



### **Brief synopsis**

MIRAGE OF EL DORADO  
by Martin Frigon  
Productions Multi-Monde 2008

*Mirage of El Dorado* leads us into the mountains of northern Chile, where the devastating operations of Canadian mining companies threaten a fragile ecosystem in one of the driest parts of the globe.

Our political cowboy flick follows the pitched battle between a farming community in the Huasco valley and Canada's mining giant Barrick Gold with its sidekick Noranda (now part of the Suisse corporation Xstrata). It's a battle fought high in the Cordilleran Andes where farmers and local representatives fear the ravages of open pit mining operations in a place where a fragile system of glaciers feeds the rivers that flow into the farmlands built out of the advancing Atacama desert.

The camera reveals a Chilean government impotent in the face of unprecedented, potentially devastating, mining projects. The film also exposes the hypocrisy of the Canadian government towards its own mining companies which corrupt foreign governments and weaken the process of environmental assessments. The permissive legislation enjoyed by the Canadian transnationals was imposed under the Pinochet dictatorship and carried over by successive transition governments, bowing to the dictates of neoliberal economics.

With a backdrop of breathtaking images and eloquent testimonials, *Mirage of El Dorado* defies the powers that would have us believe their divine mission is to extract wealth no matter where it lies, purportedly to save local communities from endemic poverty!