



Body was moved, Spector witness testifies

A criminalist says 'some activity' after Clarkson was incapacitated by the fatal shot caused blood on her face to become smeared.

By John Spano, Times Staff Writer

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Lana Clarkson's body was moved after she suffered a fatal gunshot wound more than four years ago at the Alhambra mansion of record producer Phil Spector, a government specialist said Tuesday.

The testimony of Dr. Lynne Herold came near the climax of the prosecution's case against Spector, who is on trial for allegedly killing Clarkson.

Herold, who works for the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, is the prosecution's final witness.

"Blood doesn't flow uphill. It also doesn't fly around corners," Herold said when asked by Deputy Dist. Atty. Alan Jackson how she was sure that someone had moved Clarkson's head and swabbed blood on her face. Herold said that "by inference" the person who moved Clarkson was Spector.

The 40-year-old actress was shot to death in February 2003 after accompanying Spector home from the House of Blues in West Hollywood, where she worked as a hostess in a V.I.P. lounge. Spector contends that she shot herself.

Herold testified that Clarkson's blood on the grip of the gun was smeared after the fatal shot was fired.

A portion of Clarkson's face was wiped, and then blood from her nose flowed over the smeared area, the expert said.

"There was some activity that caused the blood on her face to become smeared," Herold said.

She also said that a bloodstain on the foyer chair where Clarkson's body was found slumped indicated that her head had been turned from the right to the left.

The criminalist noted that the purse hanging from Clarkson's shoulder was positioned backward — an "awkward" way for a woman to carry a purse.

Herold said she based her opinions on an examination of photos and bloody upholstery and clothing. All of the blood found at the scene was Clarkson's.

A single gunshot to the mouth incapacitated Clarkson instantly, Herold said, suggesting that the actress could not have moved herself.

Earlier, the expert delivered key testimony for the state: that blood spatter caused by a gunshot travels no more than 3 to 4 feet from the point of impact. Prosecutors say that limitation, plus the presence of blood on Spector's jacket, helps prove that he shot Clarkson

The defense, in its opening statement, contended that blood could travel as far as 6 feet. Spector's lawyers said they would argue that he was too far away, and at the wrong angle, to have fired the fatal shot.

Herold is expected to undergo cross-examination by the defense when her testimony resumes Thursday.

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