

Spector prosecutors want defense barred from trashing victim

by Matt Krasnowski

LOS ANGELES - Prosecutors in the Phil Spector murder trial want the rock 'n' roll producer's defense barred from trying to "assassinate" the character of slaying victim Lana Clarkson with testimony portraying the actress as suicidal and despondent over her sputtering career.

The government filed papers on Friday that also tries to block defense experts from telling jurors that Clarkson took medication to treat depression, and to stop the possible showing to jurors of Clarkson's on-camera work that suggests she knew how to handle a gun.

"Those characters are not Lana Clarkson any more than Sir Anthony Hopkins is Hannibal Lecter," the motion states.

Clarkson, 40, died from a single gunshot wound on Feb. 3, 2003, at Spector's mansion in suburban Alhambra. Spector, 66, has stated that Clarkson shot herself, but prosecutors are expected to present testimony that Spector admitted killing Clarkson.

Prosecutors contend that Clarkson had no medical history showing depression or suicidal thoughts.

One of the possible witnesses is one-time Clarkson friend "Punkin Pie" Laughlin, who told defense investigators that Clarkson used prescription painkillers recreationally and twice said that she wanted to kill herself.

A Spector lawyer said the defense wants jurors to hear the testimony.

"To let the jury think (Clarkson) was an individual who did not have dark thoughts and would not act out in a depressed manner simply paints an incorrect picture," said defense lawyer Bradley Brunon.

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