

Documentary on Jailed Kremlin Critic Alexei Navalny Nominated for Oscar

January 24, 2023



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The U.S.-produced fly-on-the-wall documentary "Navalny," which followed the now-jailed Russian anti-corruption campaigner and Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny during the aftermath of a poisoning attempt in 2020, was nominated for an Academy Award on Tuesday.

The film, directed by Daniel Roher, shows Navalny during his recuperation in Berlin from poisoning with nerve agent Novichok and as he prepared to return to Russia. When he flew into Moscow in January 2021, Navalny was immediately arrested for violating his parole and jailed.

Combining original interviews with Navalny himself, his wife Yulia, daughter Dariya and close aides, "Navalny" also captures a journalistic scoop when investigative reporter Christo Grozev manages to identify the men involved in the attempt on Navalny's life.

The documentary's most dramatic moment comes when Navalny, pretending to be an official, calls Konstantin Kudryavstev, one of his would-be assassins.

During the call, the hitman admits to lacing Navalny's underwear with Novichok and outlines how his team had planned the attempted murder multiple times in an extraordinary scene that even Navalny and close associate Maria Pevchikh seem unable to believe.

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Pevchikh, who heads the investigative unit of Navalny's Anti-Corruption Foundation, congratulated Navalny and the team behind the film in a [tweet](#), calling the nomination "another example of Putin's plans going awfully wrong."

"Navalny" is up against four other films for the Oscar in the Best Documentary Feature Film category, including "A House Made of Splinters," which documents a refuge in eastern Ukraine run by a group of women for children escaping alcoholism and abuse.

The only other Russian film to be nominated for an Academy Award on Tuesday was "Haulout," a short documentary that explores the life of scientist Maxim Chakilev as he observes walrus migration on Russia's Arctic shores.

"Haulout" is in contention for the Best Documentary Short Film award.

Oscar winners will be announced at the Academy Awards ceremony in Los Angeles on March 12.

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