



Kochi- Muziris Biennale Report

November 2017

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Foreword - Kochi Biennale Foundation

The 'Kochi-Muziris Biennale' was always envisioned as a change-maker. It was birthed with the intention of impacting the way people thought about art, about culture and very importantly, about ideas. In a city with historical international pedigree, an exhibition showcasing the best of contemporary art would both be a source of inspiration and a catalyst of various kinds of changes, heralding a new era of internationalism. The founding trustees of the Kochi Biennale Foundation, under the mentorship of the Government of Kerala, believed that this effort could affect both social and economic innovation in a society that had gradually reduced the size of its ambitions.

In 2016, the Kochi Biennale Foundation organised the third edition of the Biennale. We believe that it is now time-appropriate to look at whether the intentions that this organisation was created with have been realised.

In 2013, at the end of the first edition of the Kochi-Muziris Biennale, the Foundation commissioned a study along similar lines, which tabulated the impact of India's first and only biennale. This study by KPMG in India, which was conducted right after the end of the landmark third edition, looks at a wider spectrum of the socio-cultural impact of the Biennale, on various stakeholders that either directly or indirectly participate in this effort.

The Kochi Biennale Foundation is very thankful to Vidhya Mohankumar of the Urban Design Collective, for her efforts in mapping the effects and reactions to the Biennale, painstakingly conducting interviews and tabulating findings. We are also extremely proud to have KPMG in India team with us in this research report, and to have the benefit of their analysis and readings.

The Kochi-Muziris Biennale would not be a reality without the support and co-operation of many different sectors, individuals and particularly the many quarters of the Government of Kerala. We'd like to thank Mr. Pinarayi Vijayan, Chief Minister; Mr. Thomas Isaac, Minister of Finance; Mr. Kadakampally Surendran, Minister for Devaswom, Tourism and Co-Operation; Mr. AK Balan; Minister for Welfare of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes, Law, Culture and Parliamentary Affairs; Mr. E. Chandrasekharan; Minister for Revenue and Housing. We'd also like to thank Dr. V Venu, Principal Secretary, Tourism; Mrs. Rani George, Secretary, Cultural Affairs; Mr. P H Kurian, Principal secretary, Revenue; Dr. K M Abraham, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance. We'd like to extend our gratitude to Mr. MA Baby, former Minister of Education and Culture; Mr. G. Vijayaraghavan, (former Kerala State Planning Board member); Mrs. Soumini Jain, Mayor of Kochi, and officials

of the Kochi Municipal Corporation; Prof. K V Thomas, MP; Mr. K J Maxi, MLA; Mr. John Fernandez, MLA; Mr. Hibi Eden, MLA; Mr. K. Mohammed Y. Safirulla, Collector of Ernakulam, and officials of the Collectorate; Mr. M P Dinesh IPS; District Police Chief; Dr Adeela Abdulla, former Sub-Collector of Kochi. We'd like to thank the Commissioners of Customs and Central Excise, the Cochin Port Trust, the Southern Naval Command, the Coast Guard in Kochi, the Kochi Labour Commissioner, the Kerala Commissioner of Commercial Taxes, Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB), the Kochi RTO, the Ernakulam Fire and Rescue Department, Mr. Elias George of the Kochi Metro, Mr. V J Kurian of CIAL. We'd also like to thank the media, for their continued support. Our gratitude also to Mr. PK Hormis Tharakan and Mr. Subhash Chandran, former Trustees of the Kochi Biennale Foundation.

We hope you find this report both interesting and useful. We hope it answers the question, 'Why have a biennale in Kochi?'

Trustees

Kochi Biennale
Foundation



Foreword - KPMG in India

I am delighted to present the second edition of this report on the Kochi-Muziris Biennale. The Biennale is an initiative that I have always admired, right from when it was a dream nurtured by the Kerala Minister M.A. Baby and artists Bose Krishnamachari and Riyas Komu. It is exciting to see how the festival has rapidly grown to become one of the leading global festivals of contemporary art along the lines of its European counterpart, the Venice Biennale.

The name of Muziris evokes India's place in the marketplace of global flows of ideas, knowledge and trade; Muziris was once an eastern analogue of Venice and welcomed traders from as far away as Phoenicia and Rome; through its portals St Thomas is said to have arrived in India and Islam followed some seven centuries later.

The Kochi-Muziris Biennale makes claim to an important legacy of syncretism, of an openness to the world. It is gratifying therefore to see it live up to its promise and become a platform to showcase and debate new Indian and international aesthetics and art experiences.

And to see the alleys and streets of Kochi bustle with a new vibrance of artists, residents and visitors from all walks of life getting to see the best of contemporary art during the three months while the event is underway.

This report is divided into seven sections, covering the Biennale's introduction, evolution, components, venues, sponsorship, impact so far and the way ahead. It is aptly titled The People's Biennale considering the huge number of art enthusiasts from across the world who congregated in Kochi to be part of this creative confluence.

KPMG in India is proud to have been a Knowledge Partner for the Kochi Biennale. You might ask, what does an accounting and advisory firm have to do with art? The truth is that art and business have often flourished together, one nourishes the growth of the other. It is perhaps no coincidence that double entry book keeping was invented in Florence which we know equally as a center of artistic renaissance. The Kochi Biennale, as a by-product, has the potential to advance Kochi and Kerala as a business hub.

In our role as Knowledge Partners, we reviewed the economic contribution of the arts and culture in Kochi along with the impact of the investment that the Government of Kerala provided by significantly supporting arts and cultural facilities and services during the three months the event was underway.

The findings of this report indicate that the Biennale generated widespread economic benefits which

are sustainable. And, also provided access to great cultural experiences, promoting innovation and creativity.

On behalf of KPMG in India, I would like to congratulate all the organisers and the participants for making this dream into a vibrant reality. I wish the entire team of Kochi Biennale the very best in building on their considerable accomplishments and placing Kerala and India on the mental maps of creative people around the world.

Arun Kumar

Chairman and CEO
KPMG in India



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Introduction



During December 2016–March 2017, the city of Kochi, in Kerala, India, played host to the third edition of the Kochi–Muziris Biennale (KMB). Known to host various national as well as international art and culture works, the Biennale has been growing since its inception in 2012. The biennale has evolved as a pilgrimage to art and culture enthusiasts, and puts Kerala, and India, on the global cultural platform.

The event is organised by the Kochi Biennale Foundation, a non-profit public charitable trust co-founded in 2010 by artists Bose Krishnamachari and Riyas Komu. With support from the Government of Kerala, the Kochi Biennale Foundation aims to broaden public access to art across the country and gain national consensus on investment in contemporary art infrastructure.⁰¹

Kochi has remained the chosen destination to host the event owing to its rich cosmopolitan heritage and cultural significance. The Chief Minister (CM) of Kerala, Pinarayi Vijayan, describes the Biennale as the gateway between Kerala and the world, with diverse expressions of international art and culture

moving freely and being brought together under one umbrella. The major purpose of the exhibition is to increase awareness amongst the people at large, generate new target audience in order to promote contemporary art practices and preserve the cultural heritage of the nation.⁰²

The first Kochi–Muziris Biennale in 2012 was known for its site specificity, while the second edition was about the curator's conceptual 'journey'. This third edition in 2016–17, was concerned with time — philosophically, materially and politically.⁰³ The opening edition in 2012 saw participation of 89 artists from 23 countries, while the recent edition lasted for 108 days, with 97 artists from 31 countries.⁰⁴ It featured works by visual artists and performance professionals from India as well as other countries, including France, Turkey, Germany, Slovenia and Australia.⁰⁵

The 2016-17 edition titled 'Forming in the pupil of an eye' reflects the theme as elucidated in the words of the curator Sudarshan Shetty: "The eye is the only reflective organ in the body and it reflects as much back into the world as it takes.

'Forming in the pupil of an eye' is not an image of one reality but a reflection of multiple realities and of multiple possibilities in time."

Embassies of several countries, including the Australian Embassy, Embassy of Norway, Embassy of Spain and Embassy of France; arts councils; Swedish Art Grant Committee's International Programme for Visual and Applied Artists, the Alkazi Foundation for the Arts, Kiran Nadar Museum of Art and Istituto Italiano Di Cultura, also contributed to the event.⁰¹ The patrons of the event included Aarti and Amit Lohia (Lohia Foundation), Anju Shah (G P Foundation), Asha Jadeja (Jadeja Motwani Family Foundation), Feroze and Mohit Gujral (Gujral Foundation/Outset India), Pheroza Godrej (Godrej Group) and Yusuff Ali M.A. (Lulu Group International).

The event is, thus, a major driver of arts and culture in Kerala and across India as well. This report aims to recognise the contribution of the Kochi Biennale Foundation to organise such an event on a worldwide scale and to bring out the treasure of art and culture rooted in the Indian soil.

01. Kochi-Muziris Biennale, website accessed on 24 March 2017

02. Kochi-Muziris Biennale 2016: 108 day celebration of contemporary art marks fest's third edition, First Post, 12 December 2016

03. Biennial Foundation website, accessed on 24 March 2017

04. Kochi-Muziris Biennale off to a flying start; govt to find a permanent venue for the art event, The Indian Express, 13 December 2016

05. Scene set for Kochi-Muziris Biennale to get under way, The Hindu, 4 December 2016

“ Though the Biennale is primarily an art event, it has economic and social benefits too. It has energised the tourism sector. The statistics show that lakhs of cultural enthusiasts surged to Kochi from around different corners of the world to view the first two editions. Both Kochi and Kerala benefit from this influx. ”

Pinarayi Vijayan
Chief Minister of Kerala

“ The final list of artists is but a sampling of the richness and range to be found along the art spectrum. The coming together of and the conversations between their diverse approaches, sensibilities, practices, creations and performances as they unfold in Kochi will showcase to the world what the ‘People’s Biennale’ is all about.”

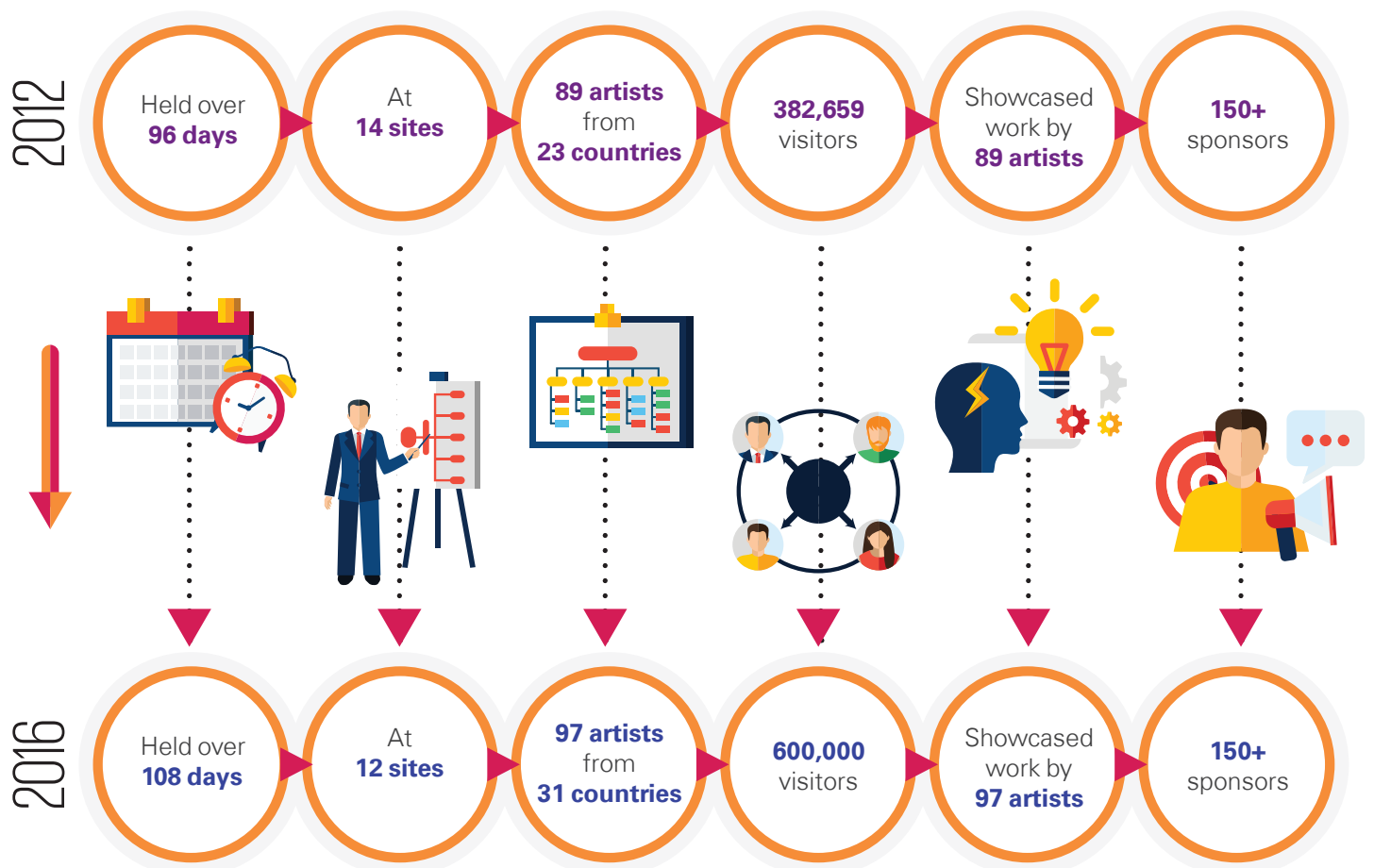
Sudarshan Shetty,
Curator and Artistic Director,
KMB 2016



Evolution of the Biennale

The inaugural edition of the Kochi-Muziris Biennale opened on 12 December 2012 and ran until 13 March 2013. It featured 89 artists from 23 countries, including 44 artists from India.⁰¹

The recent edition opened on 12 December 2016, but went on till 29 March 2017 to host work by 97 artists from 31 countries.⁰²



01. Kochi-Muziris Biennale, website accessed on 24 March 2017

02. Kerala Tourism, website accessed on 24 March 2017



Programmes of the Kochi Biennale Foundation



Students' Biennale

One of the major initiatives of the Foundation outside the Kochi-Muziris Biennale itself is the Students' Biennale project. The Students' Biennale, organised in association with Foundation for Indian Contemporary Art (FICA) and Foundation for Indian Art and Education (FIAE), aims to be a contribution to the pedagogic framework of art education in India. The process for the 2016 Students' Biennale commenced in November 2015, with the appointment of the fifteen young curators who would put together the final exhibition. The curators themselves have been mentored by leading artists, curators and academics. They have also been trained at curatorial workshops organised at various times during the past year in Kochi, New Delhi and Bengaluru.

In addition to their research at over 50 art colleges across the country, curators from the Students' Biennale also organised special workshops that brought increased and diverse exposure to contemporary art practices to the students of these colleges. After a year of research, the curators have brought together the works of around 450 art students at the Students' Biennale. A large number of these students came down to

Kochi to install their works, and had the opportunity to experience and interact with the artists of the Biennale. The Students' Biennale was hosted at seven venues across Mattancheri, and ran parallel to the Kochi-Muziris Biennale after opening on 13 December 2016.



Art by Children

Another educational project of the Foundation is the Art by Children (ABC) programme. The programme is based on the premise that our efforts today determine the future of our children. ABC is the Biennale's investment in the future. In addition to children's workshops at the venues of the Biennale, ABC travelled to 100 schools in all 14 districts of Kerala, with specially designed workshops led by experts and facilitators from the field of theatre, art and craft. The ABC workshops this year involved around 3,000 school-children and teachers. The intention is that this debut project will allow the Foundation to develop a model by which such interventions at the school level can be enacted across India.



Master Practice Studios

There are two programmes of the Foundation that follow from its educational mandate that are organised outside educational institutions. The Master Practice Studios programme is a series of workshops that allow students to work over an extended duration with master artists. Young artists get an opportunity not only to reflect on their own individual practices, but also to learn practically from and work collaboratively with master artists.



Residency programmes

The Young Residency programme is aimed at art students who have just graduated from art schools. This residency programme offers young artists the opportunity and time to build their portfolio and to develop and expand their practices. It is also



a space where artists from diverse backgrounds can come together and learn from each other.

Kochi Biennale Foundation also hosts the Pepper House Residency programme at the studios in Pepper House, Fort Kochi. The Residency/programme started after the inaugural Biennale in 2012, and has since then hosted around 50 artists from India and abroad who have worked in Kochi for various durations. In the latest cycle, 12 artists - sculptors, photographers, installation artists, video artists, painters - from around the world had been in residence at Pepper House. Their works were on show at Mandalay Hall from 13 December 2016 onwards.



Artists' Cinema

At the 2014 Kochi-Muziris Biennale, Artists' Cinema ran as a 100-day film festival put together by 12 eminent curators. In third edition of biennale, Artists' Cinema was curated by nine film-makers, critics and academics from across India and also featured packages put together by international film institutions, along with a special package curated by the Foundation.



Video Lab

Kochi Biennale Foundation has also established a Video Lab as an extension of our projects in the moving image medium. Over the past year, the personnel and technology for a space for learning and production in the field of video art has been put together. Workshops, residencies and research programmes have begun and the objective is to expand the numbers and scope of the Video Lab in 2017.



Let's Talk

The Let's Talk and History Now series are public conversation forums for thinking about and discussing art and cultural practices that run throughout the year and concentrate at the time of the Biennale. Around 40 talks and conferences were organised in the past year, and thinkers, artists and scholars such as Bernard Stiegler, Ashis Nandy, Gary Hill, Raul Zurita and Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin participated in Let's Talk events.



Music Programmes

As part of our mission to engage the diversity of culture, the Kochi Biennale Foundation runs the international music programme titled 'Music of Muziris'. This programme presents traditional musicians and contemporary performers, together with arranging spaces for informal jamming sessions. The Foundation also organises the weekly Art & Medicine programme, in which music artists from around Kerala perform at the General Hospital in Ernakulam in order to promote a healing environment at the hospital.



Kochi today is a pilgrimage site for art. Our stated mandate, as the People's Biennale, is to take art to the public and to make more art spaces more inclusive. The KBF is the biggest art organisation in India to be officially empanelled to receive funding for education initiatives. The only way to thank the Government of Kerala, our highly committed corporate, cultural, diplomatic and individual patrons and partners is to keep on getting better.⁰¹



Riyas Komu

Co-founder

Kochi-Muziris Biennale



Virtual presence

The KMB has been partnering with Google Arts & Culture since the inception to provide a virtual tour of the exhibits and happenings of the event to art enthusiasts around the world. The event also garnered immense support on the social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, with the use of hashtags and pictures depicting the cultural fest. Within the opening 10 weeks of its first edition, the event gained 13,400 likes on Facebook and 12.3 million hits on its website.⁰⁸

As of 18 May 2017, KMB's online presence is as provided below:

Facebook	Followers: 90,274	Likes: 90,420	Check-ins: 14,790
YouTube	Subscribers: 3,344	Videos: 228	Views: 668,802
Twitter	Followers: 4,705	Tweets: 1,690	—
Instagram	Followers: 13,700	Posts: 228	—

08. Biennial Foundation, website accessed on 24 March 2017

“By capturing the sites and settings of the artworks presented at the previous edition of the Biennale in 2014, this project will allow those who were unable to be there to experience what makes KMB the most eagerly anticipated celebrated of contemporary art in South Asia. As well, for those of us who were fortunate to have been able to visit last time, the virtual tour is a chance to retrace our step.”⁰¹

Sudarshan Shetty

Curator and Artistic Director
KMB 2016



Building infrastructure



To engage in the conservation of heritage properties and monuments is part of the mission of the Kochi Biennale Foundation, and this has been a focus since the Foundation was set up. Thousands of square feet of exhibition space was generated from reclaimed heritage structures, which received a new lease of life and purpose as locations for art. The largest amongst these, and the primary venue of the biennale is Aspinwall House, loaned to the Kochi Biennale Foundation by DLF and the Kerala State Government. The other venues for Kochi-Muziris Biennale 2016 were Cabral Yard, Pepper House, Anand Warehouse, TKM Warehouse, Kashi Art Café, David Hall, Cochin Club, Kashi Art Gallery, Durbar Hall. Kottapuram Fort in Kodungallur served as a satellite venue, and had the added advantage of drawing crowds to view the Muziris Heritage Project.

The Durbar Hall renovation was one of the first projects undertaken by the Kochi Biennale Foundation. With Government funding, and a team of experts including conservation architect Vikas Dilawari and Design Bureau Electric, Durbar Hall's exhibition space was increased tenfold, high end climate control features, and ERCO lighting were installed.

Mr. Satyapal, the then Lalit Kala Akademi secretary said, "Recognising the potential for Durbar Hall to play a pivotal role in the Kochi-Muziris Biennale and become one of the foremost exhibition spaces in the country, the Lalit Kala Akademi Committee decided to work in partnership with the Kochi Biennale Foundation to create a space with the technical sophistication and operational capacity to host international exhibitions of the highest prestige."

Though the space is managed by the Lalit Kala Akademi and has regular shows year round, the Durbar Hall is available as a venue for the Biennale.

Apart from the 12 main Biennale venues, Students' Biennale had seven spaces – godowns, houses, a defunct wedding hall, etc. – which were also shaped into galleries.

KMB 2016 had 22 collateral shows, each of which independently scouted and set up heritage properties as galleries spaces, dotting the town with old buildings coming to life.

Ancient Muziris, modern Kochi

Through the celebration of international contemporary art, the Kochi-Muziris Biennale invokes the historic cosmopolitan legacy of the modern metropolis of Kochi, and its legendary predecessor, the ancient seaport of Muziris.

Muziris was an urban seaport along the Malabar Coast of Kerala, from at least the 1st century BC. It was a major switch-point between the East and the West for hundreds of years, attracting Roman, Greek, Jewish, east African, Arab, and Persian sea-farers; with the linguistic, architectural and cultural traces of these ancient-world interactions continuing to linger in Kerala today. Muziris disappeared from historical records by the 13th and 14th centuries. While its exact location is unknown, historians and archaeologists speculate it may have been somewhere around the area of present-day Kodungallur, north of Kochi. Since the mid-2000s, a series of archaeological excavations and a conservation project in Kodungallur and surrounding areas have been underway, creating possibilities of re-imagining Muziris.



Kochi is among the few cities in India where pre-colonial traditions of cultural pluralism continue to flourish. These traditions pre-date the post-enlightenment ideas of cultural pluralism, globalisation and multiculturalism. The Kochi-Muziris Biennale has created a new language of cosmopolitanism and modernity that is rooted in the lived and living experiences of this old trading port which, for more than six centuries, has been a crucible of numerous communal identities.

Sponsorship



The Government of Kerala is the primary sponsor of the Kochi-Muziris Biennale. The Government of Kerala, through the Ministry of Tourism, contributed INR9 crore towards the KMB 2012 in two stages — in 2011 and in 2013. In January 2014, the Finance Minister of Kerala included INR2 crore in the state budget for the anticipated

production costs of the Kochi-Muziris Biennale 2014, and another INR2 crore was given in 2015. For the 2016-17 edition, the Kerala Government allocated a budgetary provision of INR7.5 crore.⁰¹ It also acquired about 5 acres of land to create a permanent venue for the event, in addition to approving a working fund of INR2 crore for the Kochi Biennale Foundation for FY2017-18.⁰¹ Apart from the government support for the event, a number of corporates and businessmen have willingly taken a step forward towards aiding the Kochi-Muziris Biennale.

Corporate firms like the Lulu Group, South Indian Bank, DLF, BMW and Asian Paints have made significant contributions to support the foundation's activities in 2016. In fact, DLF and BMW have been associated with the event since its inception.

Mr. Yusuff Ali M.A., Chairman & Managing Director, LuLu Group International, contributed INR1.5 crore for the event.⁰² According to him, "Promoting such an event will help boost Kerala's cultural tourism. The public and the industrial world have a collective responsibility to support the event."

“At Asian Paints, we are dedicated towards promoting art for society and have supported various street art projects across multiple cities with this purpose. Kochi-Muziris Biennale is one of the most significant art events in the country appropriately held in the cosmopolitan, multicultural city of Kochi. In our collaboration with this exhibition, we have taken our responsibility towards art a step further. We got the best minds to come up with the right shade of white that would become the canvas for the artists to exhibit and express their art. ‘Biennale White’ is flawless and pure white shade that enhances inventiveness and lifts the spirit. We are very happy to launch this new shade Kochi.⁰¹”

01. Kochi Biennale Foundation gets Rs 2 crore, land for venue, Deccan Chronicle, 4 March 2017

02. NRI businessman donates Rs 1 crore to Kochi-Muziris Biennale, The Economic Times, 23 September 2015

Amit Syngle

President, Sales, Marketing
and Technology, Asian Paints



Key sponsorship benefits

Culture and art promotion is still subdued in India, in spite of the country's vast cultural heritage. It has become imperative for the private sector, such as corporates and business houses, to try and provide support to these institutions, given the challenges of cultural promotion in the country. The technical expertise in fundraising and the business know-how of marketing and organising events can together make corporations ideal patrons for such events. Such associations can also benefit corporates by attaining goodwill and strengthening the company's reputation in an

increasingly competitive business environment. Moreover, such funding when directed in the right manner can go a long way in projecting the country's culture and art forms and attracting artists from around the globe to come and participate in the art events.⁰³

Events such as the KMB are quite rare in the country. The Kochi Biennale is rapidly becoming one of India's best-known art and culture brands and presents a number of opportunities for corporations, both international and regional, to put forward their support for art and culture. The Kochi Biennale

Foundation does welcome interest from companies looking to support cultural and social initiatives and also has a team in place to customise a sponsorship package. The Biennale offers its sponsors a platform from which they can reach out to – opinion formers, industry leaders and consumers alike.⁰⁴

03. India Culture Lab, website accessed on 24 April 2017

04. Kochi Muziris Biennale, website accessed on 25 April 2017

Key benefits of corporate sponsorship for the Biennale



Visibility

Sponsoring such an art and culture event does allow corporate enterprises to achieve recognition amongst millions of art lovers and also provides access to newer places. Associating with events and performances at such a global level provides them with a large scale outreach and can help them establish their name in the industry.



Regional development

Getting associated with the art and cultural events can also help boost hotels and other affiliated industries in the region. It leads to the development of a region in its entirety, and help achieve the long-term growth of a company.



Consumer trust

Funding of art and culture is seen as a more honest and a committed show of support to a cause, thus yielding higher consumer trust benefits.



Resource creation

By becoming associated with art and culture, organisations can gain access to niche cultural circles. It provides corporates an opportunity to interact with the intellects and creative pioneers of the industry. Not only does this help in the positive brand building, but also infuses creativity into design teams and other creative wings of the company.

Getting associated with the KMB can thus be a win-win situation for both and can open up a wide range of opportunities for the sponsors..



Case examples — International biennales



Venice Biennale

The Venice Biennale, held in Italy, has been one of the oldest of all the cultural events around the world. A number of other biennales replicate the Venice model. Inaugurated in 1895, the Venice Biennale has been recognised for hosting contemporary art exhibitions, and the number of countries from where artists participate has increased from 59 (in 1999) to 89 in 2015.⁰¹ The exhibition focusses on dance, art, architecture, cinema, theatre, etc., throughout a six-month exhibition period held every two years.

The 56th Biennale (held in 2015) was named 'All the World's Futures', curated by the famous museum director, curator and art critic, Okwui Enwezor. It was a successful event with participation of 136 artists from 53 countries. In 2015, the event attracted over 500,875 visitors (an increase of 5.45 per cent over the 2013 Biennale) in the Giardini and Arsenale venues, with an average of 2,899 visitors daily.⁰²

The event also encourages the promotion of educational activities in the region. In the three years from 2012–14, 227 universities (79 Italian and 148 international) have joined the Biennale Sessions project.

The 57th contemporary art Biennale would be held from 13 May 2017 to 26 November 2017.

Importance of the biennale⁰³

- Learning from global art intellects — allowing the local population and visitors to learn new art forms from international artists
- Enhancing relations — fostering relations through cultural dialogue and exchange of ideas
- Urban change — renovating old and unused public and private spaces
- Cultural tourism — promoting the cultural significance of the city and gathering tourist attraction.



The event generates a whopping revenue of two billion Euros on the strength of the exhibitors and visitors alone. That includes the venue rental for national pavilions and collateral events (hired by individual organisations).

As far as exhibitors are concerned, paying as much as 1 million Euros for the monthly rent to gain exposure in an international event is an investment well worth making. What's more is that creative people and entrepreneurs, not just artists, can take advantage of the occasion to seek out talented individuals for collaborations or exchanges, which triggers a chain effect of positive impact on promoting the cultural industry as a whole.

Apart from generating profits, the exhibition also benefits the infrastructure that supports it, such as transportation, logistics, customer service, food and beverage, hospitality and other related industries.



Agnes Lam

Member of the Committee of Cultural Industries

01. Biennial Foundation, website accessed on 5 April 2017
 02. 2015 Venice Biennale Passes 500,000 Visitors, 5 Percent Increase From 2013, Art News, 23 November 2015
 03. How Arts and Cultural Strategies Create, Reinforce, and Enhance Sense of Place, American Planning Association website, accessed on 5 April 2017

Impact of the Venice Biennale⁰⁴

The state funding and sponsors have traditionally been perceived as the backbone of biennale events. Further, a growing number of dealers and collectors are supporting the event financially to represent their artists in the Giardini and the Arsenale.

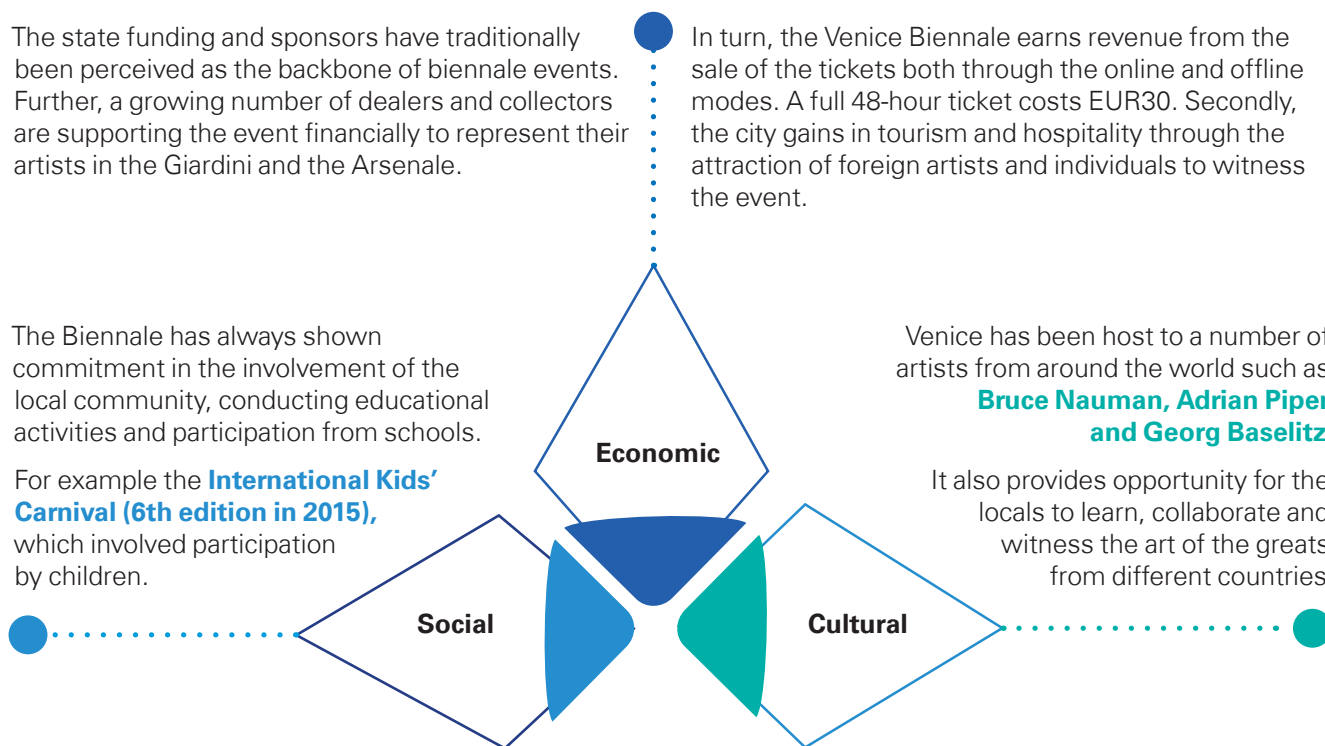
In turn, the Venice Biennale earns revenue from the sale of the tickets both through the online and offline modes. A full 48-hour ticket costs EUR30. Secondly, the city gains in tourism and hospitality through the attraction of foreign artists and individuals to witness the event.

The Biennale has always shown commitment in the involvement of the local community, conducting educational activities and participation from schools.

For example the **International Kids' Carnival (6th edition in 2015)**, which involved participation by children.

Venice has been host to a number of artists from around the world such as **Bruce Nauman, Adrian Piper and Georg Baselitz.**

It also provides opportunity for the locals to learn, collaborate and witness the art of the greats from different countries.



São Paulo Biennale

The São Paulo Biennale was started in 1951 and is the second-oldest art biennale in the world — after the Venice Biennale, which served as its role model.⁰⁴

The São Paulo Biennale was founded by the Italian–Brazilian industrialist Ciccillo Matarazzo. Since 1957, the Biennale has been held in the Ciccillo Matarazzo pavilion, which was designed by a team led by architects Oscar Niemeyer and Hélio Uchôa.

The event features both Brazilian and international artists, and is considered to be one of the most important art exhibits in the country. In addition to the art biennial, an International Biennale for Architecture and Design has been held since 1973.⁰⁵

Purpose of the Biennale

The Biennale's initial aim was to make contemporary art known in Brazil to push over to other countries abroad and also develop São Paulo as an international art centre. It helps to merge the art and culture by providing a platform to showcase talent. The international exhibitions are held under the direction of rotating chief curators.

The 32nd São Paulo Biennale

The last edition of the Sao Paulo Biennale named 'Uncertainty Alive' was held between 10 September 2016 to 11 December 2016. It was curated by Jochen Volz, along with the co-curators Gabi Ngcobo (South Africa), Júlia Rebouças (Brazil), Lars Bang Larsen

(Denmark) and Sofia Olascoaga (Mexico). The show focussed on the notions of 'uncertainty' reflecting the current scenario of life.⁰⁶

The event witnessed a participation of 81 artists from 33 countries and a total of approximately 900,000 visitors during the course of the event. The Biennale addressed certain key issues such as global warming, the loss of cultural diversity, the growing economic and political instability and uneven distribution of Earth's natural resources.

04. Who's bankrolling the Venice Biennale?, The Art Newspaper, 7 May 2015

05. Biennial Foundation, website accessed on 12 April 2017

06. Here's the Artist List for the Bienal de São Paulo 2016, Art News, 5 April 2016

“The reflections and discussions arising from contact with the works and the artists are invaluable. From these experiences we can imagine other paths to the future. It was evident at the Biennale the importance of culture and education in society.”

Jochen Volz

Curator of the 32nd São Paulo Biennale

Impact of the São Paulo Biennale^{07, 08, 09, 10}

Economic

Brazil has been facing serious economic and political crisis following the removal of the President Dilma Rousseff. Almost 12 million people were out of work as of October 2016.

The 32nd São Paulo Biennale happened to take place during the same time trying to bring back hope of simpler times.

Social

Global warming, the loss of biological and cultural diversity, and injustice in the distribution of Earth's natural resources were a few of the topics which were touched upon during the course of the Biennale.

The Biennale has tried to put users such as school students and communities, to be at the centre of the action and impart them with the required education.

Cultural

Sofia Olascoaga said, “This year's biennale is viewed as representative of art's embrace of uncertainty and experimentation and encourage today's tumultuous world to take some advice from artists. The hope is to move away from our rhetoric of crisis and move toward a place of possibility. There is a need to change our daily lives, from the drastic political shifts to the impact in our daily economic lives and the way we understand life in this series of changes.”

Biennale of Sydney

The Biennale of Sydney represents Australia's largest contemporary visual art event. Running for a duration of three months, the Biennale hosts artist talks, performances, art forums, guided tours and other special events. The event does not take any ticketing charges, and offers free programmes and educational resources.¹¹

Purpose of the biennale

The inaugural Biennale of Sydney was staged in 1973 to provide an international platform for art. Its aim was to develop a programme that looked beyond traditional thinking and encouraged creative expression.

The Biennale includes exhibitions, education and public programmes, artists' residencies and publications that drive innovations and the communication of ideas.¹²

Significance of the Biennale

It was the first Biennale to be established in the Asia-Pacific region and, alongside the Venice and São Paulo biennales and the German art exhibition — Documenta — is one of the longest running exhibitions. It has hosted works of nearly 1,600 artists from over 100 countries, from the time of its start. The last three editions witnessed double the number of visitors as compared to their editions held before. The 18th Biennale of Sydney clocked a record of 665,488 visitors.¹³

07. In the Midst of Political Turmoil, the São Paulo Biennial Dreams of Simpler, Pre-Modern Times, Artsy, 9 September 2016

08. Art for an Uncertain World at the São Paulo Biennial, Hyperallergic, 3 October 2016

09. Brazil hit by more punches amid historic recession, CNN Money, 4 October 2016

10. Bienal de São Paulo, website accessed on 12 April 2017

11. Biennial Foundation, website accessed on 17 April 2017

12. Art Gallery NSW, website accessed on 17 April 2017

13. Sydney Biennale review – contemporary art meets sci-fi in wide-reaching show, The Guardian, 19 March 2016

The 20th Biennale of Sydney

Curated by Stephanie Rosenthal along with 13 other curatorial advisers, the 20th Biennale of Sydney in 2016 was named 'The future is already here — it is just not evenly distributed'. The edition presented more than 200 works by

83 artists hailing from 35 countries and attracted an audience base of over 640,000. It focussed on how the common distinction between the virtual and the physical has become indefinable.

The artists included were Johanna Calle, Sheila Hicks, Mella Jaarsma, Jumana Manna, Dane Mitchell, Sudarshan Shetty, Taro Shinoda, Rodel Tapaya, Yin-ju Chen and Nyapanyapa Yunupingu.¹⁴

Impact of the Biennale of Sydney¹⁵



14. Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, website accessed on 17 April 2017

15. Biennale of Sydney, website accessed on 18 April 2017

Impact of the Kochi-Muziris Biennale



The impact assessment for the Kochi-Muziris Biennale is based on a combination of primary research methods comprising on-ground surveys, qualitative interviews and data collection as well as secondary research methods comprising literature and web research.

Quintessentially, this study examines the impact of the Kochi-Muziris Biennale on the city of Kochi as a whole. It also acknowledges that the maximum impact is absorbed by the immediate environs of Fort Kochi and Mattancherry. The framework for impact assessment is explored and presented under the following three heads.

Impact of the KMB

Socio cultural impact	Economic impact	Impact on the physical form of the city
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Return of local talent B. Enhanced exposure to local artists C. Developing Kochi as a cultural centre D. Growth in inbound tourism for the state E. Restoration of abandoned spaces in the city F. Placing Kochi on the world's cultural map G. Enlightening the younger generation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Job creation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Working with artists II. Volunteer. B. Impact of various sectors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Tourism and hospitality II. Homestays III. Transport sector <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Airways b. Railways c. Ferry ridership d. Roadways IV. Real estate V. Overall service-based business sectors VI. Vendors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Morphological dimension B. Visual dimension C. Perceptual dimension

The methodology included conducting street-talking and multiple surveys with different stakeholder groups – local residents, visitors to the Biennale, KMB volunteers and artists. In addition, the various programmes of the Kochi Biennale Foundation

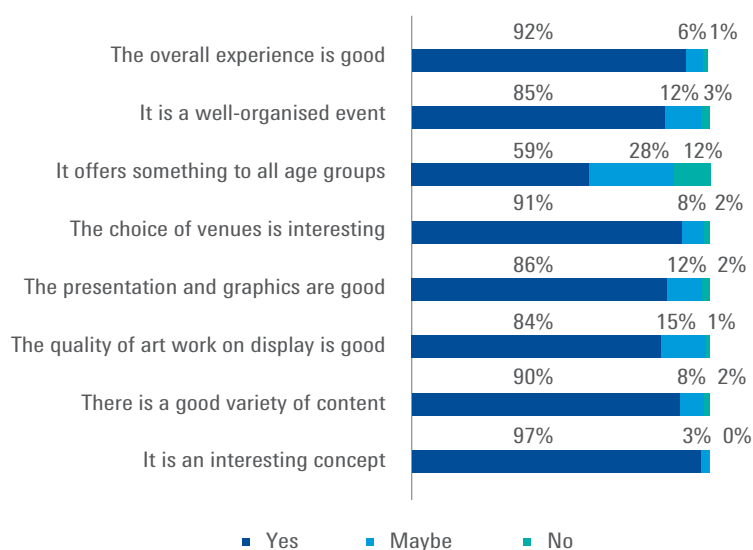
were also studied for their impact story through qualitative interviews with individuals who manage these programmes. The following types of surveys were conducted by KMB for the purpose of the report.

Type of survey	Visitors survey	Artists survey	Volunteers survey	Business owners survey	Vendors survey	Local residents impact survey
Number of respondents	1593 (1409 Indian and rest international)	29 (9 Indian and rest international)	31	208	55	50

The many inquiries tried to capture the changing perceptions of various groups in the context of three editions the Biennale. The collected data was then analysed for intersections and parallels to decipher a larger narrative for Kochi.

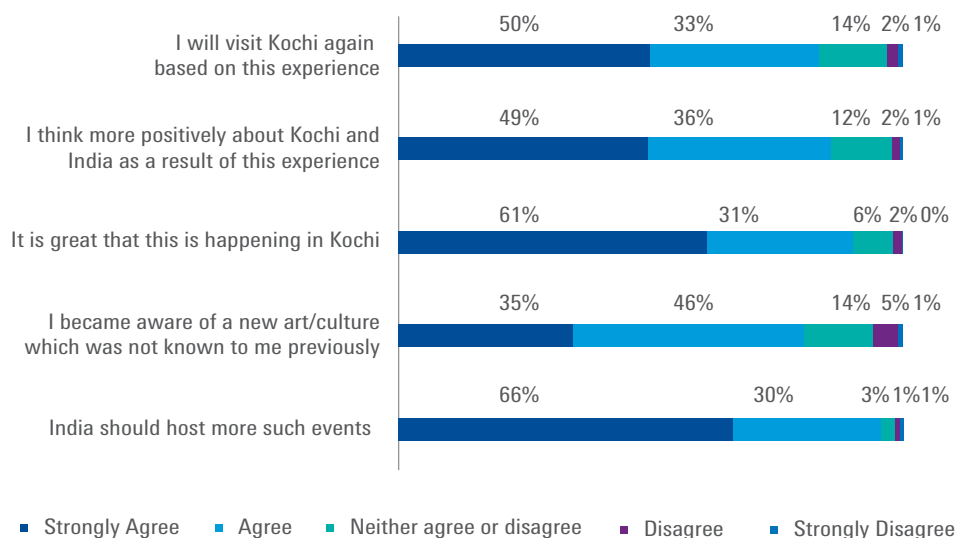
Overall the biennale has been received positively by visitors, with over 95 per cent of over 1500 respondents of the opinion that India should host more such events.

Visitors experience of the Kochi-Muziris Biennale 2016



Source: Based on responses from ~1500 respondents from a visitor's survey conducted for the KMB 2016, March-April 2017

Visitors' opinion on the impact of the Kochi-Muziris Biennale 2016

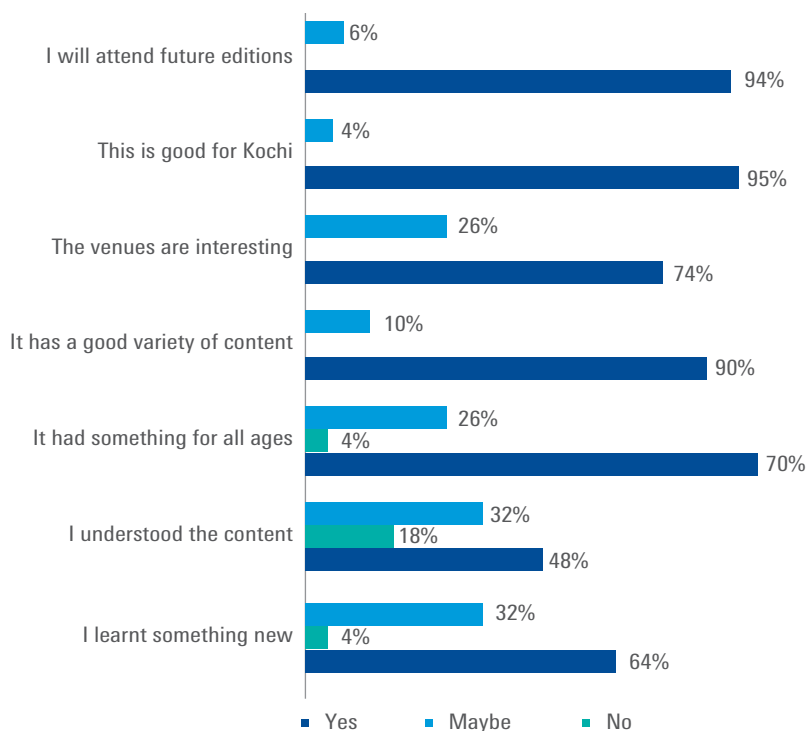


Source: Based on responses from ~1500 respondents from a visitor's survey conducted for the KMB 2016, March-April 2017

According to a household survey of 50 respondents conducted by KMB in the neighbourhood of Fort Kochi and Mattancherry, a majority of the people gave a positive response about the event.

Nearly 80 per cent of the people responded that they went to the Biennale with their family and friends which helped them to bond socially.

Local resident opinions with regard to the experience at KMB



Source: Result of the survey of 50 local residents conducted by KMB in 2017

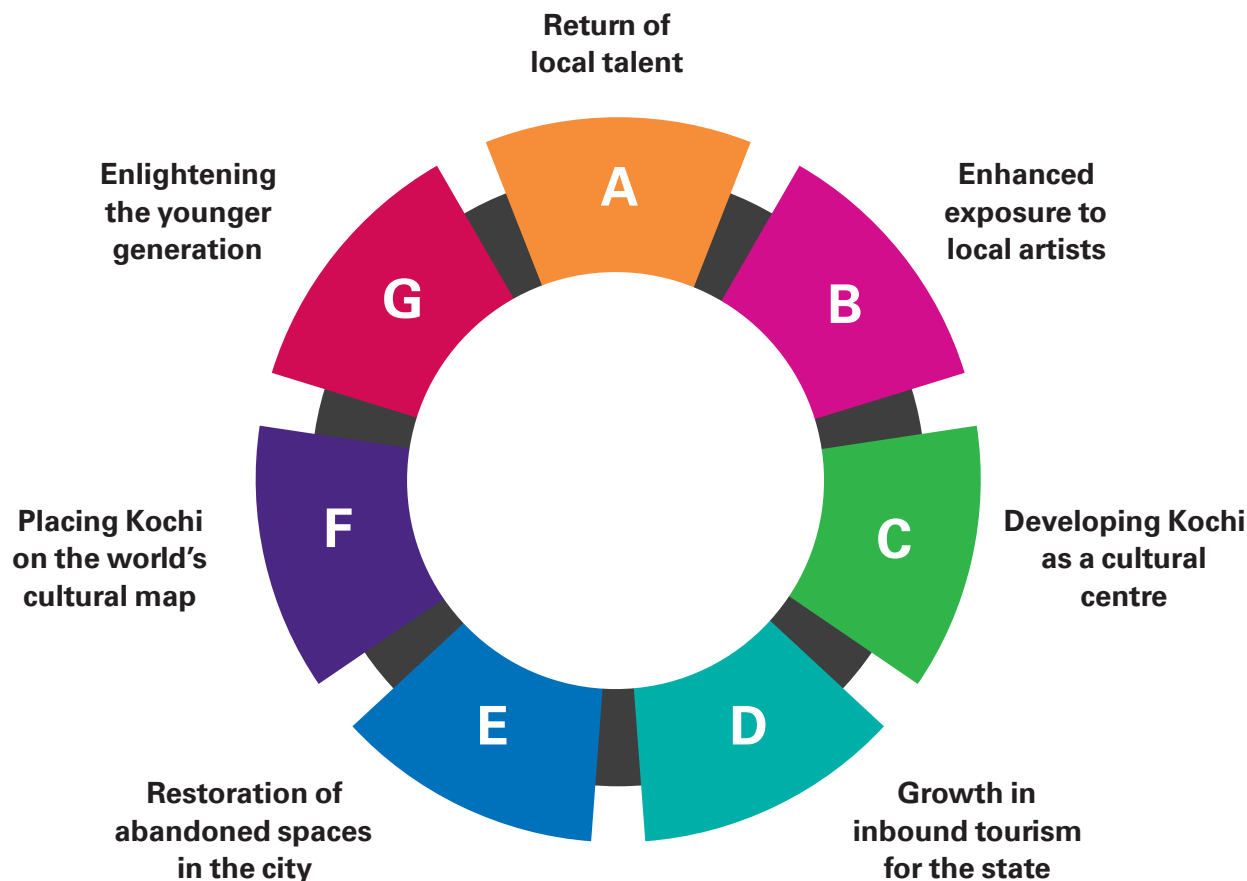
Socio-cultural impact

According to the Biennial Foundation, an independent not-for-profit arts organisation, there are 210 biennials/biennales globally.⁰¹ From Venice to Havana to Liverpool, the biennales have helped these cities build a strong presence in the global art and culture community, while also driving cultural tourism.⁰² These events also act as a platform to showcase local talent, in addition to increasing awareness about art and culture within the local community.⁰² Similarly, the KMB had a similar impact on the local population of Kerala.

The socio-cultural impact of the Kochi-Muziris Biennale was assessed through the lens of different individual stakeholder groups spread across various geographies. A range of methods were employed to extract information pertaining to these stakeholder groups that could point to a socio-cultural impact. For instance, household surveys were conducted to get a sense of how KMB adds value to the lives of the residents of Fort Kochi and Mattancherry whereas visitor surveys tried to capture how it

contributes to Kochi's reputation as a destination for contemporary arts and some aspects of the artist and volunteer surveys investigated the possibility for cultural exchange through artistic collaborations.

Socio cultural impact of the KMB



01. Directory of Biennials, Biennial Foundation, accessed on 5 April 2017

02. What are art biennials and what is their cultural impact?, Institute of Cultural Capital, 29 April 2015

A. Return of local talent

A prominent Kerala artist once stated that the state has traditionally not been supportive of its artists, driving them out of the state to pursue their careers elsewhere in the country.⁰³

However, the situation seems to have changed for the better now, due to promotions by the KMB along with significant government support. Since the very first edition of the Biennale, the Government of Kerala has provided consistent support through funding and land allocation. This change of stance is bringing local artists back to the state.⁰⁴

Chavittunatakam- Reviving lost art forms

KMB's engagement with Gothuruth began even before the opening of the 2012 inaugural edition with the promise of erecting a statue of Chinnathambi Annavi the 16th century founder of Central Kerala's dance drama 'Chavittu Nadakam' as a gesture to revive the fading art form. Subsequently, avittunatakam performances have been a regular feature on the KMB events schedule.

B. Enhanced exposure to local artists

The KMB has provided immense encouragement to the local talent in Kerala. In addition to providing them with a platform to showcase their artwork, it has opened international doors for budding artists.

For instance, for the 2014 edition, a local student-artist named C Unnikrishnan got selected by the organisers of the KMB through a 'degree show' featuring works of arts students. The art creation he displayed at the KMB got selected to be featured in the 12th Sharjah Biennial in 2015 by its curator Eungie Joo, when he visited Kochi.⁰⁵ Similarly, the curator of the 2015 Venice Biennale, Okwui Enwezor, invited artist and filmmaker K M Madhusudhanan to participate in the coveted and oldest Venice biennale — after witnessing his works at the KMB.⁰⁵

Further, Mavelikkara-based artist, Siji Krishnan has been invited by Yuko Hasegawa, a renowned Japanese curator, to exhibit her works at the Moscow biennale from 19 September to 2 October 2017. Another Kerala based artist, Sosa Joseph has been invited to show her works at the Biennale of Sydney in March 2018, curated by the Japanese artist Mami Katayoka.⁰⁶

C. Developing Kochi as a cultural centre

The KMB has been successful at triggering the interest of multiple Indian as well as global artists towards Kochi, helping position it as a cultural centre in the country.

According to K M Madhusudhanan, the biennale has led to an increased interest amongst people to open art galleries in the city. Dubai-based Art*ry Art Gallery has also set up a shop in Kochi. In addition, several artists are setting up their bases in Kochi by taking up studios.⁰⁵

Arts & Medicine

The Arts & Medicine programme conceptualized by the Kochi Biennale Foundation focusses on the idea of using therapeutic music to provide solace to patients.

Musical performances happen every Wednesday at the Government General Hospital in association with Mehboob Memorial Orchestra and Lakeshore Hospital and Research Centre Limited. There have been close to 170 performances so far under the initiative.

D. Growth in inbound tourism for the state

The Biennale has led to a spurt of domestic as well as international tourists in Kerala. Reportedly, hotels and homestays around the Biennale venues got sold out months ahead of the 2016 event.⁰⁷ Even the local taxi drivers, auto-rickshaw drivers and nearby retail outlets witnessed significant growth in business. This is in continuation with the impact of the Biennale's previous editions on state tourism; the first edition in 2012 that helped raise the state's income from tourism by 4 per cent over the event duration.⁰⁷

According to Rani George, the director of Kerala Tourism, the biennale has given a 'definite boost to cultural tourism' in the state.⁰⁸ The event attracted nearly 4 lakh visitors in its first edition in 2012⁰⁹, and an estimated 5 lakh visitors each in the second and third editions.^{10, 11}

03. Pride of place, The Hindu, 28 August 2014

04. 'Biennale brings artists back home', The Times of India, 15 January 2017

05. Art gazing in Kochi, Livemint, 2 May 2015

06. Foreign biennales zero in on Kerala's women artists, The Times of India, 9 August, 2017

07. Kochi Muziris Biennale proves to be a silver lining, The Hindu, 8 April 2017

08. Biennale lends hue to tourism, The Hindu, 13 June 2016

09. Kochi-Muziris Biennale post report released, Tourism India, June 2014

10. Biennale: Kerala economy gets a cultural context, MD Niche, 17 March 2014

11. 'Biennale to be a Permanent Avenue for Art and Cultural Exchange': Kadakampally Surendran, News Experts, 30 March 2017

E. Restoration of abandoned spaces in the city

Various venues hosting the Biennale have been re-energised as a consequence of the event. Some of these venues were abandoned warehouses used by the British, Portuguese and the Dutch traders centuries ago.

For example, the Aspinwall House, which is a primary venue for the Biennale, had been shut for years. Similarly, the Pepper House, an old warehouse complex, was renovated for the Biennale and now houses a visual arts library, gallery, courtyard café and studios for resident artists, in addition to providing spaces for events.¹² The state tourism department is even converting some of these venues into permanent cultural centres. It is also promoting the Aspinwall House as a 'must visit site' in Kerala, and leveraging it to promote its other tourism initiatives, including the Spice Route Project and the Muziris Heritage Project.¹³

F. Placing Kochi on the world's cultural map

With the Biennale, Kochi has secured its presence on the world's cultural map. The event has highlighted Kochi as an art centre not only in India, but also internationally. In addition to the participating artists from all

these countries, the event is also providing local artists a platform to go global.¹⁴ Moreover, KMB's total attendance is comparable to one of the most renowned and old biennales in the world — the Venice Biennale — which received 475,000 visitors in its 2013 edition.¹⁵ The Biennale draws to Kochi artists, collectors, museum representatives, gallerists, technocrats, writers, film-makers, art enthusiasts and students from around the world.

Artistic exchanges and engagements are central to the nature of biennales around the world, sometimes even extending influence on diplomatic/ international relations between countries. KMB too has its share of stories on that front. Art councils and embassies of over 20 countries have endorsed and supported the Kochi-Muziris Biennale so far and artists representing more than 50 countries have shown their work at the biennale. A survey conducted for this study also showed that close to 50 per cent of these artists engaged with Kochi in some form or the other for their production.

Apart from the cultural exchange that plays out when artists engage with the locale of the Biennale, there is the 'stage' aspect of the Biennale that allows artists a global exposure when they exhibit their work. This is evident from the fact that various luminaries of the art world have been drawn to visit the Kochi Biennale, such as Catherine David, Deputy Director, National Museum of Modern Art, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, and former curator of Documenta; Jay A. Levenson, Director, International Programmes, Museum of Modern Art, New York; Anthony Korner, publisher of the international magazine ArtForum; Katya García-Antón, Director, Office for Contemporary Art Norway; Eungie Joo, curator of the 12th Sharjah Biennale and Okwui Enwezor, artistic director of the 56th Venice Biennale, Vanessa Branson, Sheena Wagstaff, Thierry Raspail, Adriano Pedrosa, Maria Balshaw, Glenn Lowry, Frances Morris, Mami Kataoka, Yuko Hasegawa.

“ The founders of KMB have always been helpful and welcoming to the community. Moreover movies like Ka Bodyscapes and Velutha Rathrikal, which address issues in our community, were screened recently at the Biennale. ”

Jijo Kuriakose

Founder of Queerala,
an online space for sexual
minorities in Kerala

12. www.kochimuzirisbiennale.org, accessed on 21 April 2017

13. From spice to art, biennale anchors Kochi, The Hindu, 25 March 2017

14. Art gazing in Kochi, Livemint, 2 May 2015

15. Kochi-Muziris Biennale is here to stay, Business Line, 31 March 2015

In another kind of exchange, world-renowned installation artist Anish Kapoor's 'Descension' which was first displayed at Kochi-Muziris Biennale subsequently travelled to Galleria Continua in San Gimignano, and later to a solo exhibition at Versailles. This year it also opened in Brooklyn, New York as a public space intervention.

Coverage of all editions have appeared in The New York Times, The Financial Times, The Art Newspaper, Artforum, Art Review, Biennial Foundation, Vogue, Architectural Digest, Wallpaper, The Times of India, Hindustan Times, The Hindu, Mint, India Today, Outlook, The Week, Indian Express, Malayala Manorama, Mathrubumi, The Huffington Post, Scroll.in plus other digital, and broadcast media.

G. Enlightening the younger generation

Apart from the signature programmes of the Kochi Biennale Foundation, the Kochi Biennale hosted many groups of students from schools and colleges from around the world. From school students visiting to find out what contemporary art is to art and architecture students visiting on study tours to learn about different facets of the biennale, the Biennale has seen many a young face light up on such visits.

In addition, prior to the inaugural edition of the Biennale, an outreach programme was also organised wherein a team from KMB visited various schools in Kerala to introduce the kids to contemporary art.

Nearly 50 per cent of the artists engaged with Kochi for their artwork, in the form of availing services of someone from Kochi for the production of art work, collaborating with someone from Kochi or drawing on some aspect of Kochi through its residents for the production of art work

Source: Result of the survey conducted by KMB in 2017

37 per cent of the local residents stated that they are likely to encourage their children to be more engaged with arts related fields after the Biennale experience

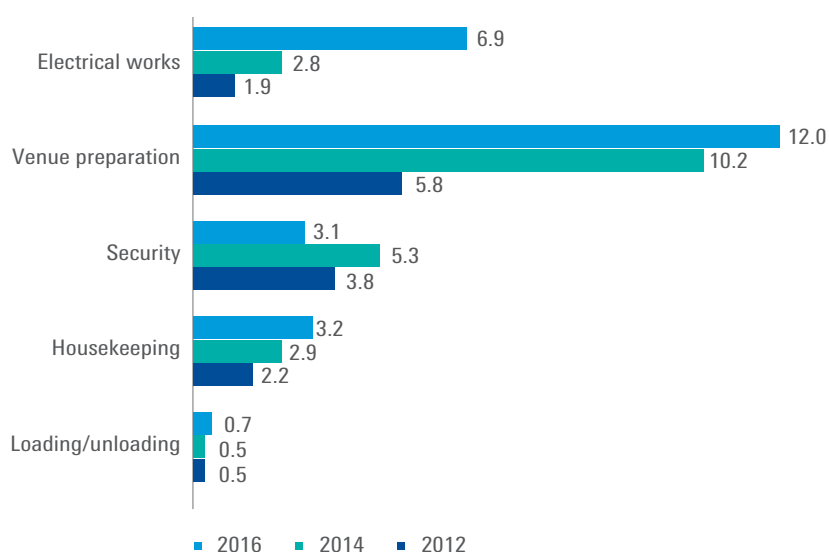
Source: Result of the survey conducted by KMB in 2017

Economic impact

An event of such a scale as Kochi-Muziris Biennale involves a huge amount of expenses to be undertaken in the form of venue preparation, housekeeping, electrical works and many more. Also, apart from promoting art

and culture, the event also helps develop various sector such as tourism, transport, real estate, etc. to grow economically. Further, the local population benefits through the generation of job opportunities.

Event management and expenses incurred at KMB (INR million)



Expenses incurred for venue preparation have almost doubled since its opening edition in 2012. It shows that money has been well utilised to improve the venue and make it a top-notch experience for artists and the viewers.

Source: Procured from Kochi Biennale Foundation in April 2017

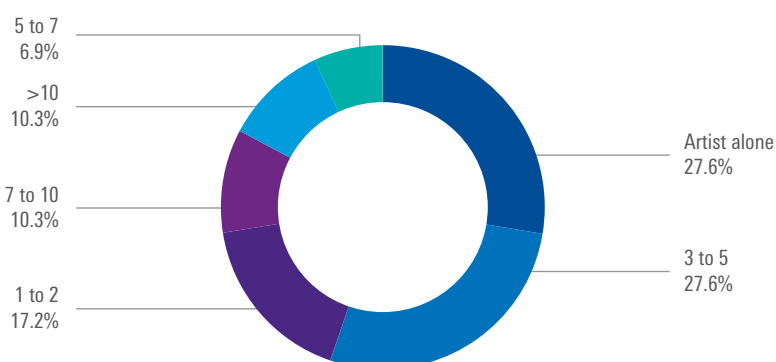
A. Job creation

I. Working with artists

From the responses availed from 29 artists (according to an independent survey conducted by KMB), over 70 per cent of the artists had a crew size greater than one for production of artworks, many also collaborating with local artists.

Further, nearly 45 per cent of the artists confirmed engaging with residents of Kochi directly for the production of artworks, thereby creating opportunities for locals as a result of the Biennale. Of the total nine artists who responded for expenses incurred, 33.3 per cent felt they availed more than INR100,000 of the value of services locally for the production of art works.

Size of crew members for KMB art production (%)



Source: Result of the survey of 29 artists conducted by KMB in 2017

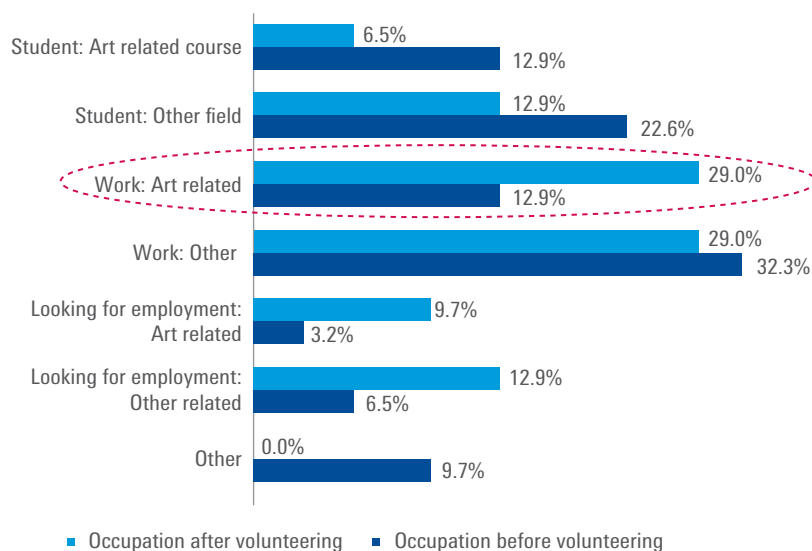
II. Volunteers

Apart from the people getting associated with the artist, there were also volunteers who found jobs as a result of the Biennale. Volunteers get involved in departments such as programmes, documentation, editorial, administration and production teams. Some of the volunteers also got absorbed into the foundation's full-time workforce.

Responses from the 31 volunteers who were a part of the Biennale highlighted that:

- About 33 per cent found jobs in the art sector after the volunteering experience
- Nearly 20 per cent of volunteers who worked previously in other fields have moved to jobs in the art sectors after volunteering with KMB
- Around 50 per cent said volunteering experience contributed positively to their career trajectory

Occupation before and after volunteering (%)



Source: Result of the survey of 31 volunteers conducted by KMB in 2017

As highlighted in the chart above, the number of people who would want to take up a job in art related field has increased due to the Biennale.

“ When Kerala tourism had a crisis on its hands with the demonetisation policy affecting tourist arrivals, the Biennale has single-handedly created a unique economic zone that supported the tourism sector and brought money into the hands of the common man and local community. From a government point of view, I can't think of a better investment. This speaks volumes for what an event like this can do for tourism and for the economy of a city and state.

Dr. Venu V
Kerala Tourism
Principal Secretary

B. Impact on various sectors

In an independent survey conducted by KMB, more than 200 local businesses comprising homestays, hotels, restaurants, souvenir shops and many more were surveyed in Fort Kochi and Mattancherry.

I. Tourism and hospitality

The cultural heritage places that hosted the events of the biennale gathered a lot of tourist attraction not just from India but across the world. KMB 2016 has helped the tourism sector to stabilise a bit after the impact of demonetisation. The tourism department lost nearly INR1,000 crore in revenue post the announcement of demonetisation till December 2016.¹⁶

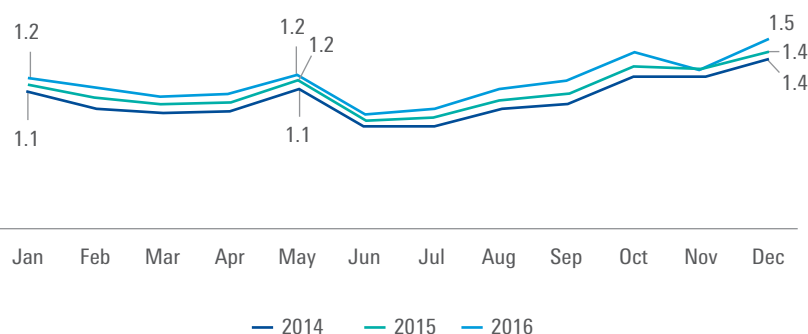
KMB 2016 can be termed as a crowd puller with nearly 600,000 visitors arriving for the event. And the survey reflected that around 62 per cent of the international tourists were visiting Kerala for the first time.

Out of the 1593 visitors surveyed by KMB, nearly 11 per cent had been from outside of India.

Also amongst these Indian visitors, a count of nearly 62 per cent were from outside of Kochi. It reflects the attention being gathered by the event from the various parts of the world.

As a general trend too, tourists arrival have been on the rise and are increasingly choosing to visit Kochi in December as opposed to the summer season break in May. A majority of this can be attributed to the Biennale.¹⁷

Number of tourist arrivals in Kerala (million)

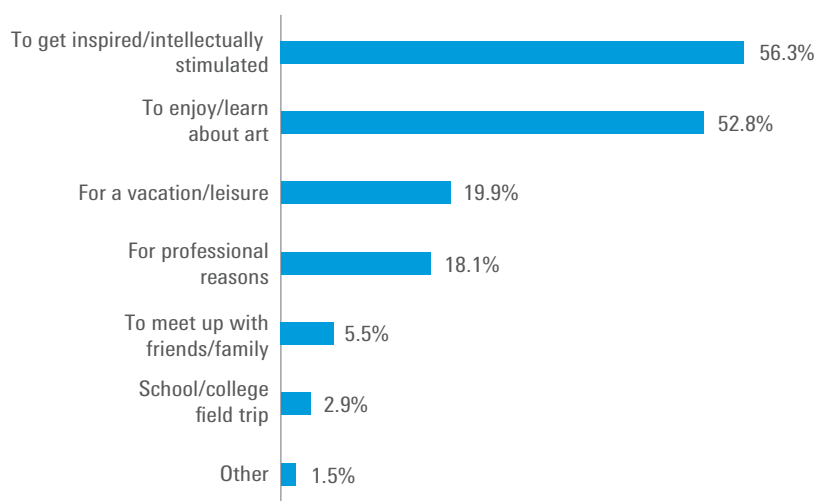


Source:

Also footfall at Mattancherry Palace (a Dutch Palace of cultural significance in Kochi) increased by 25.6 per cent during the period December–March from 2012 to 2016.¹⁸

Further, a majority of the visitors surveyed by KMB stated art and their inclination to learn about culture as a reason for their visit.

Reason to attend KMB (%)



Source: Result of the survey of 1,593 visitors conducted by KMB in 2017

16. Kerala lost Rs1,000 crore in tourism revenue since demonetisation, says state minister, Scroll, 3 January 2017

17. Kochi Biennale is Kerala's new bandwagon to promote tourism, Manorama Online, 24 March 2017

18. ASI office Mattancherry Palace, records accessed by KMB in April 2017

II. Homestays

Homestays have been quite famous among the tourists visiting Kerala during such events. Of the total homestays in Kerala, 35 per cent have been opened in the last five years. Also, since January 2013, roughly around 65 homestay accreditations have been filed in Fort Kochi and Mattancherry (places very close to Kochi Biennale), of which 40 have already been approved.

More than 50 per cent of all the KMB visitors stay in the hotels/homestays in the vicinity of the biennale. Typically a domestic tourist stays for 1–2 days, international tourist for 3–5 days and the performing artists for a duration of two weeks.¹⁹

III. Transport sector

The rise in tourist arrivals in the state directly benefitted the various modes of transportation such as airways, railways, roadways, auto-rickshaws and ferry rides.

a. Airways

With regard to air travel, Cochin International Airport saw passenger traffic of 8.9 million during FY2016-17, compared to 7.7 million passengers during the previous year.²⁰ There was an increase of 7.7 per cent in the number of international travellers and a 26 per cent rise in domestic passenger traffic.²¹ Popular carriers added extra flights to Kochi in 2016 in anticipation of demand.^{22, 23}

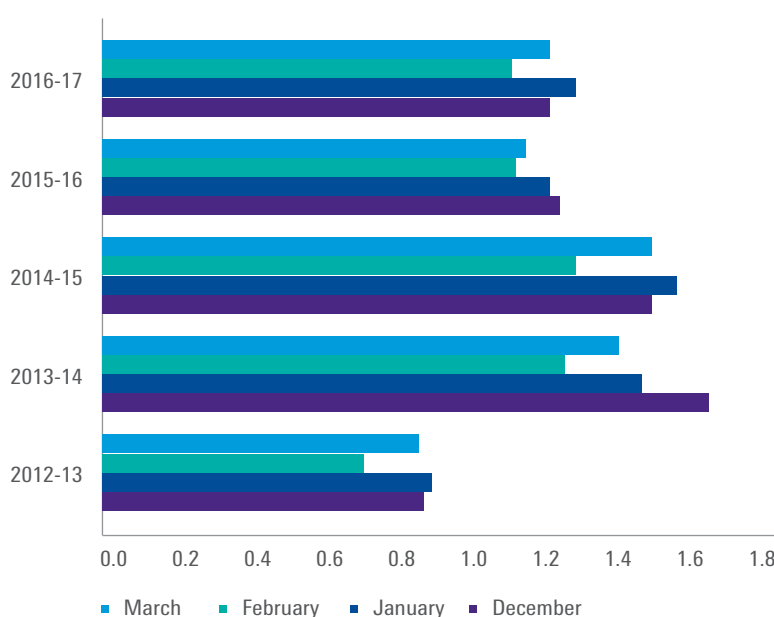
b. Railways

Railway services revealed that additional services were run between 3 March 2017 and 28 March 2017 connecting Kochi to Chennai, Vijayawada, Hyderabad, Bhubaneshwar, Kolkata and Guwahati along four different routes citing 'clearing summer rush' as a reason.²⁴

c. Ferry ridership

The State Water Transport Department stated that they deployed additional service boats on holidays and weekends to bring visitors to the biennale as they felt that during such days there was a spike in traffic.

Ferry ridership in Kochi (in millions)



Source: Procured from State Water Transport Department- Ernakulam office in May 2017

On the whole, in the month of December and January the ferry rides had seen a peak and a considerable number of which could be attributed to the biennale.

d. Roadways

A number of tourists also made use of the roadways to commute between different places of Ernakulam. Kumbalam toll is the only operational toll road connecting Fort Kochi and Ernakulam. Toll data of December 2016 saw a surge of 16.3 per cent in the number of vehicles compared to the same month last year.²⁵ The rise can be attributed to

KMB, Christmas and the New Year. Infact roads in Kochi were repaired prior to the Biennale 2016 with the help of funds provided by the tourism department.²⁶

19. Result of the survey conducted by KMB, 2017

20. Airports in Kerala soar high in passenger traffic, Manorama Online, 10 April 2017

21. Direct flights to bolster domestic tourism sector, The Times of India, 29 March 2017

22. IndiGo adds three flights from Hyderabad, The Times of India, 13 February 2017

23. IndiGo enhances connectivity from Kochi to Delhi and Thiruvananthapuram, News Experts, 2 June 2016

24. ASI office Mattancherry Palace, records accessed by KMB in April 2017

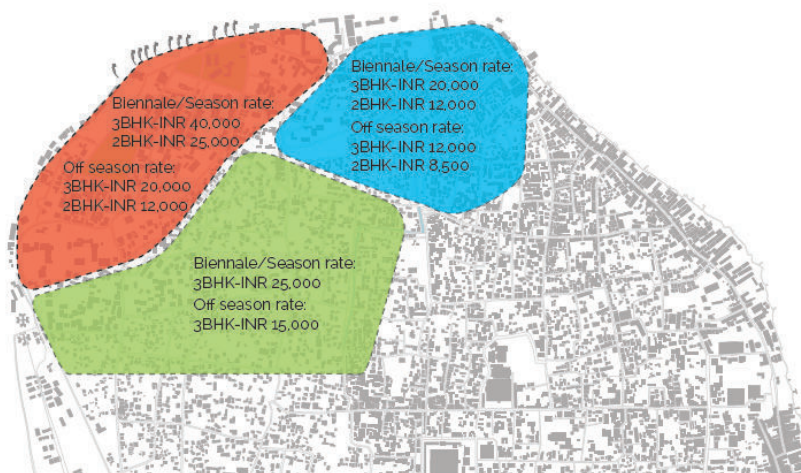
25. National Highway Authority of India, accessed on 1 May 2017

26. KMB helped Kochi with better roads, Musafir Namah, 22 March 2017

IV. Real estate

Cultural heritage magnified by the art events such as KMB has benefitted the real estate sector as well. There has been a constant increase of property values over the past six years which may be attributed to the Biennale. Residential rental values were also deliberately hiked during the Biennale season to capitalise on the short-term rental requirements.

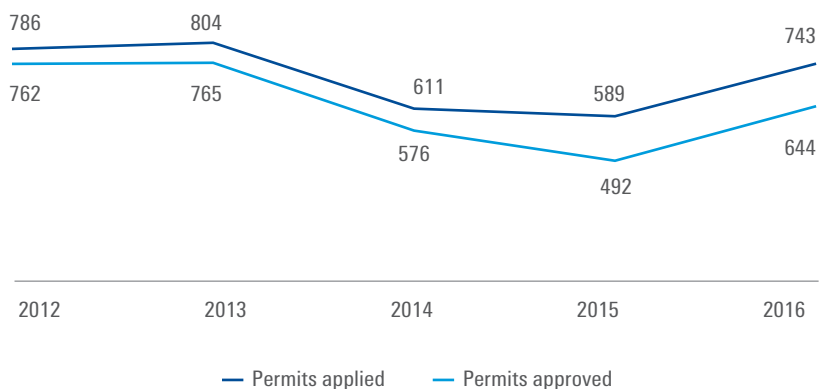
Prevailing residential rental values in Fort Kochi and Mattancherry



Source: Result of the survey conducted by KMB in 2017

Buildings and construction

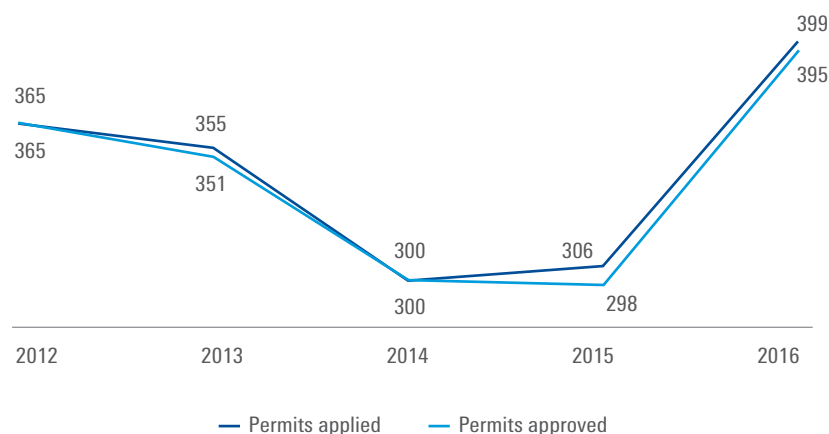
Total building permits applied and approved in Fort Kochi and Mattancherry (Units)



There is a 30-40 per cent inflation in rental values during the Biennale season as compared to normal rates. Property values had seen a peak of 30 per cent rise over the past six years.

Source: Procured from Kochi Zonal Office through filing an RTI in April 2017

New construction permits applied and approved in Fort Kochi and Mattancherry (Units)



New construction permit applied dropped by 15.4 per cent in 2014 but increased sharply by 30.3 per cent in 2016 across Fort Kochi and Mattancherry.

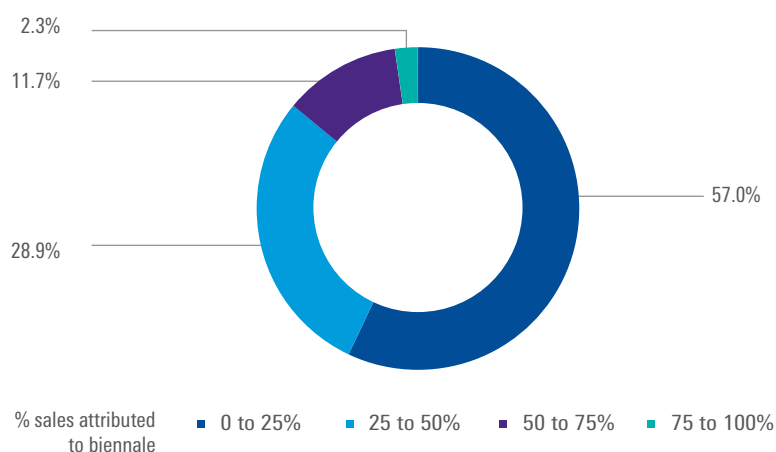
Source: Procured from Kochi Zonal Office through filing an RTI in April 2017

V. Overall service-based business sectors

Including the above hospitality and tourism sector, KMB also helped the other business services such as general stores, tour operators, clothes and souvenir shops. Online as well as direct booking medium generated sales for these services.²⁴

According to an independent survey of 208 local business service shops by KMB, 67 per cent of owners felt the Biennale helps their business. Further, 57 per cent of the people surveyed stated they attribute 0–25 per cent of their business sales to the biennale.

Business owners (%) split by sales attributed to the biennale (December 2016–March 2017)

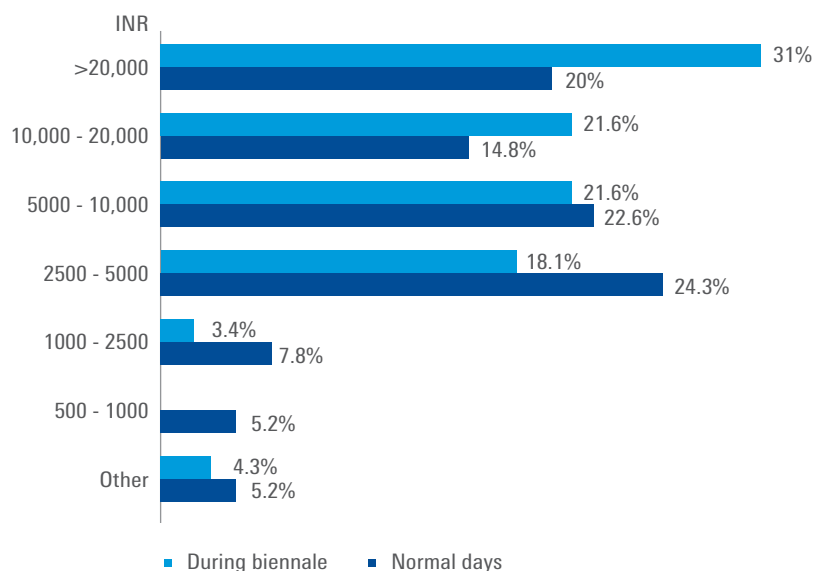


Source: Result of the survey of 208 business owners conducted by KMB in 2017
Note: 128 people responded for this question

24. ASI office Mattancherry Palace, records accessed by KMB in April 2017

Further, the survey results of business owners on their per-day earnings are as below:

Per day earnings for business earners Normal days vs. during biennale



Approximately 31 per cent of the surveyed people felt they could earn more than INR20,000 due to impact of the Biennale.

Nearly 22 per cent of the business owners earn twice as much per day during the Biennale.

According to Solar café, an eatery near Fort Kochi, its sales increased by nearly 40 per cent during the three months of KMB 2016.²⁷

Source: Result of the survey of 208 business owners conducted by KMB in 2017
Note: 116 people responded for this question

VI. Vendors

Local vendors too gained from the three-month long biennale events. The cultural fest did help them increase their share of sales. The vendors maintained the same location and goods even during the time of the Biennale.

According to an independent survey of 55 vendors conducted by KMB, nearly 10 per cent of vendors set up shops exclusively during KMB and shut it when it ended. Further, nearly 78 per cent of them feel that biennale helps their business to grow and help them make an additional business in the range of 0-25 per cent.

27. Kochi Muziris Biennale proves to be a silver lining, The Hindu, 8 April 2017

Impact on physical form of the city

Cities are constantly evolving as a result of the various driving forces that act on them, and more so, in a world where distances are shrinking. Fort Kochi is no exception. Cities, in fact, are measured for resilience based on how well they respond to the changing forces that act on them. Historically too, Fort Kochi and Mattancherry have been driven by global influences through trade relations which have been absorbed to create a unique identity for the city. It is no doubt that this legacy has contributed to its image of a multi-cultural milieu that is convivial and inclusive. In other words, Fort Kochi has had the acumen to make the best of what comes its way through a truly symbiotic relationship.

Perhaps this accepting nature is what makes it a most conducive home for the Kochi-Muziris Biennale. As co-founder Bose Krishnamachari puts it, "We did not choose Fort Kochi; Fort Kochi chose itself for the biennale." And as Kochi's physical fabric cocoons the biennale, the biennale too shapes the city; not in a deliberate forceful manner but in a way that could be referred to as 'soft urban renewal'. It does so by gradually improving the environs and rehabilitating buildings without the residents having to face inconveniences.

There are three discernible dimensions to the impact of Kochi-Muziris Biennale on the physical form of the city:

- A. Morphological dimension
- B. Visual dimension
- C. Perceptual dimension

A. Morphological dimension

The impact on the physical form of Fort Kochi which falls within the morphological dimension begins with the venues for the Kochi-Muziris Biennale itself, all of which were carefully chosen after much research. With support from the government, private patrons and local businesses, spaces such as the Aspinwall House, David Hall, Pepper House, and Durbar Hall were identified in Fort Kochi and transformed into venues for art.

These restorations not only translated into economic benefits for the construction industry but also led to an appreciation of the old; opening up the imagination of the residents to the possibilities of reusing old buildings in a sensitive manner especially within the heritage zone. This model of demonstration-by-practice is a valuable contribution to Fort Kochi because as per a report published in 2013 by the Centre for Heritage, Environment and Development (an institution under the Kochi Municipal Corporation), 'pulling down and unauthorized modifying of valuable heritage structures and public spaces' is a major issue along with 'unsympathetic and alien developments destroying the harmony in the heritage zones due to lack of proper development guidelines'. The examples set by the Biennale venues, therefore, come in as useful primers for owners of such properties with heritage value on the dos and don'ts. Hotel Ayana which opened on 6 December 2016 on Calvathy Road is the latest large scale restoration project to be realised wherein a former courthouse has been converted into an upscale hotel.

- In Fort Kochi alone, the total number of building permit applications increased by 60 per cent in 2016.
- In Mattancherry, building permit applications increased by 11.46 per cent in 2015 and by 8.09 per cent in 2016.

Source: Procured from Zonal Office- Fort Kochi through an RTI application in April 2017

As a trend, this is evident from the various emerging building uses and typologies with art galleries and homestays being more prevalent than others. New galleries like Dubai-based Art*ry have opened in Kochi and existing galleries are investing more in spaces for artist residencies. There are more homestays that have opened up since the 2012 biennale than ever in Fort Kochi.

On the city scale, with the 50 crore Fort Kochi and Mattancherry Heritage Conservation project yet to be effectively implemented and a long-drawn demand for a comprehensive master plan for the heritage zone, including conservation plans for monuments and public spaces still unmet, the efforts of KMB most definitely translate to tactical urbanism - an approach to neighbourhood improvement that uses short-term, low-cost, and scalable interventions and policies to catalyse long term change.

The allocation of funds for improvement of road transport prior to the start of the 2016 biennale from the Tourism Department as well as funds for street repairs prior to Former President Pranab Mukherjee's visit to the Biennale are proof of the catalytic effect the KMB has on its physical environs. The increased dispersal of KMB venues with each edition across the fabric of the city is, therefore, a good sign for further such development measures. With 12 venues and 23 collateral venues, the 2016 edition raised its own bar in terms of reach and, in turn, its potential to rejuvenate many more neighbourhoods across the geography of Fort Kochi and Mattancherry.

B. Visual dimension

A change in physical form, by default, results in a makeover for the visual dimension of a city. In Fort Kochi, a resurgence of heritage architecture possibly inspired by the Biennale venue restorations has only been increasing over the years. While there are stellar examples of such architecture in older establishments such as Brunton Boatyard and Old Harbour Hotel, new establishments such as Sukhayus Wellness Centre and Hotel Ayana, both located on Calvathy road, chose to restore old buildings sensitively with various architectural elements and gestures from the region incorporated into the design. Smaller establishments too such as cafes and galleries are conscious in their aesthetic gestures. And all of them appear to uniformly believe in including some form of art into the decor.

The other more direct consequence is in the casual infusion of art in public spaces. With the city and its surfaces becoming a canvas for art, the Kochi Biennale inspires a creative placemaking movement at Kochi.

C. Perceptual dimension

A place derives its identity from three interrelated components—physical appearance, the activities it supports and meanings or symbols. While Kochi continues to draw its identity from its historic traditions of cultural pluralism, the Kochi-Muziris Biennale adds more layers to create a unique content for the city. Also, in drawing attention to Muziris, it blurs the boundaries further to create a new urban milieu that is capable of generating exciting responses while connecting with a glorious past.

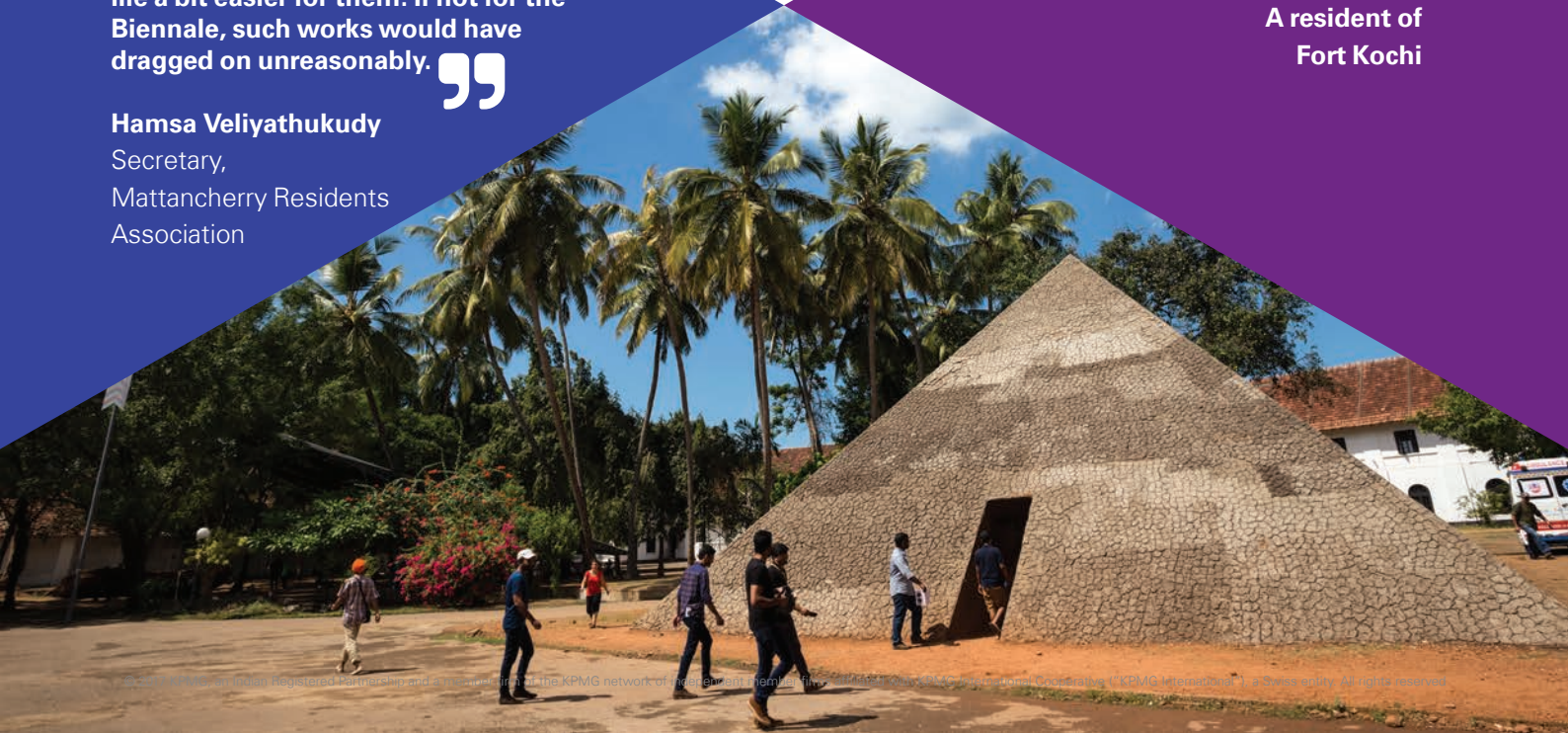
“The locals, most of whom are not very enthusiastic about the international art festival that happens in their locality, are pleased because of developmental activities that made life a bit easier for them. If not for the Biennale, such works would have dragged on unreasonably.”

Hamsa Veliyathukudy

Secretary,
Mattancherry Residents
Association

“Everyone knows us as the ‘Biennale City’ now.”

A resident of
Fort Kochi



Way forward – The 2018 Biennale and beyond



Over three editions, the Kochi Muziris Biennale has established itself as one of the most important art exhibitions in the world. Aspinwall House⁰¹, the mother-venue, has become synonymous with this Biennale, just as the Giardini and the Arsenale are with the Venice Biennale. The Kochi Biennale Foundation is hopeful that this property which has attained international attention because of the Biennale, can become its permanent venue.

The Kochi-Muziris Biennale attracts new and diverse audiences and brings in unprecedented national and international exposure for the city of Kochi. Through this exposure that KMB garners, it nurtures the larger arts infrastructure in the country by enabling links between organisations, driving a

collaborative agenda, developing talent and capacity through residencies, job opportunities, and volunteer programmes, and various other outreach programmes. This, in turn, attracts funding through patrons of art that are willing to partake in the creation of this ecosystem.

The third edition of the Kochi-Muziris Biennale drew a crowd of over 600,000 visitors.⁰² The event had been a huge success drawing an increase in number of artists, visitors and art displays. Also, the Kerala Start-up Mission (KSUM) and the Kochi Biennale Foundation signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to promote an integration of art and technology.⁰³ The partnership not only endorses the FabLab in Kochi through the support of artists in the region but the Biennale also gains vital inputs by blending art with technology.⁰⁴ The third edition of the Biennale has seen more installations in the new media category which fuse technology and creativity to create unique art.

The fourth edition of this effort is expected to be a landmark presentation, under the curatorial direction of Artist Anita Dube, who is also well-known as a writer, critic and historian. The next edition will be especially focused on issues related to gender, and voices of the marginalised. The Foundation also hopes to better opportunities and access of the Biennale for the differently-abled.



We felt that a marriage of art and technology would be good and the partnership between artists and technocrats would help bring out aesthetically rich artistic products from Kochi.



Riyas Komu

Co-founder, Kochi-Muziris Biennale

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- 01. Aspinwall House to be made permanent venue for Kochi-Muziris Biennale, Deccan Chronicle, 20 March 2017
 - 02. Artist Anita Dube appointed curator of 2018 Kochi-Muziris Biennale, Artnet News, 4 April 2017
 - 03. Kerala Startup Mission, Kochi Biennale join hands, The Hindu, 17 January 2017
 - 04. Biennale to promote design thinking, The New Indian Express, 12 December 2016

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