



July 18, 2022

'20/20' FEATURES STORY OF A WORLD-RENOWNED SURGEON CAUGHT IN A WEB OF LIES AND DECEIT BY FIANCÉE

'20/20' Reports on Latest Details of Criminal Trial Against Surgeon Paolo Macchiarini for Alleged Medical Crimes and More

Two-Hour Program Features New Interviews with Former Fiancée Benita Alexander, Prosecution and Defense, and Witnesses

'20/20' Airst Friday, July 22 (9:01–11:00 p.m. EDT), on ABC

On the heels of the trial where world-renowned surgeon, Dr. Paolo Macchiarini, faced criminal charges of aggravated assault for alleged medical crimes, a two-hour "20/20" reports on Benita Alexander, a television producer who fell head over heels in love with him while producing a report on his revolutionary new surgery technique. He took her to exclusive destinations around the world. After he proposed, as wedding planning unfolded, Macchiarini surprised Alexander by telling her about VIP guests that were slated to attend, including Elton John and John Legend. He also shocked her by announcing one of his patients offered to officiate the wedding. That patient happened to be the pope. But what Alexander thought was a perfect match turned out to be a web of lies. There was a storm brewing in Macchiarini's professional life: several colleagues alleged he committed scientific misconduct by falsifying data to make his new surgery technique — performing trachea transplants using a synthetic trachea — appear more successful than it was. "20/20" co-anchor **Amy Robach** sat down for an interview with Alexander, who opened up about how she fell for the whirlwind relationship and was blinded by love, discovered a snag in the wedding plan that caused everything to unravel, traveled to his home in Spain where she came face to face with a shocking surprise and dealt with the revelations after uncovering the truth. The two-hour program also features interviews with those who witnessed Macchiarini's downfall up close, including Alexander's close friends and family and Macchiarini's former colleagues who blew the whistle. "20/20" also reports on the most recent developments, including this year's criminal trial, where he was cleared of more serious charges of aggravated assault but ultimately convicted of causing bodily harm in one patient's case, and features courtroom audio of Macchiarini and new interviews with Alexander, who attended every day of the trial, members of the prosecution and defense, and witnesses who testified. "20/20" airts Friday, **July 22** (9:01-11:00 p.m. EDT), on **ABC**. (Rebroadcast. ABC OAD: 2/12/21)

ABC News' "20/20" is an award-winning primetime program anchored by David Muir and Amy Robach. A proven leader as a long-form newsmagazine for over 40 years, "20/20" features unforgettable, character-driven true-crime mysteries, exclusive newsmaker interviews, hard-hitting investigative reports and in-depth coverage of high-profile stories. The two-hour "20/20" events air Fridays from 9:00 – 11:00 p.m. ET on ABC and are available to stream on ABC News digital platforms and Hulu.

David Sloan is senior executive producer and Janice Johnston is executive producer.

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