

## Atlantic Craft Trade Show

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Trade Centre in Halifax, and the Nova Scotia Designer Craft Council to organize two information sessions on exporting to the U.S. market.

The first activity was a presentation on exporting to the U.S. market to 20 artists and craftspeople who exhibited at ACTS. The presentation featured basic information on how to price your work, ship across the border and develop channels for distribution.

The second activity was geared to high-end artists and galleries interested in the SOFA show in Chicago. A two-hour teleconference session was held with Mark Lyman, President and founder of SOFA Chicago. Held every fall, SOFA Chicago is a high-end art show with international galleries that feature three-dimensional art in the glass, ceramics, fibre and textile mediums. Lyman's two-hour presenta-

tion gave the audience of 25 artists an understanding of the opportunities available at SOFA.

According to Lyman, SOFA's mission is to bridge the worlds of decorative and fine art and to increase art collector



The Prince Edward Island collection at ACTS 2003

investment. Collectors from around the country visit SOFA to attend the educational session, meet other collectors and purchase artwork.

## Canadian food and wine toast of Boston

In March 2003, the Canadian Consulate General in Boston teamed up with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada to promote some of Canada's finest products with "Canada's Culinary Treasures...at a Snail's Pace." Ten companies from Atlantic Canada and Quebec participated in this two-part event that introduced them to both consumers and professionals.

Co-sponsoring the event was Slow Food Boston, the local chapter of Slow Food USA. This movement, which has almost 10,000 members throughout the U.S., embraces the philosophy that pleasure and quality in everyday life can be achieved by slowing down,

respecting the convivial traditions of the table and celebrating the diversity of the earth's bounty.

The day program was attended by distributors, brokers and Slow Food Boston members at the Canadian Consulate General. Each company showcased its products and offered samples for guests. Attendees were also treated to Canadian wine and hors d'œuvres expertly prepared by Chef Don Walker and his team from **Chefs by Design** of Halifax.

Following the day program was an evening of culinary discovery at the Boston residence of Robert Metcalfe, inventor of the Ethernet and founder of 3Com Corporation, and his wife

"At past SOFAs, Sheridan College has exhibited their glass-blowing techniques and artists. For Canadian artists and galleries, these opportunities increase their exposure to international collectors," said Lyman.

ACTS also provided new opportunities for exporting to the U.S. market. Many exhibitors at the show affiliated themselves with representatives in the U.S. and are now selling their products to American boutiques. Artist Trudy Gallagher of **Bejewel** in Fredericton, New Brunswick, is selling her jewellery to Scentamental Gardens, a high-end garden and crafts boutique in St. Charles, Illinois.

**For more information**, contact Ann F. Rosen, Business Development Officer, Canadian Consulate General in Chicago, tel.: **(312) 327-3624**, fax: **(312) 616-1878**, e-mail: **ann.rosen@dfait-maeci.gc.ca**

**For more information** on ACTS and SOFA Chicago, go to **www.ednet.ns.ca/educ/acts/about.htm** or **www.sofaexpo.com** ✦

Robin—both Slow Food members. Once again, Chef Don Walker and his team created an extraordinary five-course meal for more than 50 guests.

Dinner guests included the President of Slow Food USA, the President of the Epicurean Club of Boston, key local food distributors and brokers, Slow Food Boston members, representatives from the participating Canadian companies, and organizers from the Canadian Consulate in Boston and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Participants and organizers alike contributed to making the event a great success. According to Paul Colville of **Goodspring Organic Ltd.** of Middleton, Nova Scotia, "Our company benefited directly from the Slow Food program in Boston. We established contacts with two brokers and with Slow Food members themselves—the foundation of the organic market."

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## Mexico Canada's Other North American Partner

### Mexico: Part of the North American Business Cycle

*Does anyone recognize Mexico's economy these days? Inflation is below 5 percent, the peso is strong, and investors consider Mexico tops among emerging markets.*

Sound economic policies and its increasing economic integration with the U.S. and Canada as a result of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) have allowed Mexico to escape the volatility recently experienced by some Latin American economies.

At a time of some uncertainty, Mexico's stability sets it apart from the rest of the region. Mexico still looks and feels Latin American, but economically now follows the North American business cycle.

The country's strong performance peaked in 2000 with gross domestic product (GDP) growth at 6.9 percent. It then slowed along with the U.S. economy last year, but may reach 3 percent this year. Mexico's population of 100 million is growing by 1.5 percent annually.

Rating agencies have upgraded Mexico's investment standing, encouraging foreign investment. While the sale of a major Mexican bank spiked foreign direct investment (FDI) to \$33.5 billion in 2001, annual FDI runs at approximately \$20 billion.

### Monterrey, Guadalajara: Two of Mexico's Strongest Economies

*Mexico City (population 20 million) represents the largest economic region in the country, but two others continue to lead the way in Mexico's economic development.*

**Monterrey**  
Northern Mexico, with Monterrey as its core, is considered the industrial engine of the country. Its success has come in part as a



Torre Mayor – Latin America's tallest building developed by the Toronto company Reichmann International.

result of the synergy between educational institutions (TEC de Monterrey), private and government sectors. The region produces close to 25 percent of all manufactured products in Mexico and contributes 15 percent to the national GDP.

It is host to 10 of the 20 largest industrial conglomerates in Mexico (called *Grupos*) which exercise control over 50 percent of the national industries. The region is the industrial leader in glass, corn flour, synthetic fibres, cement, beer, ceramic products, steel, automotive and household appliances. Biotechnologies, software development and information technology (IT), and aerospace are the new developing sectors.

With 60 percent of Canada's trade with Mexico transiting through the Laredo/Nuevo Laredo border and 80 percent of U.S.-Mexico trade going through the Laredo and Brownsville crossings (second largest after Windsor, Ontario), Mexico's northern region is strategically located.

### Guadalajara

Guadalajara is known as Mexico's Silicon Valley, with its large concentration of electronics manufacturing facilities, including IBM, Siemens and Flextronics. The state of Jalisco manufactures more than 60 percent of all computers and telecom equipment in the country and is Mexico's most important producer of pork, poultry, dairy, tequila, corn and confectionery products, and second in beef, foodstuffs and footwear. Due in part to its proximity to the country's consumer centres, Guadalajara is a key distribution point for food and other consumer products.

Guadalajara, Mexico's second biggest city, is located in Jalisco, the largest economy in the country outside the area of Mexico City. It exports more than \$20 billion a year to over 80 countries, and reports having almost doubled its Canadian imports in five years, up to \$611 million in 2001. The Consulate in Guadalajara identified IT, agriculture and agri-food, education, environment and manufacturing technologies as priorities for Canadian exporters.