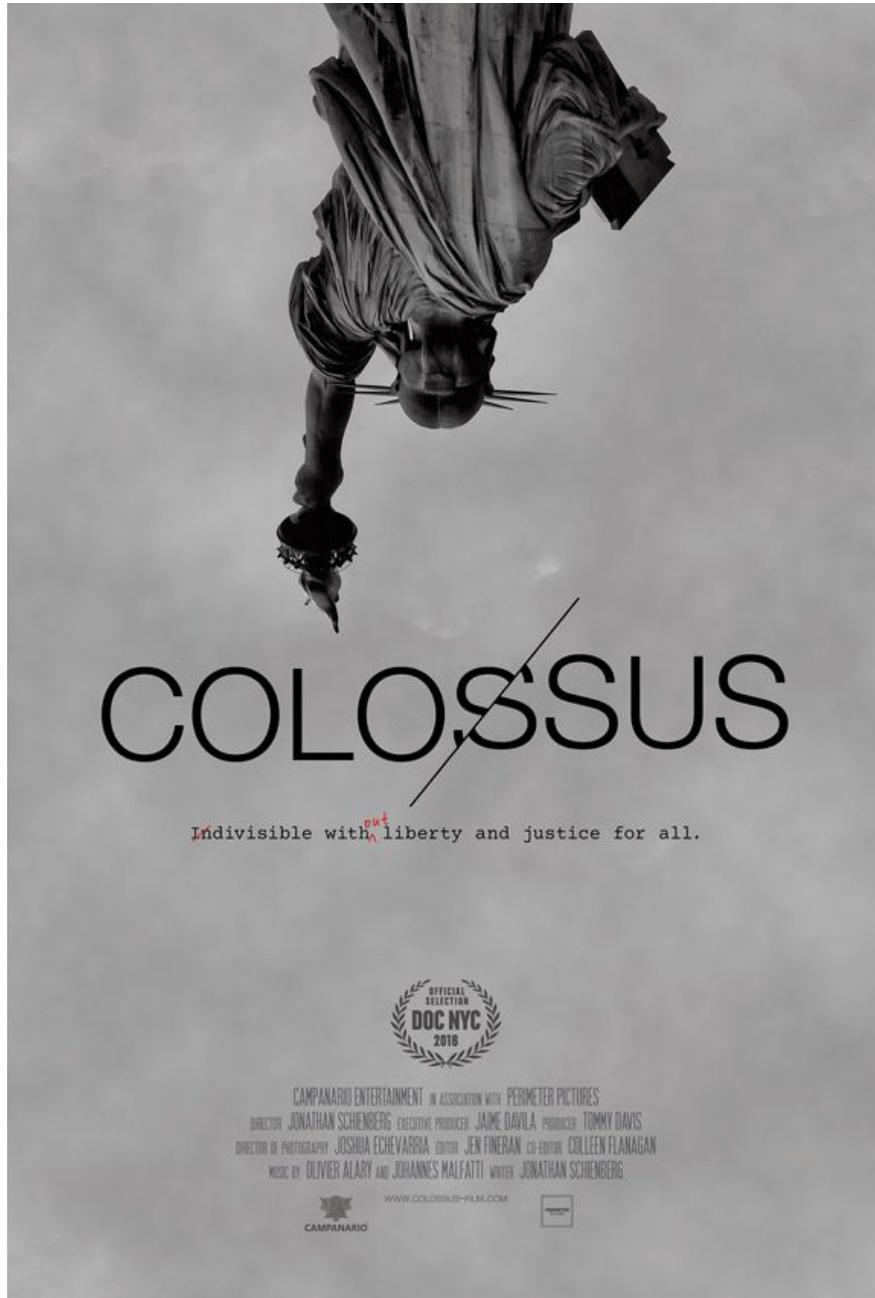


# COLOSSUS



84 minutes | USA | 2018

English | Some Spanish with English subtitles

Documentary | Unrated

Trailer: <https://colossus-film.com/trailer>

For images visit: <https://bit.ly/2G4D15k>

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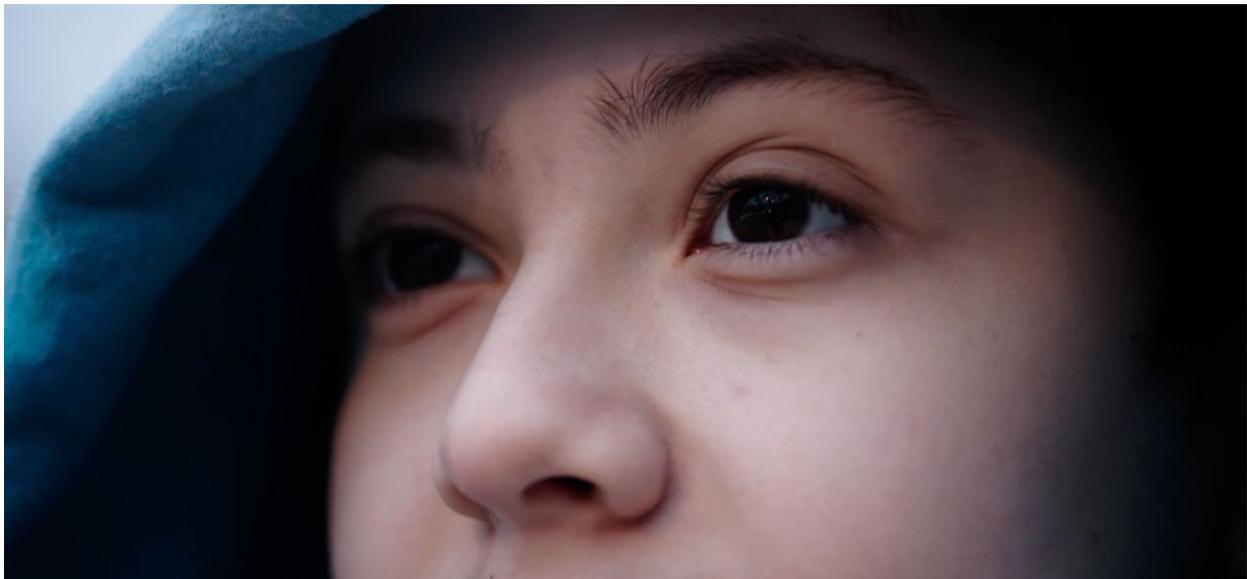
## **LOGLINE**

Told through the eyes of 15-year-old Jamil Sunsin, *Colossus* is a modern-day immigrant tale of one family's desperate struggle after deportation leads to family separation, and the elusive search for the American dream.

## **SYNOPSIS**

Jamil Sunsin is the only person in his immediate family born in the United States. His parents and infant sister came from Honduras and lived in the U.S. for a decade before Jamil's father was arrested for being undocumented. The entire family was forced to return to Honduras, a country wracked with violence. Jamil's sister Mirka had believed she was an American citizen, but found out otherwise when the family was deported. In Honduras, Jamil and Mirka suffer a knife attack. Jamil is traumatized and afraid to leave his home. The family makes the excruciating choice to send him back to the U.S.

Now 15, Jamil tries to survive without his family and fights against a broken immigration system. Back in Honduras, his sister Mirka, who would have been eligible for DACA had she remained in the U.S., lives in fear and with great regret, struggling to adapt, and hoping to one day reunite with Jamil. This intimate portrait is a rare look into the aftermath of deportation and family separation, amidst the current backlash against America's immigrants.



## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I've covered immigration stories since early on in my career as a journalist, and I always felt the story of families being separated by deportation was a tragic one we'd hear about, but rarely did anyone explore the aftermath of those separations in any in-depth way.

Just a few months ago, the Trump administration's intentional family separation policy for Central American and Mexican families turning themselves in at the border made this film's subject a banner issue. But this tragic narrative didn't start with the Trump administration; it only intensified an already complex situation, making it much worse.

I was fortunate that three years ago the Sunsin family gave me intimate access to tell the story of their own difficult journey of family separation, and the consequences of what these separations actually mean for many of these families in the aftermath.

Jamil was born in the U.S. His mother and father, Alex and Alison, came to America from Honduras before his birth, carrying their 11-month-old daughter Mirka in their arms as they made the treacherous journey north through Guatemala, across Mexico. Alex was unable to obtain legal status through immigration court, so he and his family disappeared into the shadows like millions of immigrants before them.

The family lived in New Jersey for 10+ years before Alex was arrested one morning on his way to work for being undocumented. Alex was imprisoned, and he and Alison and their daughter Mirka were ordered deported. Had Mirka stayed, she would have become eligible for DACA soon after. Now, she is prevented from entering the U.S. for years because of her deportation.

The film is a moving account of the impact on families being torn apart, driven by America's current immigration policies. The Sunsin's journey is a microcosm of hundreds of thousands of immigrant families currently coping with the aftereffects of deportation and separation. We often forget that these stories are not just about immigrants from another country, but about Americans. So many of these families, like the Sunsin, have mixed status. Jamil and Mirka are siblings, who were living their lives like any ordinary American teenagers when their worlds were suddenly shattered by a broken immigration policy breaking apart families. Now, their futures are very different. It is likely that these traumatic events visited on families are engendering a mental health crisis in this country, and this issue is also explored in the film.

## FILMMAKER BIOS

### **JONATHAN SCHIENBERG - DIRECTOR**

Jonathan Schienberg is an independent documentary film director and producer. Previously he worked as a director and producer with *Years of Living Dangerously*, an Emmy Award winning documentary series for National Geographic and for Nat Geo's flagship documentary program *Explorer*. Prior to that, he worked as a director for Al Jazeera's documentary program *Witness*, and as a producer with the CBS News magazine series, *60 Minutes*. Before CBS, Jonathan worked as a producer and assignment editor for CNN in New York, and as a stringer and reporter for New York Newsday where he covered immigration.

His freelance work as a multimedia producer and writer has also appeared in the New York Times, PBS Frontline, Foreign Policy Magazine, CNN International, and the Chicago Tribune.

### **JAIME DÁVILA - EXECUTIVE PRODUCER**

In the four years since he founded Campanario Entertainment, Jaime Dávila has established the company as a prolific source of multilingual content and a production bridge between the U.S. and Latin America. Fulfilling his goal of making opportunities for Latinx creators and inclusive programming for audiences, Dávila oversees development and production on both sides of the border. His slate includes the upcoming multigenerational reality series *Mexican Dynasties* for Bravo, a pilot for a scripted series inspired by Selena Quintanilla for ABC, and a number of unscripted and scripted projects in development. Campanario is also known for *Camelia La Texana* (for Telemundo) and *Laugh Factory En Espanol* (with Pantaya).

Jaime began his career at ICM, ITV Studios, and Bravo. At Bravo, he held progressively senior development roles as he adapted international formats and developed original series, including *Best New Restaurant*, *The People's Couch*, and *The Extreme Guide to Parenting* (the latter created by Dávila).

The son of Mexican immigrants, Dávila earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Harvard and a Master of Science in Latin American Studies from Oxford.

### **TOMMY DAVIS - PRODUCER**

Tommy Davis is from McAllen, Texas. He has won numerous festival awards for his documentary films: *"Every F\*\*\*ing Day of My Life"* (HBO), *"Delirious"* (Complex Networks) and *"Mojados: Through the Night"* (Canal +). His latest short film, *"The Honeymoon,"* premiered on Channel 4 in the UK.

## FEATURING

**JAMIL SUNSIN** - Jamil, the main subject of *Colossus*, is a seventeen-year-old Honduran American living in New Jersey. He is the sole U.S. citizen in his immediate family, and was separated from his parents and older sister when his undocumented father was deported. An attempt to live together in Honduras failed when Jamil was threatened by thugs at knifepoint. Genuinely terrified, Jamil returns to the U.S. to go it alone.

**MIRKA SUNSIN** - Mirka, Jamil's older sister, is a college student currently living in Honduras. She is caught between two worlds - the United States where she grew up, and Honduras where she is now forced to live after being deported from the U.S. Though she was carried across the border as a baby and raised to believe she was American, Mirka was undocumented and she unknowingly relinquished her rights under DACA when she returned to Honduras.

**ALISON SUNSIN** - Alison is Jamil and Mirka's mother. She struggles mightily with being apart from her son, valuing family togetherness above all else. She wants nothing more than for the family to be reunited by Jamil's return to Honduras.

**ALEX SUNSIN** - Alex, who brought his family to the United States in hopes of a better life, is Jamil and Mirka's father. They had established a comfortable life, with Alex working as a tradesman, when he was suddenly deported after a routine traffic stop. Now stuck in Honduras, Alex feels like he belongs in neither country and dreams of returning to the U.S.

**ROSA SANTANA** - Rosa is Jamil's cousin, his main support system and legal guardian in the United States. She is also an activist with First Friends, an immigrant advocacy organization in New York and New Jersey.



## **ABOUT CAMPANARIO ENTERTAINMENT**

Campanario Entertainment is a North American media company that develops and produces broad appeal scripted and unscripted content driven by Latinos and Latinas in front of and behind the camera. Co-founded by Jaime Dávila, former development executive at Bravo, and Jaime Dávila Sr., former Televisa COO and Univision President and Chairman, Campanario Entertainment strongly supports original voices as well as adapts proven IP for both the U.S. and international television markets. Current productions include unique intellectual properties and adaptations such as an untitled musical drama inspired by the legacy of Selena Quintanilla with Scooter Braun’s SB Projects for ABC, “Mexican Dynasties,” a docuseries for Bravo that highlights elite families in Mexico City, FOX’s “Red Band Society,” “Bandolero” with Kenny Ortega (“High School Musical,” “Descendants”), and “Laugh Factory en Español.” Their first project, “Camelia la Texana,” premiered on Telemundo in the US and on Netflix in Mexico and set a new standard in content and visual quality for Spanish-language programming. For more information, visit [Campanario.com](https://www.campanario.com).

## **PRODUCTION NOTES**

- The film’s executive producer, Jaime Dávila, is a former Bravo executive who knew when he went out on his own as a producer that he wanted to tell the stories of separated families

- He partnered with experienced documentary producer Tommy Davis and director Jonathan Schienberg, who both care deeply about the same issue and approached the film from an activist perspective
- Tommy Davis had previously directed and produced an immigration-themed film, 2004's *Mojados Through the Night*, that won the audience award at SXSW (among other awards)
- The team undertook an extensive search with a field team to find a suitable and willing subject who would illuminate the human reality behind the political issues
- Determined to find the story, the team found Jamil and his family
- Shooting the film took three years and brought the crew back and forth from the United States to Honduras multiple times
- In that time, Jamil went from being a boy of 15 to a young man of nearly 18
- Jamil changed the direction of the film when he decided, in the middle of shooting, that he would try returning to Honduras to be with his family once again. It was a twist that filmmakers didn't see coming
- The film's editor, Jen Fineran, was an "Outstanding Editing" Emmy Award nominee for her work on the feature documentary "Ai Weiwei: Never Sorry"



## CREDITS

**Executive Producer:** Jaime Dávila

**Producer:** Tommy Davis

**Director:** Jonathan Schienberg

**Director of Photography:** Joshua Echevarria

**Editor:** Jen Fineran

**Co-editor:** Colleen Flanagan

**Field Producer:** Natasha Pizzey

**Music:** Olivier Alary, Johannes Malfatti

**Second Camera:** Philip Friesenbichler, Jonathan Schienberg, Fletcher Wolfe

**Sound:** Carlo Herrchen, Braulio Lin, Alan Kudan

**AC:** Junior Alvarez

**Colorist:** Jimmy Cadenas

**Sound Mixer:** Michael Rupe

**Assistant Editor:** Adielenah Perez

**Researchers:** Esther Lee, Esther Anino

**Translators:** Tanya Zelaya, Diego Senior, Natasha Pizzey

**Consultant:** Eli Saslow

**Photos** courtesy of Daniele Volpe, and Francesca Volpe.

**Special Thanks** to: Rosa Santana, The Sunsin family, Irene Schienberg, Luis de Leon, Monica Davis, James Fredrick, Betsy Paluck, and Filmworkers