



MOSTRA INTERNAZIONALE
D'ARTE CINEMATOGRAFICA
LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA 2024
Official Selection

**NBC News Studios and Participant
Present
A Fourth Floor and Moxie Pictures Production**

SEPARATED

A film by Errol Morris

Based on the Book by Jacob Soboroff

Production Notes

Running Time: 93 Minutes

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Logline

Academy Award®-winning filmmaker Errol Morris incisively probes the darkest chapter in recent American history: family separations. Merging narrative vignettes of one migrant family's plight with hard-hitting interviews with government officials, Morris paints a jaw-dropping picture of the state-sponsored crisis of cruelty, as hundreds of families remain separated today.

Short Synopsis

Academy Award®-winning filmmaker Errol Morris confronts one of the darkest chapters in recent American history: family separations. Based on NBC News Political and National Correspondent Jacob Soboroff's book, *Separated: Inside an American Tragedy*, Morris merges bombshell interviews with government officials and artful narrative vignettes tracing one migrant family's plight. Together they show that the cruelty at the heart of this policy was its very purpose. Against this backdrop—with hundreds of families still separated years later—audiences can begin to absorb the U.S. government's role in this unthinkable horror and be warned that we are on the verge of allowing it to happen again.

Long Synopsis

Issues around immigration remain a perennial point of contention across the American political spectrum. But the US administration's alarming embrace of anti-immigrant rhetoric in tandem with punitive federal policies took the American immigration debate to a new peak. No policy, however, was as morally dubious and publicly polarizing as the U.S. administration's dehumanizing "zero-tolerance" immigration policy that in 2018 resulted in U.S. authorities deliberately taking thousands of migrant children from their parents at the southern border.

The extraordinary cruelty of this political calculation was not a byproduct of the surging immigration rhetoric, but rather its purpose. By inflicting such unspeakable trauma on the families—the majority of them from the Central American countries Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras—the government aimed to deter others from traveling to the U.S. seeking asylum.

With searing incisiveness, Errol Morris, the Academy Award®-winning filmmaker behind seminal non-fiction works including "The Fog of War" and "The Thin Blue Line," probes at this bleak chapter in recent American history by merging hard-hitting interviews with government officials who were both alarmed by or complicit with these policy decisions, as well with artful narrative vignettes that immerse the viewer in the migrants' plight as they journey across the border.

Bombshell revelations from Jonathan White, at the time a top official in the Office of Refugee Settlement, about the “state-created orphans” and the ongoing efforts to reunite the unprecedented number of children, some of them infants, with their family members, paint a jaw-dropping picture of the immediate and long-lasting effects of the family separations. Yet, it’s the dramatic portrayal of a Guatemalan mother and her young son, embarking on a dangerous journey to escape poverty and violence in their homeland, only to be held apart for months in the U.S., that transforms intellectual understanding into visceral empathy.

Those narrative vignettes, shot in Mexico with local crew and talent—including Academy Award-winning production designer Eugenio Caballero and actress Gabriela Cartol—serve to emotionally and authentically illustrate the underlying trauma of what migrants endure in pursuit of a better life.

The resulting film—based on NBC News Political and National Correspondent Jacob Soboroff’s 2020 book, *Separated: Inside an American Tragedy*—is a devastatingly moving and thoroughly researched exposé of how several high-ranking government officials became willingly complicit in this horror. With hundreds of families still separated today, it’s a story without an ending in sight.

ABOUT THE FILM

A Cruel Calculation

While immigration policy has been a core issue since the United States was founded, recent years have seen the debate heat up in unprecedented ways. In particular, the Trump administration’s hard-line stance on immigration resulted in a series of devastating policies that affected thousands of people over the four-year presidency, many of which continue to have repercussions for some of the country’s most vulnerable populations.

But in the summer of 2018, one of those political calculations would prove shockingly cruel even by the Administration’s own standards, bringing about one of the most shameful and morally reprehensible chapters in the history of the United States: the family separation policy.

In an apparent effort to deter immigration, mostly from Central America, the Trump administration enabled the Department of Homeland Security to separate migrant parents from their children—some of them infants—upon being apprehended at the U.S.-Mexico border.

ACLU estimates about 5,500 children were taken from their parents while the policy was implemented. Despite ongoing efforts, not all of the families affected have been reunified.

An Unlikely Eyewitness

Since his days working at Pivot, the former television network owned and operated by Participant, California-based journalist Jacob Soboroff has reported on immigration issues and life across the U.S.-Mexico border.

Upon transitioning to NBC News, Soboroff dug deep into the issue, reporting on a series of hour-long programs dedicated to finding answers about the Trump administration's claims about the situation at the border by traveling there and investigating firsthand.

Those experiences put Soboroff in the privileged position to become an eyewitness to the family separations that were, at first, only rumored to be occurring. Covering in real time—and having access to the dehumanizing facilities where migrant children were kept—he found himself horrified at what he was witnessing.

“Even though I was there, and even though I saw it myself, and even though I was inside those facilities, and I met a number of families that went through it, and I talked to a number of officials who were responsible for it, I still couldn't comprehend how the U.S. government could do something so deliberately cruel,” expressed Soboroff.

According to Soboroff, the family separations under President Trump were made possible because the U.S. government, under both Democrat and Republican leadership, has long designed our immigration system to be punitive in order to scare people away from immigrating.

Indeed, looking back at the most recent past presidential administrations' immigration policies, it's no secret how we landed on Trump's “zero-tolerance” stance. President Bill Clinton's administration sought prevention through deterrence policies by pushing migrants to more dangerous and deadly parts of the border, resulting in alarmingly higher death rates in those crossings. In creating the Department of Homeland Security, President George W. Bush greatly increased the size and the scope of the Border Patrol. And over the course of President Barack Obama's two terms, more people were deported than under any other president in the history of the United States.

“When Donald Trump wanted to separate parents from their children as a means of deterrence, he was able to do so with the snap of a finger because that’s the way the system has been set up,” explained Soboroff.

From Reality, to the Page, to the Screen

After spending time at the border reporting on family separations for NBC News — for which he was awarded the Walter Cronkite Award for Excellence in TV Political Journalism, and the Hillman Prize — Soboroff decided that in order to dig deeper than what segments on television or an article would allow, he needed to write a book. The result from his firsthand account and research is the best-selling “Separated: Inside an American Tragedy,” published in July 2020.

Not long after the book hit the shelves, Soboroff learned through a social media post that acclaimed veteran filmmaker Errol Morris (“The Thin Blue Line,” “The Fog of War”) had not only read it but had been impressed and appalled by his findings.

Eager to thank him for his kind words for the book, Soboroff reached out to the only person he thought could put him in touch with the celebrated director, longtime friend and collaborator Diane Weyermann, who was the Chief Content Officer at Participant until her passing in October 2021.

“The book chronicles his experience of uncovering the story, which at the time was not a story that was widely known,” said Morris. “In the process of reporting for NBC News, he discovered the unthinkable.”

Once Morris and Soboroff connected, the possibility of turning “Separated” into a film emerged quickly. Both parties were interested in shining a light on the issue through cinema.

“Jacob and I had had a conversation. He asked if I knew anyone who might be interested in adapting his book as a movie? And I told him I did know somebody who would be interested — myself,” recalled Morris. “But it wasn’t clear to me how the story could be told.”

With Morris on board and Soboroff’s successful book as a foundation, NBC News Studios, a small production company embedded inside the news organization, and Participant joined forces to finance the production of this most timely project.

“Errol has this incredible ability to blend both speaking truth to power and cinematic visual storytelling,” said Molly O'Brien, Head of Documentary at NBC News Studios, about the company's desire to work with Morris. “He doesn't live in the ripped-from-the-headlines world of documentary. He is uniquely suited to dive deep underneath the headline.”

“What Errol does brilliantly is drill down into the how and why things happen,” added Courtney Sexton, Executive Vice President for Documentary Film and Television at Participant. “My hope is that beyond just being emotionally connected to the families that are going through this, audiences also leave angry at the institutions that installed it.”

Bureaucratic Red Tape

Morris' interest in the story of family separations came at a point when enough had been reported about the situation at the border that Trump administration officials who had been actively involved in the policy refused to speak with Morris, afraid of the repercussions.

“I approached a lot of people to be interviewed and was just repeatedly turned down again and again, and again,” said Morris. “I kept running into brick walls.”

One key figure in the implementation of the policy, Kirstjen Nielsen, the former United States Secretary of Homeland Security, was among those who wouldn't talk to Morris, even though she was out of office at the time he approached her.

There were others he reached out to who were still involved in the machinery of immigration and weren't allowed to speak without the explicit permission of their superiors. At every turn of the process, Morris encountered more and more bureaucratic red tape.

“I've never really quite encountered something like this. It's very odd to be making a movie in the middle of things as they're happening,” said Morris. “At least this kind of a movie, which depends on putting people in a chair, having them talk to me, or talk to camera.”

At times, the frustration pushed Morris to consider abandoning the project, but his strong commitment to Soboroff, who trusted him with the material, compelled him to stay the course.

“I learned a lot about government bureaucracy, more than almost anything else in the making of this film,” Morris expressed. “How deeply bureaucratic it all is, particularly the Department of Homeland Security, which is a kind of monstrosity created after 9/11.”

On-the-record with government officials

Amid the challenge of finding the voices that could provide insight into the family separations, there were two interviews that convinced Morris how the story could be told. One was with Commander Jonathan White, the former Deputy Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) for the Unaccompanied Alien Children’s (UAC) Program, and the other with Scott Lloyd, who was the Director of ORR at the time the disturbing policy was in place.

White turned out to be the most compelling character in the story, given how deeply involved he was at every step of the process, including reuniting families in the aftermath of the family separation policy.

“White is a man who has dedicated his life and his career to the wellbeing of children through his work at the Office of Refugee Resettlement,” said Soboroff. “Aside from the children and the parents who were separated, I don't think there's a more central character than Jonathan White in the story.”

Morris considers White one of the most fascinating people he’s ever interviewed, yet also a tortured character who wears his heart on his sleeve, plagued by the guilt of not being able to stop the harm done against migrant children before it happened.

Through his famous interview device, the Interrotron, Morris did two extensive interviews with White that resulted in about five hours of crucial material with indispensable details for “Separated.” “White is an extraordinary civil servant who took his job seriously as a protector of children,” Morris added.

On the other hand, Scott Lloyd — the formerly outspoken anti-abortion advocate with almost no background in supporting refugees and then-head of the Office of Refugee Resettlement — presented a different kind of challenge for Morris. Although Lloyd agreed to be interviewed, “To call him guarded would be an understatement. He was so unforthcoming,” recalled Morris.

Despite his extensive preparation, including reading Lloyd’s anti-abortion novel, “The Undergraduate,” Morris came away from the interview thinking it had been disastrous.

However, having also recently done “American Dharma,” a documentary on the controversial and shadowy Republican operative Steve Bannon, Morris was aware of what working with figures on opposite sides of the political spectrum entails but still sees value in having those uncomfortable conversations.

“What's the point of just listening to people who say what you want them to say or agree with you, or share the same values that you have? It's deeply pointless,” added Morris.

“Errol’s interview technique is about being inquisitive, and really interested in what these people have to say,” said Robby Fernandez, Morris’ longtime producing partner at Moxie Pictures and a producer on this film. “The conversations touch on a number of different topics. That's part of his interviewing style. He doesn't come in with a preformed agenda, but he's incredibly prepared.”

During the process of making “Separated,” Soboroff himself experienced what it’s like to be interviewed by Errol Morris. Soboroff recalls being nervous going into the conversation, but quickly feeling at ease to be vulnerable and share his part in the story with Morris.

“To talk to him is a really unique experience. First of all, it turned the tables on me because I'm so used to being the one interviewing people,” said Soboroff. “He has a way of talking to you where one thing leads to the next thing. It's a masterclass in interviewing.”

Always Pushing the Form

Throughout his career, Morris has never conformed to any rigid parameters in nonfiction storytelling. And on “Separated,” he once more pushed the form into unexpected territory.

To immerse the audience in the plight of migrant families who leave their homelands and risk their lives for a chance at a better life in the U.S., Morris created a fictional story of a mother and a son making the trip from Central America like thousands of others. These vignettes are interspersed throughout “Separated.” Morris describes the film as a “drama with interviews,” to highlight the significance of these scripted scenes based on reality.

“I am always interested in extending the vocabulary of documentary. Why make documentary films? Maybe there's no good reason to make them, but one good reason for me is that they're experimental,” Morris explained. “You get to reinvent what a documentary is or what a film is in each attempt to make one.”

Ever since his seminal work “The Thin Blue Line” introduced a new approach to nonfiction, Morris has always rejected the concept of reenactments. In “Separated”, the mother-son narrative portrayed in the vignettes is not so much recreating one particular experience, but rather breathing life into a symbolic everywoman’s journey from Central America to the US.-Mexico border.

Morris first utilized dramatized segments in a significant manner in the 2017 Netflix series “Wormwood” about CIA employee Frank Olson, who died under mysterious circumstances.

“He's a filmmaker, and this is his way of trying to expand on the form and to make it more interesting, more evocative, more provocative,” said Fernandez, who has worked with Morris since 1997.

According to editor Steven Hathaway, “Separated” was constructed with great attention to pacing, trying to find the right moments for the audiences to enter, exit, and reenter the dramatic vignettes—which together form a short film within the film as a whole.

“It's about not losing that narrative arc,” Hathaway explained. “It can't go too long before the next vignette or else you forget where you're at. It was really just about pacing for both the film as a whole, but also in the journey of the mother and son. “

On every Errol Morris project, Hathaway starts cutting down the interviews as they come in. He then integrates new elements along the way. At first, Morris allows Hathaway complete freedom to create a “draft cut” to which Hathaway will make adjustments. On “Separated,” which features a variety of elements at play, this process was essential to create a cohesive film.

“I don't think of it as a documentary with some drama stuck in,” said Morris. “It really is a different kind of movie, a different kind of art form where we tried to take archival materials and combine them with interviews shot with the Interrotron, to preserve eye contact, and straight drama.”

“NBC News Studios partnered with Errol, providing the archival assets and rigorous fact-based reporting and infrastructure of a legacy news organization to this story to support his unique vision and ability to continually evolve the art of filmmaking,” said O’Brien.

Mexican Talent Enriching the Film

Shot in Mexico in Veracruz, Hidalgo and Mexico City with local crew and talent, the narrative vignettes serve to illustrate the underlying trauma of what migrants endure in pursuit of a better life.

In addition to Croatian cinematographer Igor Martinović, a longtime collaborator of Morris, the director enlisted the enormous talent of Academy Award®-winning production designer Eugenio Caballero (“Pan’s Labyrinth,” “Roma”) to imbue realism and authenticity into the spaces where the tragic story unfolds.

“He was just an invaluable collaborator,” said Morris of Caballero. “This guy is a perfectionist. He is able to command vast resources and finds a way to make it all happen.”

In front of the camera, award-winning Mexican actress Gabriela Cartol (“The Chambermaid”) plays the young mother risking it all for the sake of her son, who is in turn brought to life by a superb performance from emerging young actor Diego Armando Lara Lagunes (“The Realm of God”).

“Separated” marks Caballero’s first time working on a documentary, given that it’s not common for nonfiction projects to employ dramatic segments the way Morris does here.

The production designer conducted extensive research on the many challenges that Central Americans migrants face when leaving their countries: They must first cross through Mexico, where dangers are aplenty, until they arrive at the U.S.-Mexico border where they often face further horrors, such as the family separation policy.

“They are stripped of everything, even of affection,” said Caballero.

For Caballero, it was important that the home of the mother and son was depicted with a certain dignity but also with vivid colors. As their journey takes them into difficult situations, the scenes lose color according to what they experience. At the end of the road, when they are taken to an ICE facility, the environment becomes colorless, almost antiseptic.

That contrast between the world they leave behind and the one they enter, Caballero believes, helps the audience register the transition on a visual level, and perhaps feel more connected to them in a way that more traditionally presented information otherwise couldn’t.

“If you are moved by characters, then you are sort of experiencing the same journey as them,” Caballero explained. “It is much more compelling than seeing it in statistics or seeing a politician speaking about it. That's important, but so is this visual counterpoint.”

For one of the scenes, Caballero and his team built a replica of a section of the border wall. The slats in the border wall also sparked the idea of using shots of a zoetrope in motion to metaphorically depict how a child could perceive the imposing barrier.

The realism that Caballero conjured through his work helped Cartol feel immersed in her character's devastating experience. One unforgettable scene in particular, when the mother and son are apprehended at the border, affected Cartol profoundly.

“I felt such great empathy for them, beyond rationality,” said Cartol. “But I'm not an activist. I'm not a politician. Sometimes I felt like the only thing I can do honor these people or to somehow do something is by portraying their experience on screen for the world to see.”

Morris, who has always enjoyed working with actors, has a simple principle for directing them: he does not give any elaborate instructions. Instead, he allows them the space to approach the scene instinctively; if he were to present them with specifications beforehand, Morris fears, he could ruin what could be a perfect take. On “Separated,” both Cartol and the young Lara Lagunes consistently impressed him with the naturalism of their dramatic choices.

“It's the shut-up school of direction,” said Morris. “You wait and see what someone is going to do. And if they do it perfectly, then you thank your lucky stars and leave it alone.”

Near the end of film, one moment makes Morris the proudest. Rattled by her ordeal, Gabriela's character speaks on the phone with her son. They are in separate detention facilities, and though she tries to reassure him, the boy, who has forcefully matured through the tribulations of their journey, knows his mother doesn't know when they will see each other again. It's at that moment that Morris asked Cartol to stare directly into the camera.

“It's the ambiguity of the shot that gives it enormous power,” said Morris. “Is it an accusation, is it a look of desperation? Is she our conscience telling us that this is wrong? I don't know, but I know that I like it.”

Cruelty as Policy is Still in Place

Soboroff believes that the film couldn't come at a more crucial time, both for the families who are still waiting for justice, and in terms of the political realities surrounding the 2024 presidential election.

As much as one would like to think that the family separation policy is a thing of the past, Soboroff warns, the bones of the punitive immigration system that allowed the Trump administration to separate thousands of children from their parents is still there today.

“If you were furious about a system that was intending to harm people who were coming here to seek asylum from dangerous or deadly situations in their home country, that system's still here,” Soboroff noted. “And some kind of radical or wholesale departure from it is not what's happened under the Biden administration at all, despite what many people thought might happen based on the rhetoric during the last campaign.”

Soboroff also points out that there are still potentially as many as a thousand families who haven't been reunited yet. The vast majority of these families have received no financial compensation from the U.S. government for what they went through and continue to go through. And none of the officials who were responsible for the policy have faced any accountability, despite the fact that President Biden himself called the policy criminal in his campaign's final debate against President Trump in October 2020.

In December 2023, the Biden administration's Department of Justice and the ACLU settled a longstanding lawsuit about the policy, agreeing to bar most family separations for eight years. Doing so permanently, however, would take an act of Congress.

“This is an extraordinarily important issue, particularly because we know what Trump threatens to do with immigration if he is reelected,” said Morris. “The message of the movie is an important one and a very timely one. And I hope it gets out there.”

“I hope this film is seen by as many people as possible and that it helps prevent something like this from happening again,” added O'Brien. “There are no laws in place preventing an American administration from implementing child separation as a tool in the future.”

According to Soboroff, pressuring the current, and future, Administration to investigate who was responsible for the policy will be imperative to begin righting the unspeakable wrongs committed against these families. Soboroff is hopeful that having “Separated” become an Errol Morris film will reach people emotionally in a way that his book alone couldn't.

“It's such an awful story, but Errol tells it in a way that I hope brings people back to how they felt at that time,” said Soboroff. “Everybody can close their eyes and remember how they felt when they heard that the U.S. government was separating thousands of parents from their children deliberately.”

For Morris, the goal is to use the cinematic tools to reveal the most essential of truths.

“It's an attempt to tell a story that we should all relate to emotionally. It's not just a story about political malfeasance or about bureaucracy, but about people,” Morris explained. “People like you and me. It's not about *other* people. It's about people.”

Director's Statement

Art is not reality and reality is not art, although there is often a confusion as to which is which. And then there is the inevitable question about how to *depict* reality in art, as if there is one way rather than myriad possibilities. I have wrestled my entire life with the question of how to depict the world, and more relevantly, how to preserve the deep ambiguities in how we try to apprehend the world. *Separated* is my most recent attempt. How do we capture the horrors of the Trump administration's border policies without repeating things we have already seen, perhaps *ad nauseam*? How do we capture the underlying emotional reality of what is going on? The tragedy of parents separated from their children, powerless to do anything. Or of the children, incapable of comprehending their nightmarish new lives. How do we underline the bureaucratic machinations behind the scenes? The opportunism, the institutional indifference.

I have tried to construct a road between drama and interview. The factual news reporting of Jacob Soboroff informed my plan. Dramatic scenes played out by two extraordinary actors, Gabriela Cartol and Diego Armando Lara Lagunes, depicting a family in flight, torn and broken apart by their arrival in the United States. Interviews with people who have not really been heard from in the news. Elaine Duke, former acting head of the Department of Homeland Security. Jallyn Sualog from the Office of Refugee Resettlement, the mismanaged department that was forced to take custody of the separated children. Lee Gelernt, an ACLU lawyer who convinced a judge to order the separations halted and the families reunited. And of course, the hero of the movie, Jonathan White, who decided to jeopardize his career by reaching out with a story that needed to be told. Today, this story is as much a cautionary tale for the future as an exploration of the terrible misdeeds of our recent past.

Errol Morris (Director)

Roger Ebert has said, “After twenty years of reviewing films, I haven’t found another filmmaker who intrigues me more...Errol Morris is like a magician, and as great a filmmaker as Hitchcock or Fellini.”

Errol Morris’ films have won many awards, including an Oscar for “The Fog of War,” the Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival for “A Brief History of Time,” the Silver Bear at the Berlin International Film Festival for “Standard Operating Procedure,” and the Edgar from the Mystery Writers of America for “The Thin Blue Line.” His films have been honored by the National Society of Film Critics and the National Board of Review. Morris’ work is in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art. Roger Ebert, a champion of Morris’ work, called his first film, “Gates of Heaven,” one of the ten best films of all time. The Guardian listed him as one of the ten most important film directors in the world.

Morris is the author of two New York Times bestsellers, “Believing is Seeing” and “A Wilderness of Error,” and is a regular contributor to The New York Times opinion pages and Op-Docs series. His most recent book, “The Ashtray,” was published in 2018.

Morris has directed over 1000 television commercials, including campaigns for Apple, Levi’s, Nike, Target, Citibank, and Miller High Life. He has directed short films for the 2002 and 2007 Academy Awards, ESPN, and many charitable and political organizations. In 2001, Morris won an Emmy for Photobooth, a commercial for PBS.

Morris has received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, a Guggenheim Fellowship, and a MacArthur Fellowship. In 2007, he was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison and was a graduate student at Princeton University and the University of California-Berkeley. He has received the Columbia Journalism Award and honorary degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Brandeis University, and Middlebury College.

Morris lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts with his wife, Julia Sheehan, an art historian, and their French Bulldog, Esmeralda.

Jacob Soboroff (Journalist/Author/Executive Producer)

Jacob Soboroff is a Political and National Correspondent for NBC News and the author of the New York Times best seller and Los Angeles Times Book Prize finalist “Separated: Inside an American Tragedy.” For his reporting on the Trump administration’s child separation policy, he received the Walter Cronkite Award for Individual Achievement by a National Journalist and the Hillman Prize for Broadcast Journalism. He is also the recipient of a Ruben Salazar Journalism Award from the California Chicano News Media Association,

and in 2022 was nominated for a News and Documentary Emmy® Award for his reporting from Haiti. He lives in Los Angeles with his wife Nicole Cari and their two children.

Igor Martinovic (Cinematographer)

Igor Martinovic is a New York based cinematographer who photographed the Academy Award winning documentary “Man on Wire”, which also won the Sundance Grand Jury Prize as well as Audience Award at the same festival.

Igor worked as a cinematographer on TV series “The Night Of”, “House of Cards”, “The Outsider”, “George and Tammy” as well as Sundance Grand Prize winner “Padre Nuestro”. In last few years he has been working with Errol Morris on Netflix series “Wormwood”, “My Psychedelic Love Story”, “The Pigeon Tunnel” with two more documentaries currently in production.

Igor was nominated for Emmy Awards for his cinematography work on the Netflix TV series “House of Cards”; for documentaries “What Happened, Miss Simone?”; “Jim Henson – Idea Man” as well as for the Showtime TV series “George & Tammy”. Igor was nominated for the American Society of Cinematographers Award for his work on “George & Tammy” and won the ASC Award for the HBO mini-series “The Night Of”.

Robert Fernandez (Producer)

Robert Fernandez is CEO/Co-Owner of Moxie Pictures, a production company with offices in New York, Los Angeles, and London.

He is a recipient of the Palme D’Or (Cannes Lions) for Top Global Production Company (1998 & 2001) as well as every major advertising award, including 6 Emmy’s. He has produced films that have won numerous major documentary film awards including The Academy Award, Independent Spirit Award, Sundance Documentary Grand Jury award and the IDA Best Feature of the year.

In 1998 Robert produced his first feature film, “Above Freezing,” directed by Frank Todaro. In 2003 he produced the first (of many) collaborations with Errol Morris, as the Co-Producer of the 2004 Academy Award winning documentary, “The Fog of War.” Robert was the Executive Producer of “Standard Operating Procedure” (2008), which won the Silver Bear at the Berlin Film Festival as well as Executive Producer of both “Tabloid” (2010) and “The B-Side” (2017). In 2013, Robert produced “The Unknown Known” and in 2017, was producer of the critically acclaimed Netflix series “Wormwood.” In 2018, he produced “American Dharma” and in 2020, “My Psychedelic Love Story,” which premiered on Showtime in November 2020. In 2023, he produced “Tune Out the Noise,” which will

premiere fall of 2023 and has just completed his 10th film with Errol Morris, "Separated" (Participant and NBC News Studios) which will premiere in late 2024.

In addition, Robert is the Executive Producer of "Dina," which won the Grand Jury Documentary prize at the 2017 Sundance Film Festival and was the 2017 International Documentary Association (IDA) Best Film of the year. Also in 2017, Robert was the producer of the Tomas Leach documentary, "The Lure" that premiered at DOC NYC, as well as Executive Producer of the Greg Kohs directed film, AlphaGo that premiered at the 2017 Tribeca Film Festival and was acquired by Netflix. In 2022, Robert produced the Tomas Leach documentary, "A Brilliant Curling Story" for The Olympic Channel. As well, Robert was the Executive Producer of the Kief Davidson directed and Emmy nominated Netflix limited series, "Meltdown: Three Mile Island." Premiering the fall of 2023, Robert is the producer on his first film with director Lee Hirsch, "The First Class."

He is a producer on the documentary "Some Kind of Monster" directed by Joe Berlinger and Bruce Sinofsky. He was also the Executive Producer of "The Life," a weekly television series on ESPN as well as programming for Bravo, IFC, AMC, MTV, Animal Planet, NBC and ABC. He was also the producer of the opening films to the 74th and 79th Annual Academy Awards.

He is Executive Producer on Moxie's first foray into narrative feature film with "Austenland," an official selection of the 2013 Sundance Film Festival and acquired by SONY Pictures. He is also the producer of the narrative feature, "The Mend" that was an official selection of the 2014 SXSW Film Festival. In 2015, Robert produced Errol Morris' successful ESPN Short Film Series, "It's Not Crazy, It's Sports" that premiered in primetime on ESPN.

In addition, Robert has been a leader in the commercial production industry. Robert is the current Treasurer of the Association of Independent Commercial Producers (AICP), after serving three terms as Chairman and four terms as Vice-Chairman. Robert has been a member of the AICP National Board since 2000 and is on the Board of Trustees for Producers Health Benefits Plan (PHBP) and was a trustee from 2000 to 2022 for the Directors Guild Training Program (ADTPNY). He has been a member of the Directors Guild of America (DGA) since 1992 and is a member of the Producers Guild of America (PGA), the British Academy for Film and Television (BAFTA) and the Television Academy. In 2008, Robert was selected a chairperson of the 17th annual AICP Show at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, which is one of the most prestigious advertising award shows in the world.

Robert resides in Bucks County, Pennsylvania with his wife of 35 years, Lisa. His sons, Timothy and Matthew, and 4 Grandchildren also live in Bucks County

Steven Hathaway (Editor/Producer)

Steven Hathaway is an editor and producer of documentary films, including “The Pigeon Tunnel,” “My Psychedelic Love Story,” “American Dharma,” “Wormwood,” and “The B-Side.” His work has premiered at the Telluride Film Festival, the Venice Film Festival, and the Berlin International Film Festival. It has played on Netflix, Showtime, and ESPN. In 2003, he was an associate editor on “The Fog of War,” which won an Academy Award. He lives in Concord, Massachusetts with his wife and French bulldog.

Gabriela Cartol (Actress)

Gabriela Cartol is a Mexican actress who graduated from CasAzul Artes Escénicas ARGOS. In 2012, she starred in her first feature film “Perpetual Sadness,” for which she earned her first nomination for the Ariel Award in the Breakthrough Actress category. Afterwards, she was part of different films such as “Mole de olla, receta familiar” (dir. Enrique Arroyo), “I Dream in Another Language” and “Cosas imposibles” (dir. Ernesto Contreras).

“The Chambermaid” (dir. Lila Avilés), represents her most relevant lead role do date. This film was selected to represent Mexico at the Academy Awards and Goya Awards in 2019. Gabriela also received several nominations as best actress for this work, including her second Ariel nomination. She won Best Ibero-American actress at the Festival Internacional de cine de la Orquídea in Cuenca, Ecuador and later, she received the Best Actress Jury Prize at the Nador Film and Common Memory Festival in Morocco. In February, 2020, she received the Silver Ring from the Taxco Guerrero International Film Festival for her outstanding career.

After the success of “The Chambermaid,” Gabriela participated in the international series “Hernán, el hombre” produced by Dopamine, where she played Moctezuma’s daughter. In 2021, she participated in her first project outside of Mexico with the series “The Shelter,” produced by Fábula and filmed in Santiago, Chile. She later landed an important role in the series “The Resort,” produced by PeacockTV and NBC, where she plays Luna. This project premiered at Comic-Con 2022.

Gabriela was selected at the Talents Guadalajara 2018 and Berlinale Talents 2019 programs by the international film festivals of Guadalajara and Berlin, respectively. She teaches workshops on acting for film throughout Mexico and Latin America. In 2023, she participated in he series “El centauro del norte” where she plays Lucita, the legitimate wife of Pancho Villa and the film “Where the Tracks End” directed by Ernesto Contreras on Netflix. Gabriela is expecting important project to premiere in 2024: “Separated” directed

by Errol Morris, “Each Minute Counts” by Trazziende films and Amazon Prime, “Like Water for Chocolate” for Max and “Forever” for Netflix.

Eugenio Caballero (Production Designer)

Eugenio Caballero is the Academy Award winning production designer of Guillermo del Toro’s “Pan’s Labyrinth.” Mr. Caballero’s work on the film also earned him an Ariel Award, an Art Directors’ Guild Award (the most prestigious award in his field), a Los Angeles Film Critics Association Award, the Gold Derby Award, the Online Film Critics Association and a Goya, Satellite, Las Vegas Film Critics Society Award and BAFTA Award nominations.

Born in Mexico City, Mr. Caballero, after study History of Art and History of Cinema in Florence, Italy his career as a production designer began in Mexico, with award-winning work on music videos (MTV award) and short films, soon he started to work in feature films as an assistant, and a set decorator.

Mr. Caballero’s credits include near 30 films, 20 of them as a designer.

He has worked with directors Jim Jarmusch (“The Limit of Control”), Baz Luhrmann (“Romeo and Juliet”), Alfonso Cuarón (ROMA), Sebastian Cordero (“Crónicas,” “Rabia” and “Europa Report”), Floria Sigismondi (“The Runaways”), Claudia Llosa (“Aloft”), Fernando Eimbcke (“Club Sandwich”) Carlos Cuarón (“Rudo y Cursi”), Russel Mulcahy (“Resident Evil Extinction”), among others.

His first collaboration with J.A.Bayona on “The Impossible”, starring Naomi Watts, Ewan MacGregor and Tom Holland, earned him a Goya nomination and an Art Directors Guild nomination in 2013.

In 2015 and 2016 he worked on the film “A Monster Calls”, directed by J.A. Bayona, based on the multi awarded book by Patrick Ness which earned him a Goya on his third nomination to this award. He received the Gaudi Award , the Fenix Award and the Platino Award award for the same film.

In 2017-2018 he designed the film “Roma” working alongside with the director Alfonso Cuarón, for this work he has earned multiple international awards and nominations, including the Critics Choice Awards, the Art Directors’ Guild, the BAFTAs and the Academy Award.

In 2020-2021 he worked on the film “Bardo” directed by Alejandro Gonzalez Iñárritu.

Mr. Caballero's has been nominated 7 times for the Ariel award -Mexico's main film award – of which he has won 3.

He has served as a Jury member on numerous international festivals, and he is a member of the AMPAS (Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences), the Mexican and Spanish Film Academies

Courtney Sexton (Executive Producer, EVP of Documentary Film and Television, Participant)

Courtney Sexton is Executive Vice President of Documentary Film and Television at Participant, the leading media company dedicated to entertainment that stands at the intersection of art and activism.

Prior to Participant, Sexton was Senior Vice President for CNN Films, where she supervised the production of documentary films for theatrical exhibition and distribution across CNN's platforms, as well as for distribution by other partners. During her tenure, she executive produced films including "Gabby Giffords Won'T Back Down," "The Last Movie Stars," "Oscar® winner "Navalny," "John Lewis: Good Trouble," "Apollo 11," "Linda Ronstadt: The Sound of My Voice," "RBG" and "Three Identical Strangers."

Before joining CNN, Sexton worked as a development executive at Participant on the documentary team. During her first stint at Participant, her projects included the Academy Award®-winning "An Inconvenient Truth," Academy Award®-nominated "Food, Inc.," "Standard Operating Procedure," and "Page One: Inside The New York Times."

Molly O'Brien (Producer, Head of Documentary, NBC News Studios)

As Head of Documentary at NBC News Studios, Molly provides collaborative and strategic oversight to NBC News Studios' premium documentary business. She is an Academy Award shortlisted and a prime-time Emmy award winning filmmaker with nearly three decades of experience making documentary series and feature films. Prior to NBC News Studios, Molly was Executive Producer, Special Projects at Fork Films in New York, founding producer of Sundance Institute's Catalyst Initiative, professor of wildlife and environmental filmmaking at Chapman University, and a freelance producer/director working on dozens of projects in the reality, advocacy, and documentary feature film and series space.

DEDICATED TO DIANE WEYERMANN
1955 – 2021

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ERROL MORRIS

WITH
PRODUCED BY
ERROL MORRIS
ROBERT FERNANDEZ
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EDITOR
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JULIA SHEEHAN, BERYL LIPTON, NICOLE CARI, JULIA AINSLEY, PETER HUBBARD, IZHAR
HARPAZ, SIMON DOOLITTLE, AARNE HEIKKILA, MITCHELL KOSS, DANA ROECKER,
ROBERT COLVILL, ELIZABETH LEIST, TOM MAZZARELLI, AMERICAN IMMIGRATION
COUNCIL, PAUL RYAN, DAVID CORVO, JANELLE RODRIGUEZ, BETSY KORONA, RASHIDA
JONES, ERIKA GLASS, REBECCA BLUMENSTEIN

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