



## **Jury in Spector trial is chosen**

**Earlier questioning of the panelists provides a look at how the case may progress.**

By Peter Y. Hong, Times Staff Writer  
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The jury that will decide whether Phil Spector murdered actress Lana Clarkson in his home was sworn in Thursday, after three days of questioning that offered a glimpse of the trial to come.

The nine men and three women watched defense lawyers confront the fallout of four years of news reports on Spector's history of violent threats against women, and the potentially incriminating statements he made in the aftermath of the Feb. 3, 2003, shooting.

Prosecutors appeared to be seeking jurors who would look critically at the famous forensic scientists whom Spector's defense team is likely to present to argue that Clarkson was shot accidentally or in a suicide.

Spector, a record producer whose fame peaked almost two generations ago, is accused of shooting Clarkson through the mouth. She was found dead in the reclusive music legend's Alhambra mansion after a meeting at the VIP room at the House of Blues in Hollywood, where she worked as a hostess. Spector has pleaded not guilty.

During this week's proceedings, the diminutive, enigmatic Spector sat quietly in the courtroom. He arrived in a different knee-length jacket each day and high-heeled shoes, forgoing a necktie. His hairstyle was neatly tamed from the wild tangle he had in earlier court appearances.

He entered the downtown Criminal Courts Building with his 26-year-old wife, Rachele, whom he married after the shooting, at his side. She beamed adoringly at him as a trio of beefy security men cleared their path to the courtroom. Outside the courtroom, she handed out coaster-size "Team Spector" buttons.

During breaks, Spector smiled warmly and greeted veteran Associated Press reporter Linda Deutsch, an avid fan of Elvis Presley and the music of Spector's prime.

Spector became visibly nervous only in the moments after the jury was finalized. He held his delicate hands on his lap, fingers laced and trembling as he looked at the panel and whispered urgently to Bruce Cutler and Roger Rosen, two of his six lawyers.

Cutler and Rosen emerged this week as disparate co-captains of the defense team. Burly, combative but sharply eloquent, Cutler is a theatrical New Yorker noted for his defense of mobster John Gotti.

He quickly knocked heads with prosecutor Alan Jackson, bellowing accusations that the youthful D.A. had been "smirking and giggling like a girl" at him. Shouting, outside the presence of the jury, he told Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Larry Paul Fidler: "If he has anything to say, he should say it to me!"

The circumspect Fidler did not allow himself to be dragged into the antics, and essentially told the lawyers to behave themselves.

The silver-haired Rosen, suave and self-effacing, attempted to soothe any jurors shaken by his partner's eruptions. At one point, the Century City criminal defense lawyer asked jurors not to hold it against him that he was not as young and handsome as Jackson.

Jackson's youthful good looks drew more jokes as lawyers and the judge worked to put jurors at ease and perhaps build a rapport. A Texan, Jackson referred to jurors as "Y'all," which Cutler dismissed as a folksy affectation, in contrast to his authentic Brooklyn swagger.

When one juror said she could understand only about half of what Jackson said because of her limited English, he replied, "That's better than my girlfriend."

Jackson is a veteran prosecutor, teamed with one of the most experienced and skilled deputy district attorneys: Patrick Dixon. Head of the major crimes unit, Dixon has been a prosecutor for three decades. He paired with Jackson in the recent successful prosecution of Michael Goodwin for the murders of car-racing legend Mickey Thompson and his wife.

Rounding out the defense team are lawyers experienced in DNA evidence cases: Christopher Plourd, Robert Blasier, Linda Kenney Baden and Bradley Brunon. This is not surprising because scientific evidence will be a pillar of the defense, which also will contend that Spector was too far from Clarkson at the time of her death to have shot her.

Spector's team also includes noted criminalist Henry Lee, a prominent figure in the O.J. Simpson murder trial.

Fidler has been on the bench more than two decades, having presided over the trial of Sara Jane Olson, the accused Symbionese Liberation Army member convicted of attempting to blow up police cars. He also overturned dozens of convictions tainted by the Rampart police scandal.

His shaved head intensifies his facial expressions. He looks menacing when glowering at rowdy counsel, but will smile generously at appropriate moments. When a juror from Corpus Christi, Texas, was excused, he asked her before she left if she could vouch for Jackson's "Y'all." The courtroom erupted in laughter. She said the "Y'all" rang true to her.

Much of the attorneys' questioning dealt with how jurors felt about DNA and scientific evidence. At one point, a group of 18 potential jurors were asked if they had heard of Henry Lee; six raised their hands.

Jury consultants said both the prosecutors and defense wanted educated jurors. The defense probably sought people who will understand and consider scientific evidence; the prosecution wanted those intelligent enough to be skeptical of expert testimony.

The defense needed to avoid people prejudiced against celebrities. The prosecution's job was to find people not overly impressed by either Spector or the semi-celebrity forensics experts hired by the defense.

The group of 12 includes a man thoroughly familiar with the case. He is an NBC network news producer who said he had followed the case closely. But he said his job as a journalist was to be objective.

Another juror, a marketing executive, said during questioning that, if the jury acquitted Spector, he would "take a beating" at the office from co-workers who told him they thought Spector shot Clarkson. Despite those circumstances, he assured lawyers that he could assess the case on its merits.

Others on the panel include a civil engineer for Los Angeles County who had two friends who had committed suicide, a woman who had previously served on a federal grand jury, and a man who

said people with guns in their houses should make sure guests cannot get to them.

Five of six alternate jurors still must be selected. That process is expected to wrap up Monday, and the lawyers' opening statements should begin Wednesday, Fidler said.

He said the trial should not last more than three months; Cutler and Rosen said it could take as little as two.

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