

Xinga

Lenore Snell Borisova and Andrew Chau

1999-2000

The Xinga project was intended to explore new modalities for interacting with multimedia spaces. Several users would enter into an immersive visual and auditory environment comprised of no visible computers or input devices. Instead, the space would include a few objects reminiscent of toys that could be manipulated by the users. This would influence multiple overlapping layers of musical animations that would advance and transform in response to the users' input. The space would model a playground environment, recalling a nonlinear childhood exploratory experience and helping remove preconceptions of user interfaces. The users would discover how to interact with the space and with each other to create a concordant joint audio-visual display.

The prototype implementation of Xinga consisted of a geodesic dome with projected displays of Flash 4 animations. We constructed physical objects that were fitted with gyroscopic wireless mice (a precursor to the now popular Wii controllers) that the subjects would interact with in order to directly or indirectly control the Flash presentation. Flash ActionScript was used to direct the controls to simultaneous, overlapping layers of the animation. The project was housed in a self-contained portable environment that would not be restricted to a particular physical locale.

