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Man's Conviction Upheld in West Hollywood Triple-Murder in Drug Deal

By City News Service • Published June 24, 2016 • Updated on June 24, 2016 at 10:40 pm

A state appeals court panel Friday upheld a man's conviction for murdering three men, including two brothers, in a West Hollywood apartment during an apparent drug deal that went bad.

The three-justice panel from California's 2nd District Court of Appeal found that "compelling circumstantial evidence" pointed to Harold Yong Parkas the gunman who killed Pirooz Moussazadeh, 27, his older brother, 38-year-old Shahriar Moussazadeh, and Bernard Khalili, 27.

The three were each shot in the head Aug. 26, 2010, in an apartment in the 600 block of North Kings Road.

In a 27-page ruling, the appellate court justices noted that the most reasonable inference is that Park "robbed Pirooz at gunpoint, and then shot the three potential witnesses against him."

Detectives determined that there were many phone calls to and from Pirooz Moussazadeh's cell phone from a phone belonging to Park, according to the ruling.

"Numerous text messages to Pirooz indicated that defendant had been recently purchasing large quantities of marijuana from him, and that defendant and Pirooz had arranged to meet at Pirooz's home on the night of the murders for

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defendant to make such a purchase," the justices noted in the ruling.

The appellate court panel noted that at the time of his arrest a few days later Park had all of his clothing in his car, along with his birth certificate and passport photos, "suggesting he was preparing to flee the country, and suggesting a consciousness of guilt."

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A Los Angeles County sheriff's sergeant who searched Park's vehicle testified that he found a suitcase containing two large bags of marijuana that would have a street value of \$40,000 to \$50,000 if the drug was divided into smaller parcels, according to the ruling.

Park gave varying accounts to Los Angeles County sheriff's investigators about what happened, including his final account that he brought a handgun with him into the apartment, shot the men in the head after one of them smirked at him when he tried to negotiate with \$2,000 in cash and took a bag of marijuana, the justices noted.

He subsequently contended that he had confessed to crimes that he did not commit in an attempt to satisfy the detectives so he could leave the sheriff's station, according to the ruling.

Park was convicted in September 2014 of three counts each of first-degree murder and residential robbery and one count each of burglary and transportation for sale of marijuana.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Mark Windham -- who heard the case after Park elected to have a non-jury trial -- also found true the special circumstance allegations of multiple murders, murder during a robbery and murder during a burglary. Park was sentenced in November 2014 to three consecutive life prison terms without the possibility of parole.

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