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Painseeker Forensics Expert: "Fingerprints Point To Wolfe"

Defense Argues Expert Testimony "Biased"

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LOS ANGELES – On Thursday in second day of testimony in the second Painseeker Murder Trial in Los Angeles Superior Court, Assistant District Attorney Thomas Andrews called on LAPD forensics expert Lisa Finnegan to prove that Sharon Wolfe was responsible for the murder of her client, rising music star Raychel Wagner.

Following the day's testimony, many believed that Finnegan's credibility with the jury will be a major issue with the jury in deciding the case, as the defense hammered away at the evidence and the inability of the police to find a suspect in their initial investigation.

In gruesome testimony, Finnegan provided a blow-by-blow description of Raychel Wagner's last minutes. She stated that the confrontation started in the living room and spilled down the hallway and into the kitchen, where it turned deadly.

Finnegan concluded that Raychel Wagner died from loss of blood due to the fact that she had been slashed or stabbed 23 times with a broken bottle of Jose Cuervo Gold tequila. She stated that the weapon was ascertained by reconstructing the numerous fragments in the kitchen and from the size and type of wounds on the victim. Finnegan went on to describe many of the wounds as defensive since they were found on her hands and lower arms. She stated

that there were also significant wounds on her abdomen, neck, and head.

Recapping LAPD Detective Kevin Wakefield's testimony from Wednesday, Finnegan detailed how the evidence upheld the prosecution's case that Sharon Wolfe was responsible for the murder of Raychel Wagner. As she had stated in the first Painseeker trial against Laura Douglass, Finnegan stated that fingerprints on several items at the crime scene indicated that they were handled by Raychel Wagner, Sharon Wolfe, or both.

On cross examination, Wolfe's defense attorney, Wendy Timmerman, immediately asserted that Finnegan's testimony was biased due to her affiliation with the LAPD, and that part of her job description was to testify before trials and convince the jury of the prosecution's case. Timmerman drove the point home by asking if the truth had ever gotten in the way of her testimony. When the expected objection from Andrews came, Timmerman withdrew the question.

In oftentimes technical questioning, Timmerman also hammered at Finnegan's confidence in the quality of Wolfe's prints on the evidence in question. Timmerman repeatedly asked about the possibility that the fingerprints had been left prior to the time of the murder, specifically at the beginning of the day. Timmerman hinted that she had her own expert willing to testify against Finnegan. However, Finnegan remained firm in her stance.

Timmerman turned to questioning Finnegan on her confidence in the quality of the evidence in general against Sharon Wolfe. When Finnegan stated that she had full confidence in the evidence, Timmerman asked Finnegan why charges were not pressed against her client earlier. Timmerman asserted that all of the evidence that had been presented had been obtained early in the investigation; however, charges were not filed until over a year later. When Finnegan balked at the question, Timmerman asked about the murder weapon, the broken tequila bottle, and how she could be so confident in her case when the murder weapon, and any incriminating fingerprints, had never been recovered. Finnegan stated that she believed the evidence that had been recovered from the crime scene was sufficient reason to be confident in the case.

“Then I guess you’re a far more trusting person than I am. Then again, you’re paid to be, aren’t you?” Timmerman replied, before telling Judge

Michael Rodriguez that she had no further questions.

When asked if he feared that Timmerman’s cross examination had eroded Finnegan’s credibility as Les Levin’s had done in the Douglass trial, Assistant District Attorney Thomas Andrews was quick to discern between the two attorneys.

“While I disagree with her, I respect Ms. Timmerman and the job she has done representing her client. Les Levin did not cross examine Ms. Finnegan in the previous trial, he just threw a tantrum in court.”

“Besides, “ he added before leaving, “I don’t believe that either lawyer did anything to keep the jury from believing in the defendant’s guilt.”

The week is scheduled to conclude with testimony from Sharon Wolfe’s ex-boyfriend Geoffrey MacIntyre.