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Navalny Poisoning Documentary to Premiere at Sundance

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"Navalny" was revealed as the "mystery 10th film" to be screened in the prestigious festival's U.S. Documentary Competition section. **t.me/teamnavalny**

A new documentary about jailed Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny's poisoning will have its world premiere at the Sundance Film Festival, the Sundance Institute announced Monday.

"Navalny," a fly-on-the-wall look into the saga that unfolded following the Kremlin critic's near-fatal poisoning, was revealed as the "mystery 10th film" to be screened in the prestigious festival's U.S. Documentary Competition section. It will premiere at 6 p.m. Mountain Time on Tuesday.

"When we saw this film in the early fall we all immediately knew that we wanted it and would wait for it: riveting cinema in the present tense, incredible access, intrepid investigative journalism, a compelling protagonist speaking truth to power – all beautifully edited, directed and produced into a timely non-fiction thriller that deals with the highest of stakes for freedom of expression," Sundance director Tabitha Jackson said in a statement

announcing the film's screening.

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Directed by Daniel Roher, "Navalny" is a first-hand look at the events surrounding the opposition figure's August 2020 poisoning while traveling from Siberia to Moscow. He was eventually evacuated to Germany, where scientists confirmed his poisoning by military-grade nerve agent Novichok.

While in recovery, Navalny teamed up with investigative journalists from CNN, Bellingcat and Russia's The Insider to uncover the truth behind his assassination attempt. He claims that the poisoning was carried out by FSB agents on President Vladimir Putin's orders, a claim the Kremlin denies.

"Boldly confronting injustice through cinematic storytelling has been threaded into Sundance's DNA since its inception. ... We are thrilled that Sundance audiences will be the first to see our film and witness the extraordinary courage of Alexei Navalny," Roher said in the statement.

The documentary thriller premieres roughly one year after Navalny returned to Russia, where he was promptly jailed for violating parole while in recovery abroad — a charge his allies say was politically motivated.

Months later, Russian authorities blacklisted Navalny's political and activist networks as "extremist" organizations and many of his top associates have since fled the country.

The U.S. film festival will take place virtually from Jan. 20-30 due to the Omicron coronavirus variant.

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