the human body. Every visitor is made aware of these energy points in himself by providing the information on his own self. So here the direct connection to the persons own body helps reinforce the idea better.

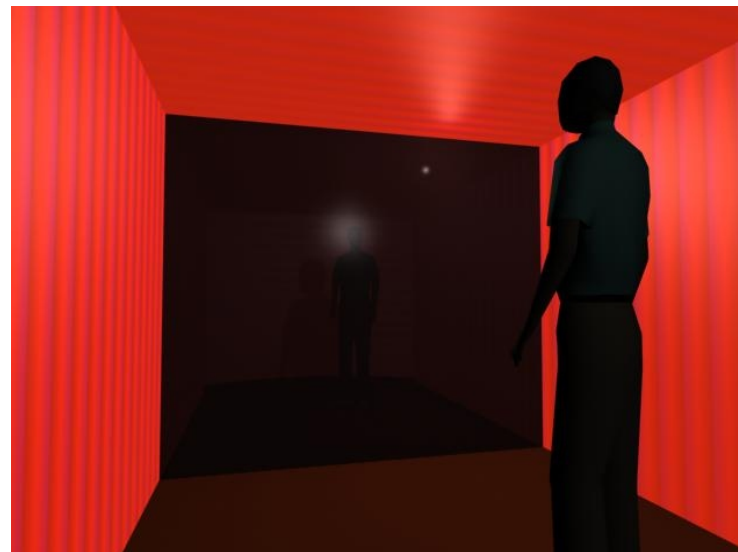
## **CONCEPTS**

### **Energy Meter**

The visitor speaks to a microphone mounted in the center of a large display panel. Depending on whether the content is a Anusara or Visarg, varying patterns emanate on the display panel indicating lunar and solar energy. The density of the patterns change as per the intensity with which the visitor speaks into it.

### **Energy Reflector**

The energy reflector is a huge sized mirror in which the visitor sees not only his reflection but also superimposed on it the different energy points.



## **SECTION 1- SUN and ENERGY**





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**DESCRIPTION OF THE THEME**

The Sun has been worshipped in various forms. In each form one attribute is highlighted and that power invoked.

**EXHIBIT CONTENT: #1****108 names**

In the Mahabharata, Yudhishtra prays to Surya by chanting his 108 names. Each name assigns a different power to Surya.

**EXPERIENCE TO BE CREATED**

The visitor can chant or hear the names and understand the significance behind that name.

**CONCEPT****108 Bells**

Before entering the main sanctuary, the visitor passes through a vestibule with 108 bells. On striking, each bell chants a different name of the Sun God. The walls alongside carry information regarding the significance of these names.

## SECTION 2 - SUN as GOD



#### **EXHIBIT CONTENT: #2**

##### **Sun and other deities**

The Sun God is associated with a number of other deities. Stories of the Sun and these deities have connected the explanations of many a phenomenon. This exhibit shall make available to the visitor these connecting relationships of the Sun and the deities

##### **EXPERIENCE TO BE CREATED**

The visitor can read through the many stories which are both written and graphically illustrated

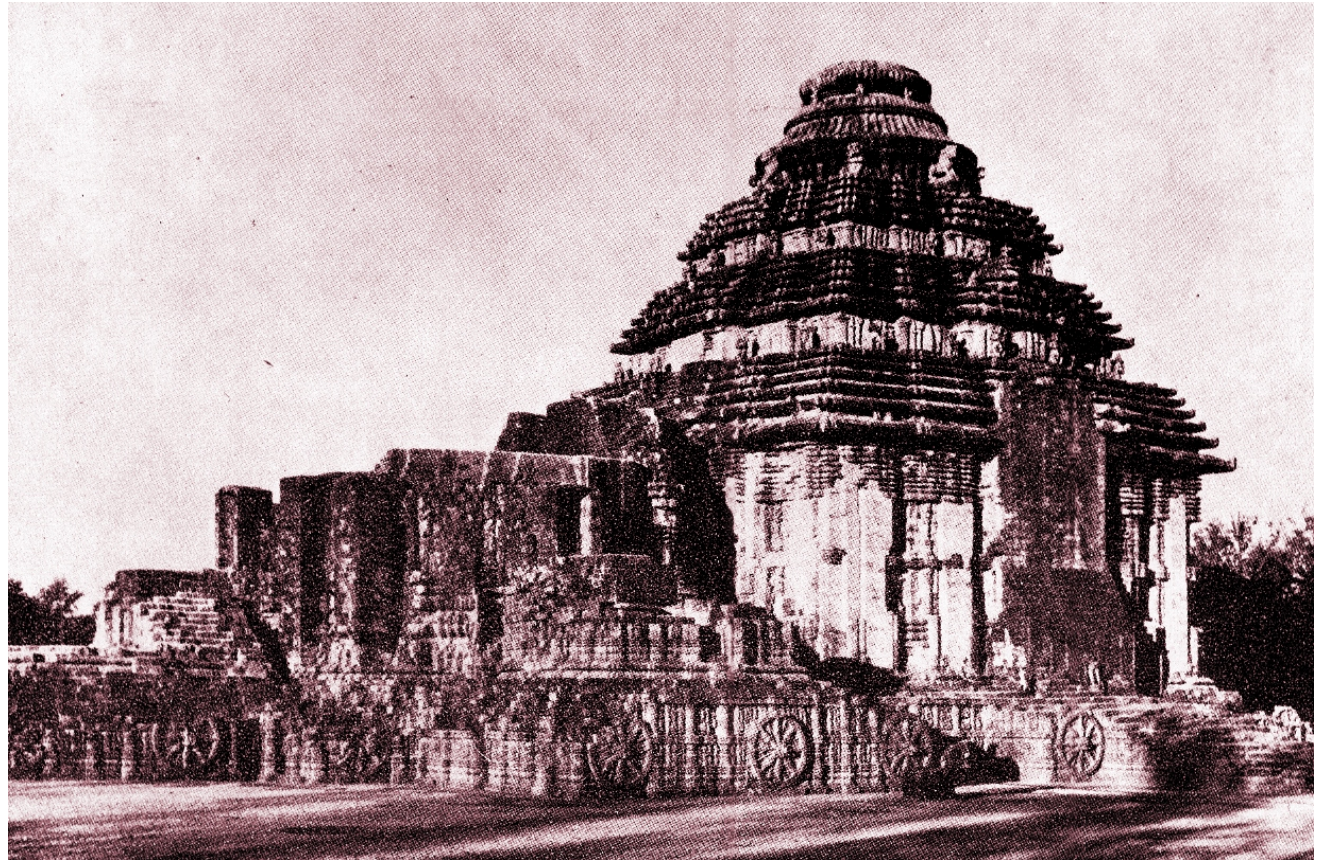
#### **CONCEPT**

##### **The temple pillars**

Pillars in temples carry friezes with sculpted stories on them. Taking this association and introducing a scrolling story panel in free standing pillars, many stories can be made available to the visitor. Each face of the pillar shall carry different stories. The visitor can read them at his own pace.

## **SECTION 2 - SUN as GOD**





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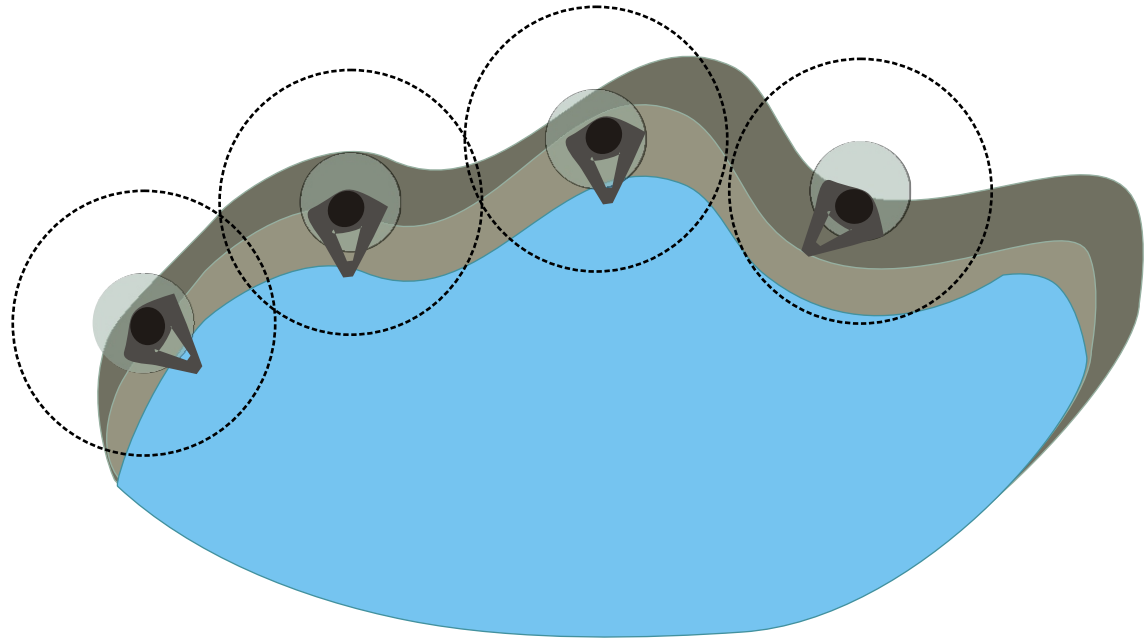
**DESCRIPTION OF THE THEME**

This section deals with the means in which man has worshiped the Sun. Temples, hymns, festivals are some of the ways the Sun was venerated and celebrated as a divine entity.

**EXHIBIT CONTENT: #1****Model of Konark Temple**

A large number of Sun Temples found all over the country are signs of the Sun worship prevalent in ancient times. A replicated model of one of these temples, The Konark Temple will be available for the visitors in the worship section.

## SECTION 3 - SUN WORSHIP



Visitors offering prayers at the pond

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**EXHIBIT CONTENT: #2**

**Prayers and Hymns**

A large number of prayers and hymns have been addressed to the Sun invoking strength and spiritual energy.

**EXPERIENCE TO BE CREATED**

The visitor is shown how the Sun is worshipped in different ways. If so desired, he can worship the Sun in this section.

**CONCEPT**

**The River Bank**

A waterbody has been provided inside the section along which steps have been provided. When a visitor stands on the steps and offers water as an offering, he can hear prayers to the Sun. Different points on the edge chant different prayers in a low volume audible to the person making the offering.

**SECTION 3 - SUN WORSHIP**



#### **DESCRIPTION OF THE THEME**

This section deals with the methods used to measure time in relation to the movement of the Sun in the sky.

#### **EXPERIENCE TO BE CREATED**

The visitor should be able to understand and measure the basic units of time. This activity can either be natural or simulated to give the experience of actual passage of time.

#### **CONCEPT**

##### **Man as Sundial**

A skylight brings the Sun into this portion of the hall. A sundial is calibrated to indicate the time of the day when a visitor stands at its center.

Subsequent concentric discs around the sundial would then indicate the different breakup of time with the day as a primary unit.

The visitor becomes sensitive to the movement of the sun in the sky and would always carry this experience every time he looks at his shadow.

## **SECTION 4 - SUN and TIME**



### **DESCRIPTION OF THE THEME**

The Sun in the Madhubani painting, in the embroidered towels of Orissa, the Sun in Kalidasa's Meghdoot and many more are all the different ways people have tried to present their experience or perception of the Sun they see everyday. This section is not merely a collection of such artefacts but a reflection of innumerable variations on a single theme. Broadly this section is classified into two,

#### **Graphic art representations and Literature References (audio and written)**

This section is located in the 5th part i.e evening portion of the exhibition (6pm-9pm) to associate the variations of the collection with the changing colours of the evening sky and its subsequent transition to dark night.

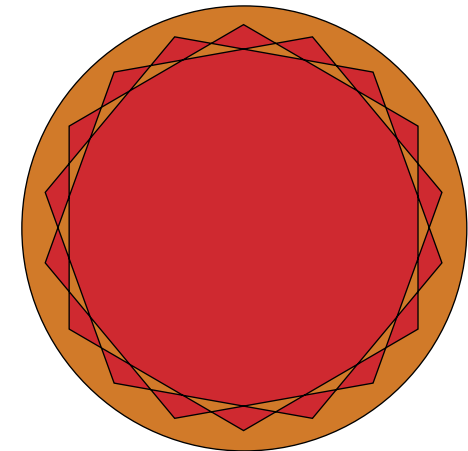
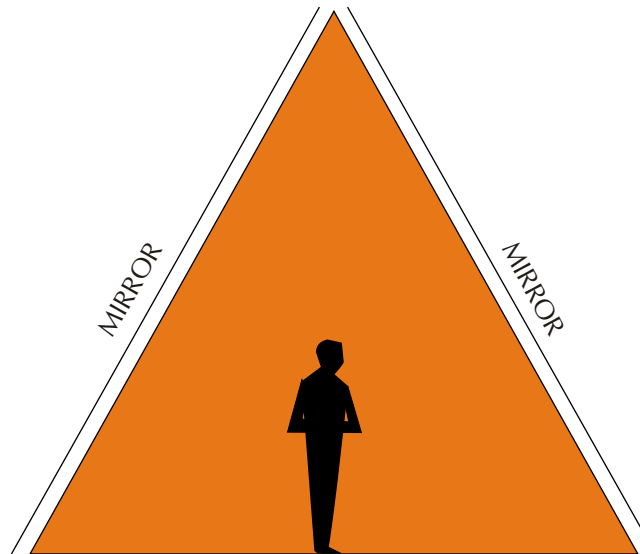
### **EXHIBIT CONTENT**

The collection would contain-  
Actual artefacts (Paintings, Carvings, etc)  
Reproduced versions of the original.  
Photocopies of the objects in case reproduction was not possible.  
As the list is not exhaustive, the design demands that provision be made for a growing collection.

### **EXPERIENCE TO BE CREATED**

Each object was a personal expression of an individual's perception. The section could translate itself to a platform where every visitor could leave his personal experience with the Sun while viewing the work of other people.

## **SECTION 5 - REPRESENTATIONS OF THE SUN**



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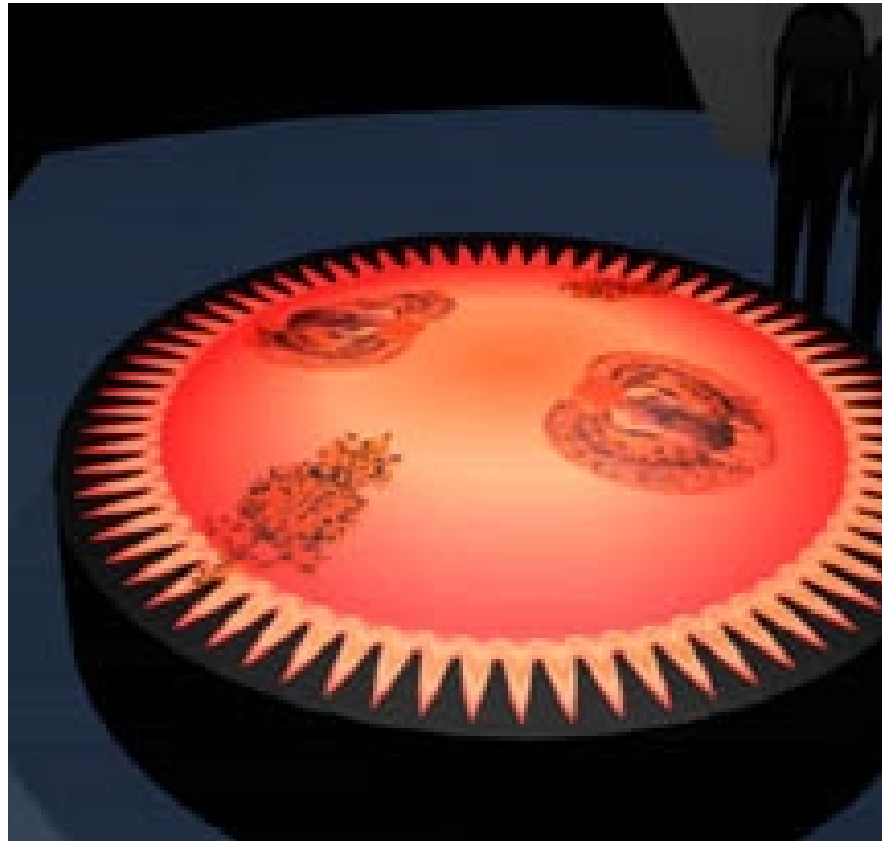
### **Sun Kaleidoscope**

All possible variations are randomly viewed in a huge sized kaleidoscope. The visitor can rotate the kaleidoscope to view more variations. As each rotation would end with a unique result, every visitor will have his own personal experience with the exhibit. Addition to the contents can also be easily done.

### **Solar Disc**

A panel on which the visitor could draw and write and leave his impressions of the Sun. This gets added to the exhibit collection. The panel could also serve as a display of all objects.

## SECTION 5 - REPRESENTATIONS OF THE SUN



### **Solar Disc**

The solar disc is a circular panel on which the visitor can write or draw or speak to. The disc keeps spewing out images from the collection of section. The inputs by the visitor is recorded and added to the collection. A continuous flow of images and audio in a randomized manner ensure that the output viewed at any given time is different and unique to the visitor.

The visitor is given an opportunity of expressing his perceptions and interpretations of the Sun. The visitor input data can be refreshed on a daily or weekly basis. The experience will be a unique one where the visitor can see his personal mark alongside other exhibits.

## **SECTION 5 - REPRESENTATIONS OF THE SUN**





### DESCRIPTION OF THE THEME

This section deals with duality of Sun and Moon and their influence when they co-exist.

### EXPERIENCE TO BE CREATED

The visitor should be able to understand the absence and presence of two opposing forces. In the absence of one the other is present.

### CONCEPT

#### **Mooning the Sun**

A panel with all solar symbols over which a moon can be moved. As the moon moves over distinct symbols, the opposite symbol from the lunar category is revealed. The Moon symbolizes the night and the Sun the day. As the Moon moves over the panel, 'night' is created depicting all lunar symbols. When the moon recedes, day is back with all solar symbols on the panel.

## SECTION 6 - SUN and MOON

### DESCRIPTION OF THE THEME

This section deals with the influences of the Sun and the other eight planets. While there is considerable amount of rich imagery in terms of iconography of the planets, some of the concepts in abstraction needed to be made understandable to the visitor.

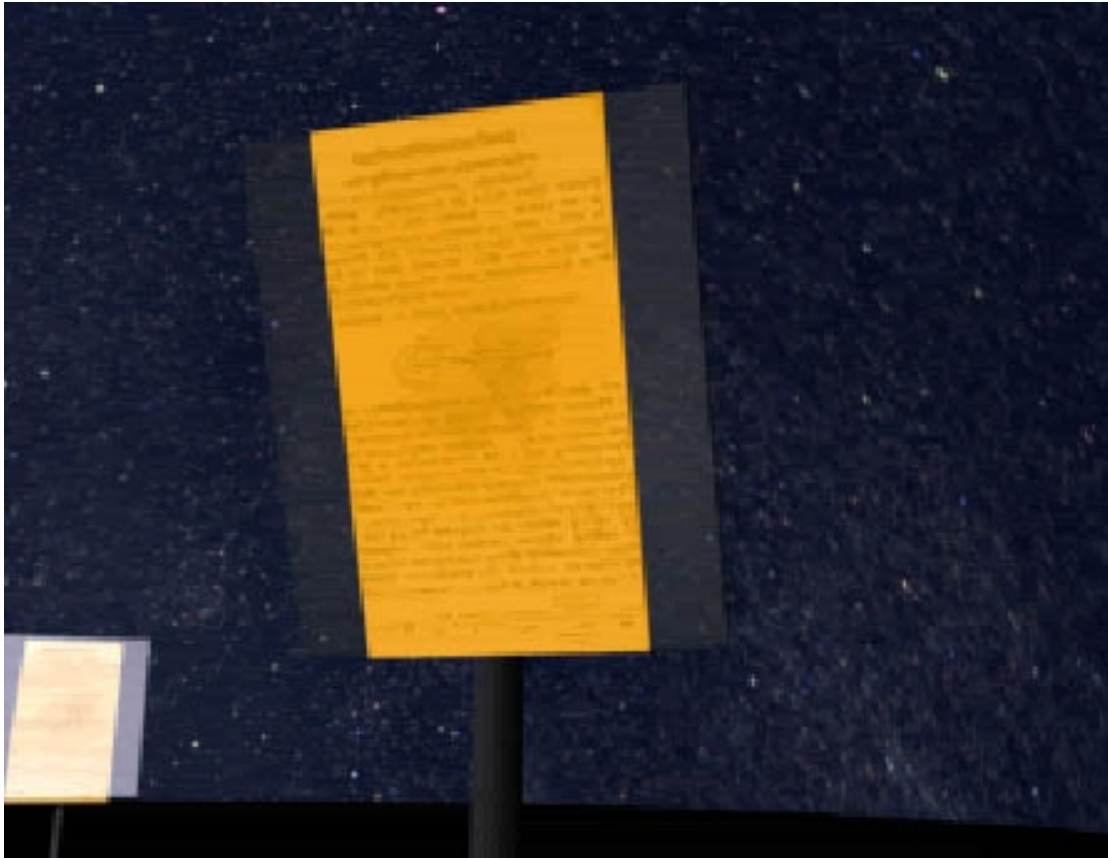
### EXHIBIT CONTENT: #1

#### Graha

A cubical room with information on all the walls and the ceiling provides information of the different influencing powers as the Sun moves in the 12 houses of the horoscope. When a visitor moves the Sun on the table provided, the information on the walls change respectively to indicate the changing influence. The visitor can move the Sun in the 12 houses which is marked on the table. Similarly all other planets can also be moved to different combinations and subsequently information on walls also change.



## SECTION 7 - SUN and NAVAGRAHAS



### DESCRIPTION OF THE THEME

Mystical interpretations of the movement of stars and planets developed into astrological science, and astronomy grew into a major factor in the intellectual pursuits of different cultural periods. The Sun was an integral part of this science. Various methods of measuring the cyclic changes brought about by the Sun have been detailed by various astronomers and in the developmental stages of the science

### EXHIBIT CONTENT: #1

The different *Siddhantas* indicating the developmental stages of explaining the night sky with the Sun as the central figure

### EXPERIENCE TO BE CREATED

The visitor is to take a run down the history of astronomy and how the position of the Sun was pivotal in learning about the night sky.

### CONCEPT

#### The Night Sky Dome

A night sky is simulated on the inside of a dome. From different points inside the hall the night sky can be viewed through circular screens. These screens overlay information on the night sky. Each screen represents different phases or the *Siddhantas* and the same night sky thus provides different learning material as one keeps moving from screen to screen.

## SECTION 8 - SUN and ASTRONOMY

**Surya The Sun God**, Shakti M. Gupta, Somaiya Publications Pvt Ltd 1977

**Indian Astronomy A Source Book**, BV Subbarayappa and KV Sharma, Nehru Centre, Bombay 1985

**The Astronomical Observatories of Jai Singh**, G R Kaye, The Director General Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi 1982

**Science & Technology in India through the Ages**, Shri BK Srivathsa and Shri MA Narasimhan, Academy of Sanskrit Research, Melkote 2003

**Mrityunajaya The Death Conqueror**, Shivaji Sawant, P Lal & Nandani Nopany 1989

**The Sun, In Myth and Art** Madanjeet Singh, Thames and Hudson Ltd 1983

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