

sumption, or co-productions of English-language films for world consumption. In effect, this type of activity amounts to Canadian imports of scenery from Mexico. Thus, the Canadian producers are buyers rather than sellers and the usual issues of market entry do not apply in most cases. But by expanding the range of production styles available to Canadian producers, Canada's growing relationship with Mexico provides them with many new opportunities.

These opportunities have been enhanced by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which has streamlined procedures for Canadian performers and technical crews to obtain work permits. The producers of one recent music video reported that they obtained permits for both talent and crew in Canada in only two days — an unheard-of feat in pre-NAFTA days. Moreover, the publicity surrounding the implementation of NAFTA has raised both awareness of and curiosity about Canada among Mexicans. Canadian film and video crews returning from Mexico invariably report a great cultural affinity and friendliness that they say benefits their productions in concrete ways.

THE FILM AND VIDEO INDUSTRIES

In Mexico, the term *cinematografía* is used to describe an industry that includes both film and television production. This subsector consists of companies that create feature films (*largometrajes*), short films (*cortometrajes*) and video recordings (*videogramas*). Television programs include those intended for broadcast over the airwaves or by cable television systems, as well as non-broadcast video productions for education and corporate promotion. The latter are distributed using videocassettes.

Although the film and television industries use distinctly different technologies, there is considerable overlap. Films are converted to videocassette for retail distribution. And film is often used as the original recording medium for productions intended only for television broadcast.

Film and television producers in Mexico belong to the *Cámara Nacional de la Industria Cinematográfica y del Videograma (Canacine)*, National Chamber of the Film and Television Industry. There is a separate national association for the cable television industry called *Cámara Nacional de la Industria de Televisión por Cable (Canitec)*.

As in Canada, the film and television industry is characterized by short-term projects and many technical workers and performers are, for practical purposes, self-employed. For this reason, unions and associations are active in protecting the rights of the various participants. There are several important organizations in the Mexican industry:

- *Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Industria Cinematográfica, Similares y Conexos de la República Mexicana (Stic)*; Film Industry Technical Workers Union, represents a wide variety of technical workers in the film industry.
- *Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Producción Cinematográfica (STPC)*, Film Producers Union, split from the *Stic* in 1945 to represent feature film workers.
- *Asociación Nacional de Actores*, National Actors Association, represents actors and interpreters.
- *Asociación Nacional de Intérpretes*, National Interpreters Association, represents interpreters.
- *Sociedad General de Escritores de México*, Mexican Society of Writers, represents writers.

- *Sociedad de Autores y Compositores de Música*, Mexican Society of Authors and Music Composers, represents authors and composers.
- *Asociación Nacional de Ejecutantes de Música*, National Musicians Association, represents musicians.
- *Sociedad Mexicana de Directores y Realizadores de Cine, Radio y Televisión*, Mexican Association of Directors and Producers of Film, Radio and Television, represents film and television directors.

TELEVISION AND VIDEO

The television and video industry is dominated by large Mexican companies which produce their own programs and buy the rights to foreign programs.

Television is a much more important medium than theatres for the exhibition of films, both domestic and foreign. According to estimates by the *Cámara Nacional de la Industria de Radio y Televisión (Cirt)*, National Chamber of the Radio and Television Industry, about 92 percent of Mexican households have at least one television set. In 1995, there were about 51,000 movies shown on television, including cable and pay-for-view, with foreign films accounting for 83 percent of the market.

It is estimated that about 60 percent of Mexican households have a videocassette recorder (VCR). The proportion falls from 100 percent in the highest income bracket to about 50 percent for those earning between 2 and 10 times the minimum wage. Even in the lowest bracket earning the minimum wage or less, VCR ownership stands at 20 percent of households.

According to a survey conducted in Mexico City in 1996 for the *Reforma*