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Mexican envoy lauds Biennale's knowledge base

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Jaime Nualart, Ambassador of Mexico to India, at the Kochi-Muziris Biennale. -Photo: S. Anandan

The most audacious aspect of the Kochi-Muziris Biennale has been its knowledge base, and success in bringing to town eminent artists and curators along with a cluster of contemporary artistic concepts and practices, said Mexican Ambassador to India Jaime Nualart.

“Though just two editions old, the Biennale has been able to attract well-known artists and curators. The concept of the Biennale is well-defined and the works make perfect sense, coherent as they are with the concepts that are to be translated,” Mr. Nualart told *The Hindu* at Aspinwall House, the main venue of the Biennale, during an interaction.

While he toured the maiden Kochi-Muziris Biennale as a visitor, this time around, he has come in connection with the support extended by the embassy to Mexican artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer.

Besides Mr. Lozano-Hemmer's work ‘Pan anthem’ — which he thinks is illustrative, poetic and political — a 10-minute film, ‘Nummer acht: Everything is going to be alright’ by Dutch artist and filmmaker Guido van der Werve impressed him no end. The film has the artist walking on ice sheets covering water as a mammoth ice-breaking ship trails him menacingly, hardly 10 metres behind. “It's poetic; impressive,” exclaims Mr. Nualart, a rightful heir to author and former Mexican Ambassador to India Octavio Paz.

“Paz's second tenure in India was between 1962 and 1968. He was very much interested in Indian thought and philosophy, which found their reflections in his works *The Monkey Grammarian* and *East Slope*. Both were written during his term in India. Paz's residence was a melting pot of different cultures and disciplines — it was a culture enthusiast's refuge,” says Mr. Nualart on his acclaimed predecessor and the cultural ties India forged with Mexico. The KMB also attains a similar feat, by bringing people from all over the world together, where local narratives and provincial practices acquire global dimensions, he notes.