



Saudade do Futuro

(Docu -- Brazil-France)

A Laterit Prods. presentation in association with Cobra Films, LX Filmes, AF Cinema & Video, RTBF Liege, Voyage and Mezzo.

By DENNIS HARVEY

An impressionistic hymn to both Sao Paulo and one unique regional music form, Brazilian-born, Paris-based docu veteran Cesar Paes' "Saudade for the Future" is an infectious delight. Taking a free-spirited, kaleidoscopic view of the city's culture, infrastructures and spirit, item is a natural for global TV slots, fests and world-music slots.

After time-lapse overhead shots of the bustling metropolis, pic introduces us to the cantadores -- street troubadours who've brought their breathtaking improvisational music here from Brazil's poorer northeastern territories. Even jaded urban sophisticates stop to marvel at these Nordestin peasants' lightning-speed rapping (solo or in groups, with percussion accompaniment), that spins out autobiographical, political and philosophical commentary, entirely off-the-cuff. As if to match this loose yet dazzling style filmically, pic also roams through myriad strata, personalities and activities of Sao Paulo: from break dancers to a temperamental radio announcer, police on the beat, the mayor making her rounds, housewives at toil, jam-packed subways, discotheques, the stock exchange, etc. Sans narration, polyglot docu adds up to a breezy, good-humored love letter to the city itself. Tech aspects are solid; print screened at Montreal fest had French subtitles only.

Camera (color), C. Paes; editor, Agnes Contensou. Reviewed at World Film Festival, Montreal (Latin American Cinema), Aug. 30, 2000. Running time: 94 MIN.