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Statement of Mamie Mitchell, Script Supervisor on the film “Rust”

Good morning.

Before Halyna was shot and killed and our director, Joel, was shot and injured on the set of Rust, my life was fairly simple and I was generally a very healthy and happy woman, with one large responsibility. I am the Guardian to my sister, four years older than me who is severely intellectually disabled and in a Group Home in Texas. I have been her primary decision maker since 1996.

On Thursday, October 21st, 2021, I got up early, and drove to Bonanza Creek Ranch for a 6:30 A.M. call. When I got there, I was told that the camera crew, and both of the 2nd AC's and camera utility, had quit because of safety issues and other issues related to their working conditions.

That morning we shot Scene 115 in the Church with Alec and then we blocked and rehearsed Scene 118. We did three camera setups for Scene 118 and broke for lunch. The camera set ups to complete the scene in the afternoon were discussed between Joel, Halyna and me .

I was sitting at a table doing my lunch report and Halyna walked by and flashed her gorgeous smile at me. I will never forget that. She was a great collaborator on the set and my new friend. She was pure light. She had beautiful energy.

After lunch, I went inside the church with members of the crew to get ready for the camera set up that we had discussed before lunch. I saw Alec going through his movement with the gun for the camera. I was holding my script in my left hand and had taken out my iPhone and opened up my photos to check the continuity on his shirt and vest. Then an explosion. Deafening loud gunshot. I was stunned. I heard someone moaning and I turned around and my Director was falling backwards and holding his upper body and I turned around toward Alec and saw Halyna going down to the left of me.

I ran outside and called 911 for help.

We waited and eventually they brought Halyna out to the ambulance waiting outside the door. She was on a stretcher and not moving. They had some kind of large oxygen balloon thing on her face and her left hand was on her stomach. It was blue. I could not believe this was happening.

I gave my statement to law enforcement and drove home. 10 minutes after I got home someone notified me that she was dead. I stood in my driveway screaming.

I will never forget what happened on the set of Rust that day.

I relive the shooting and sound of the explosion from the gun over and over again. I am depressed. I don't feel safe. I feel that at any moment anything could happen to me and to those that I care about that are standing close to me. I do not have a sense of guardrails in my life to keep me safe.

I'm frightened of the future. This violent tragedy has taken away the Joy in my life.

I have also lost a new friend who was an extraordinary and rare person and future collaborator. Halyna was a woman who spoke the same language of film as I did. I have been robbed of my new friend. I am very sad and heartbroken for her son and husband, her sister and family and all of her friends who are suffering this preventable and unimaginable loss.

I never want what happened on our set to ever happen to anyone else. I have spent 40 years as a script supervisor and in other capacities in this industry. Before this happened, it has always been a safe space, familiar, stimulating and an inspiring place for me to be. It is where I have had my career and made my living. I have worked all over this country and in films where there were guns on the set. I have never before seen anything like what happened on October 21st, and I never want to see what happened on that date happen again..

Statement of Mamie Mitchell
Represented by Gloria Allred
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