

Review: Golden Lion winner 'All the Beauty and the Bloodshed' profiles artist's activism



VENICE: The war between an individual and the immensely wealthy Sackler family is the centerpiece of this year's Golden Lion-winning movie at the Venice Film Festival.



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Academy Award-winning director Laura Poitras's 'All the Beauty and the Bloodshed' is an emotion-driven work about renowned artist and activist Nan Goldin. Narrated through deeply incisive interviews, powerful slideshows, illuminating photography

and rare footage, the documentary presents a moving story of Goldin's fight to hold the Sackler family responsible for the opioid addiction crisis perpetrated by their company Purdue Pharma.

The 117-minute work is divided into seven chapters and profiles Goldin, a photographer who revolutionized the art form and shed light on the horrific misdeeds of the Sacklers. It is about a woman who used pictures as a means of activism. Her photographs were full of life, demanding people open their eyes to the crimes of a family that was venerated as philanthropists and magnanimous donors.

In the director's notes, Poitras says: "I began working on this movie with Nan in 2019, two years after she decided to leverage her power as an artist to expose the billionaire Sackler family's criminal culpability in fueling the overdose crisis. The process of making this movie was deeply intimate. But as we talked, I realized that this was only one part of the story I wanted to tell, and that the core of the film was Nan's art, photography, and the legacies of her friends and sister Barbara. A legacy of people escaping America."

To that end, Poitras focuses her camera on P.A.I.N (Prescription Addiction Intervention Now), a group founded by the artist to highlight the financial support that the Sackler family has given to high profile museums and cultural institutions in order to improve their public image.

As Goldin says in the film, "they have washed their blood money through the halls of museums and universities around the world."

This award-winning work is as much a profile of the artist and her stunning photography as it is an indictment of the now infamous Sackler family, and it is this duality that makes it so fascinating.
