

HUICHOLS

THE LAST PEYOTE GUARDIANS

SYNOPSIS - EXHIBITION - PRESS - THE WIRIKUTA CASE

CREDITS

Huicholes: Los Últimos Guardianes del Peyote *Huicholes: The Last Peyote Guardians*

Argentina - Mexico, 2014 | 125min | HD | Spanish
Subs: ENG - RUS - FRA - GER - ITA - POR - CZE

Director and Producer:

Hernán Vilchez

Produced by:

Kabopro Films

Producer:

Paola Stefani

Cinematography:

José Andrés Solórzano

Original Soundtrack:

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Paola Stefani - Robino.Co



huicholesfilm.com



vimeo.com/ondemand/huicholesfilm



facebook.com/HuicholesTheLastPeyoteGuardians



youtu.be/a_umAUErxNB



HUICHOLLES

THE LAST PEYOTE GUARDIANS

KABOPRO FILMS PRESENTS

"HUICHOLLES : THE LAST PEYOTE GUARDIANS" PRODUCER PAOLA STEFANI CINEMATOGRAPHY JOSÉ ANDRÉS SOLÓRZANO MUSIC GASTÓN F. SALAZAR ASSISTANT EDITOR LAYLA LINDQUIST ANIMATIONS EUGENIO COSTA GRAPHIC DESIGN GUSTAVO G. ROTH - GENI EXPÓSITO DIRECTED & PRODUCED BY HERNÁN VILCHEZ

WWW.HUICHOLLESFILM.COM

SYNOPSIS

An urgent story about the Wixarika People, one of the last living Pre-Hispanic cultures in Latin America, and their struggle with the Mexican government and transnational mining companies to preserve Wirikuta, their most sacred territory and the land where the peyote grows, the traditional medicine that keeps the knowledge of this iconic culture of Mexico alive.

We enter the Wixárika world accompanying the Ramírez family, a traditional clan of the Sierra Madre, as they perform the ancient pilgrimage to Wirikuta, a ceremony held every year to honor their spiritual tradition. But this time something is different. The “Heart of the World”, where everything is sacred, is in serious danger.

In 2009 the Mexican government granted concessions to several Canadian mining companies to explore and exploit the area, a natural reserve of 140,000 hectares of desert and hills in the Mexican state of San Luis Potosí, rich in gold, silver and other valuable minerals, and which according to the Huichol world view, maintains the energy balance of the region and the whole planet.

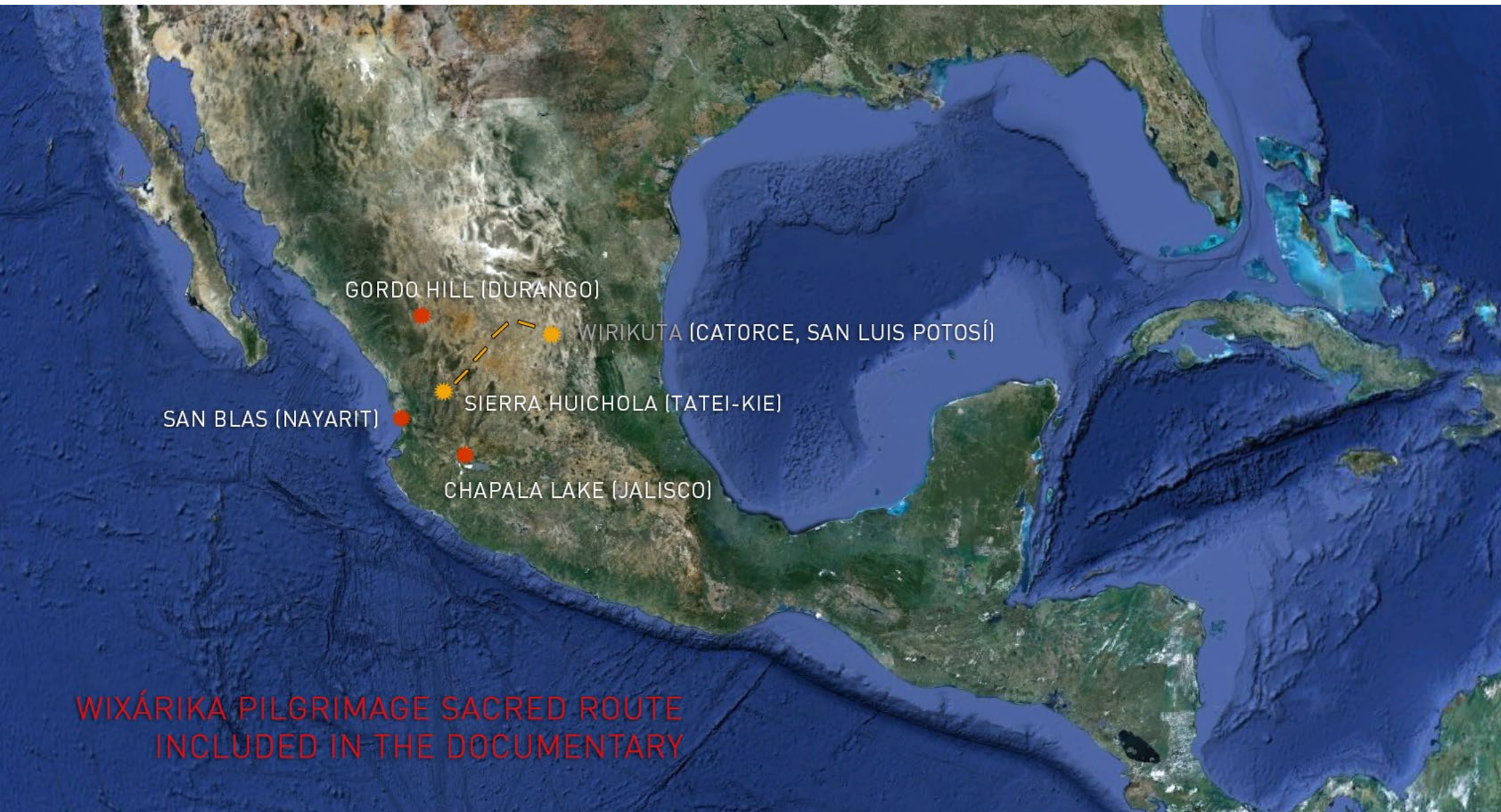


The main company already established in the area promises to create hundreds of jobs for the needy people of a region that already has a history in mining activities, without causing pollution or affecting the indigenous sacred areas.

However, for the Wixárika People and their supporters (well known activists, artists and scientists), mining implies a mortal threat to the delicate biodiversity of this unique ecosystem, included on the list of Sacred Natural and Cultural Sites by UNESCO, and therefore, to the survival of this ancient culture.

An uneven and controversial fight ensues, which stimulates the complex global debate between ancestral cultural values, the exploitation of nature and the inevitable development of native peoples.





GORDO HILL (DURANGO)

WIRIKUTA (CATORCE, SAN LUIS POTOSÍ)

SIERRA HUICHOLA (TATEI-KIE)

SAN BLAS (NAYARIT)

CHAPALA LAKE (JALISCO)

WIXÁRIKA PILGRIMAGE SACRED ROUTE
INCLUDED IN THE DOCUMENTARY



MOTIVATION

This film was produced independently on behalf of Wixaritari (Huichol) families and elders of La Laguna Seca, Jalisco. In January 2011 they asked director Hernan Vilchez: *“We want you to make a documentary about our fight to save Wirikuta, the sacred land of peyote, the source of our existence as a culture, which today is endangered by the mining industry.”*

The documentary was produced over three years, based on the personal effort of the director and producers. We consider its message vital, not only for Mexico, but for the whole world, currently at a point at which our survival as a species is threatened as a result of a dominant ideology that values material accumulation above everything else.

For this we decided to carry out a promotion and communication campaign focused on the contents and scope of the film, which moves the public opinion and promotes a global debate about the care of nature and ancestral cultures. A proposal of consciousness about the alternatives to development summarized in the question: *“What are we doing to take care of life?”*

RELEASE

As a launch strategy, in May 2014 five free public functions were carried out in five different locations in Mexico. The premiere was open air at the sacred site in Real de Catorce (Wirikuta, San Luis Potosí), and then continued at Estación Catorce (Wirikuta, San Luis Potosí) and San Andrés Cohamiata (the Huichol community that commissioned the film). We finished the tour with multitudinous presentations from the Film Forum of the University of Guadalajara to the Monument to the Mother of Mexico City.

We traveled more than 2,700 km in one week, delivering 5 free public screenings, totaling more than 4,600 attendees in three different states of the country, including the affected communities of Wirikuta and the Huichol Sierra.

The realization of this ambitious launch plan was possible thanks to the support of organizations, companies and civil society, interested, like us, in sharing the message of life and hope of the Wixárika People.

Making of the tour vimeo.com/ondemand/huicholesfilm/98666473





More than 2,500 people gathered at the “Monumento a la Madre” under a heavy rain, to watch the premiere in Mexico City.

PRESS

Since then, several Mexican and international media have covered the main screenings and presentations in festivals, as well as collaborating with the promotion of the case of Wirikuta, with more than 50 press articles in both traditional and alternative, printed and digital media, radio and TV. Links to the main articles on our page at IMDB: imdb.com/title/tt3294878/externalreviews?ref=tt_ov_rt



Canal 22 (Mexico)



Deutsche Welle (Germany)

La bataille des indiens huichol au Mexique pour défendre leur terre sacrée

Un documentaire présenté en France retrace la lutte de ces indiens originaires du désert de Wirikuta au Mexique contre des compagnies minières canadiennes.

Le Monde.fr | 06.06.2015 à 11h17 • Mis à jour le 06.06.2015 à 19h03

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Le Monde (France)



La Razón (Spain)



Huffington Post (USA)

'Huicholes: los últimos guardianes del peyote'

Acerca de Rafael Paz
Truffaut aseguraba que los amantes del cine eran gente enferma y que nadie nace diciendo "quiero ser crítico de cine". Editor en jefe en ButacaAncha.com y blogger en El Financiero.

Escrito por Rafael Paz en mayo 8, 2014

Huicholes: los últimos guardianes del peyote es un proyecto que surgió por coincidencias. Su director, el argentino **Hernán Vilchez**, se encontraba en **San Andrés Cohamiata, Jalisco**, buscando la intervención de la comunidad **wixárika** para una producción diferente cuando ellos le encargaron hacer un documental sobre su lucha por salvar el desierto de **Wirikuta**, uno de sus lugares sagrados en peligro de desaparecer por un proyecto



Forbes (Mexico)



RT in Spanish



Aristegui Noticias (Mexico)



VICE (Austria)

INDEPENDENT DISTRIBUTION

Since the release on May 2014, we've chosen distribution models that meet the overall philosophy of the project:

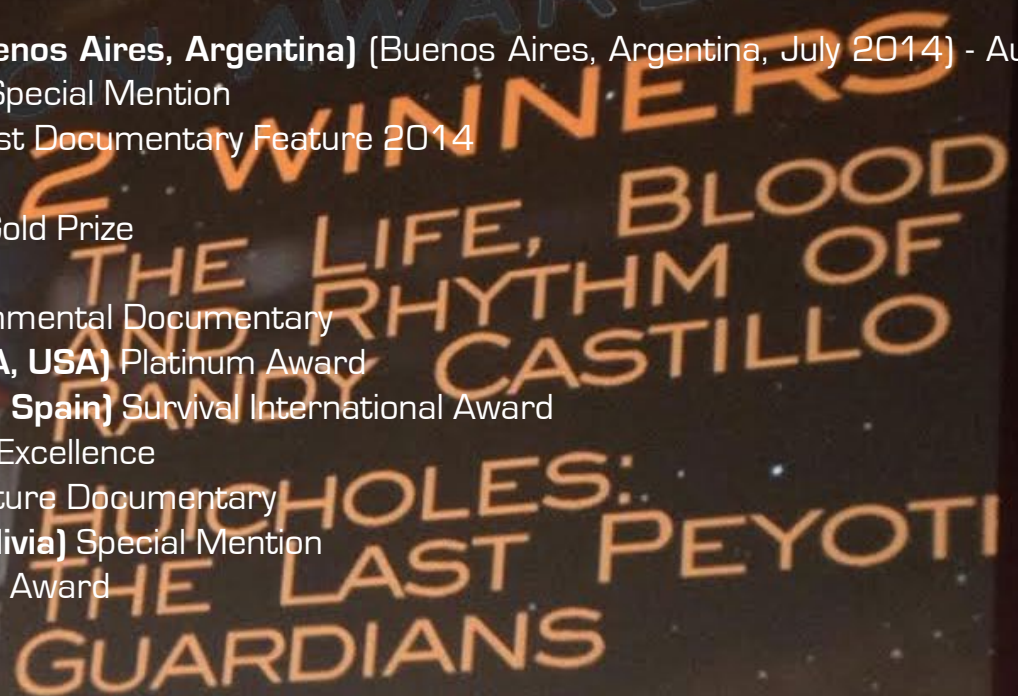
- We opt for social networks as the main means of publicizing screenings in Mexico and the world, and for the online platform Vimeo on Demand vimeo.com/ondemand/huicholesfilm, where it has been rented around 3300 times in more than 80 countries.
- From several promotions carried out online, it was seen for free on our page huicholesfilm.com on more than 50,000 occasions.
- More than 39,000 people have seen it in 250 functions in movie theaters, film clubs, public squares, university forums, festivals and other alternative spaces in 25 countries in America, Europe, Asia and Oceania.
- The Facebook page for the film has more than 143,000 followers, many of them active to this day facebook.com/HuicholesTheLastPeyoteGuardians
- Thirteen universities, public libraries and museums in the United States, Canada and Europe have purchased the DVD for educational use and be availability in its bookstores.
- The documentary was only granted in a non-exclusive agreement with DLA, only for VOD systems in the territories of Central and South America, for 24 months starting on February 1, 2016. It was never broadcast on TV or cable.
- INCAA granted us a subsidy for post-production in 2014 and Argentine nationality in 2015, being qualified by the CAEC as a film suitable for all audiences.
- Hernán Vilchez, director and producer, owns the exclusive global rights of the documentary.



INTERNATIONAL TOURS AND FESTIVALS

- After the premiere in Mexico in May, at the end of August 2014 we produced a promotional tour in Santiago and Valparaíso, Chile. The program consisted of four screenings with the presence of the protagonists, and the director Hernán Vilchez. After the initial blessing and the screening ended, each event was closed with a question and answer session with the audience about the issues expressed in the documentary and open dialogues with representatives of the Mapuche Nation and other local communities.
- Between November and December 2014 we organized a tour of similar format in more than 30 cities in North America, a series of events among different types of audiences. We summoned in total more than 6,100 people to independent cinemas, university halls, colleges, libraries and museums, as well as community social and cultural centers of the states of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California in the USA, and the cities of Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver in Canada.
- After the significant response to these international presentations, it was decided to make a new tour through Western Europe between April and June 2015; 41 screenings in 37 cities in 15 countries, which had a total audience of 4,330 people. The tour had a very positive resonance among the public and the press of the countries visited, many of which had their first contact with the Wixárika culture through our film.
- The documentary was selected in competitions at several international festivals, having been awarded in:

- **2° FINCA Environmental International Film Festival (Buenos Aires, Argentina)** (Buenos Aires, Argentina, July 2014) - Audience Award - SIGNIS Award for Best Documentary - Official Jury Special Mention
- **11° Red Nation Film Festival (Beverly Hills, CA, USA)**, Best Documentary Feature 2014
- **2° Sayulita Festival (Sayulita, Mexico)** Best Documentary
- **2015 International Movie Awards (Jakarta, Indonesia)** Gold Prize
- **4° FICIP (Pozos, Mexico)** Best Documentary
- **32° Bogotá Film Festival (Bogotá, Colombia)** Best Environmental Documentary
- **2015 International Independent Film Awards (Encino, CA, USA)** Platinum Award
- **12° Barcelona Film & Human Rights Festival (Barcelona, Spain)** Survival International Award
- **2015 Impact Docs Awards (La Jolla, CA, USA)** Award of Excellence
- **2016 Latino Film Festival (Cleveland, OH, USA)** Best Feature Documentary
- **12° International Human Rights Film Festival (Sucre, Bolivia)** Special Mention
- **2016 Spotlight Documentary Film Awards (USA)** Bronze Award



THE WIRIKUTA CASE

The mining concessions in Wirikuta were granted in 2009 and are currently suspended by the injunctions filed in 2013 by the various communities of the Wixárika people, Human Rights organizations and their allies of Mexican and international civil society. planoinformativo.com/nota/id/505170/noticia/en-wirikuta,lo-que-esta-en-juego-es-la-vida

Within the framework of the 2nd Festival of Indigenous Cultures organized by the Government of Mexico City in August 2014, and with the framework of a Zócalo with 3000 seated people, the Wixárika people recognized through all their traditional authorities the validity of the documentary **Huicholes: The Last Peyote Guardians** as a fundamental resource for the world to learn about its culture and values, as well as its struggle to save its most sacred place. Video about the event: youtu.be/B9MY9id5tjg

Also in that year, it was declared the “most successful independent exhibition documentary in Mexico” in the yearbook of the Mexican Institute of Cinematography, which in 2017 chose it to promote the relaunch of its platform **VOD Filmin Latino**.

Since then, the documentary has been exhibited by different federal and state institutions of the Mexican government in Mexico and its consulates in the United States, with the purpose of making known the importance of the Huichol people and their traditions, for the preservation of the Mexican culture and the environment.

