

The Road to El Dorado

The latest from Dreamworks' animation department is *The Road to El Dorado*, brought to us by the studio which came out with *The Prince of Egypt* in late 1998. This production is similar: an historic tale softened, trimmed, and updated mercilessly to appeal to both adults and young people.

The time is the period of Spanish conquistador Cortez's conquest of Mexico. Two Castillian hustlers--Tulio and Miguel (voiced by Kevin Kline and Kenneth Branagh, respectively)—are caught as stowaways on Cortez's ship, but they escape--with the help of an intrepid horse--to the dream world of El Dorado, where they are seen as gods. Plenty of fish-out-of-water humor ensues.

In its aiming to please both its audiences, however, *El Dorado* somehow doesn't come off (somehow those animators over at Disney have been able to do it better). The "snappy" dialogue between the two con men stops the picture dead, the love interest is an incongruous Rosie Perez, and the few songs (by Elton John and Tim Rice) are short and forgettable. The best thing about *The Road to El Dorado* is the animated decor: a fantastic rehash of every Meso-America style and color. For a lot of kids, though, this movie might prove to be The Road to El Tedio.

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