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# First Lawsuits Filed in Oakland 'Ghost Ship' Warehouse Fire

Derick Ion Almena, Micah Allison, Chor Ng, Joel Shanahan, Jon Hrabko, 100% Silk, Daniel Lopez, Omar Vega, Oakland, Alameda County all named.

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OAKLAND, CA — The families of two people killed in an early December warehouse fire that killed 36 people at an underground music event in Oakland filed wrongful death lawsuits today in Alameda County Superior Court.

The families of Michela Gregory and Griffin Madden filed the suits, which name Chor Ng, the owner of the now infamous warehouse at 1315 31st Avenue in Oakland's Fruitvale neighborhood.

Also named are Derick Ion Almena, the warehouse master tenant, and his wife, Micah Allison.

"As a result of the horrific gross negligence of the defendants in this case these<sup>2</sup> two young people have lost their lives," said the families' lawyer Mary Alexander. "They had every gift but the gift of time."

The suits claim that Gregory and Madden did not die instantaneously but "were trapped in the inferno" and "suffered from the injuries caused by the fire and smoke for many minutes before dying."

"(The defendants) caused this place to be such that it did not have the permits for residences," Alexander said. "It didn't have the permits for events and yet they allowed people to live there and these young people to come to an event where there was no fire alarms, no sprinklers, no good egress, no way to exit."

The suits also name that night's performer, Joel Shanahan, whose stage name is Golden Donna, Jon Hrabko and a business called "100 % Silk," claiming they, along with Almena and Allison, were organizers of the Dec. 2 event, which was attended by at least 100 people.

In addition, two men who leased buildings neighboring the Ghost Ship warehouse, Daniel Lopez and Omar Vega, are also named in the suits, which claim the pair provided electricity to the warehouse and bathroom access to event attendees.

The three-alarm fire broke out during a performance of Golden Donna 100% Silk 2016 West Coast Tour. Interior photos showed a makeshift second floor in the building with wood nailed all around it and numerous items decorating the inside.

Firefighters said attendees had difficulty finding their way out of the space, either because of the crowded interior or narrow staircase from the second floor.

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Japanese Prime Minister joins Obama at U.S.S. Arizona Memorial at Pearl Harbor, boffo box office, and Trump team readies war room.



A separate suit was also filed against the City of Oakland and Alameda County.

"The city failed to warn the public, warn these young people that this was not a place that was permitted for events, that it was unsafe from a fire standpoint," Alexander said. "They did not close this down, did not provide the type of requirements in this building that would be necessary either for residents or for events like they had that night."

A spokesman for the city declined to comment on the suits and a call to Ng's lawyers seeking comment was not returned today.

After Alexander filed the suits this afternoon, Gregory's father addressed a crowd of reporters who had gathered outside the court building in downtown Oakland.

"I just want to say that first of all our daughter will never come home. There's not a day that goes by that we don't miss her," David Gregory said. "We just want justice."

These were the first of many civil suits expected in relation to the fire, and Alexander suggested today that the court will likely combine them as they are filed.

No criminal charges related to the fire have been filed, but the Alameda County District Attorney's Office is reviewing the case.

Almena's lawyers issued a statement on Dec. 19 saying he didn't engage in criminal misconduct and alleging that government agencies are responsible for the fire.

— *Bay City News; Alameda County*