

Police want help locating porn actor suspected in murder in Van Nuys

A porn actor "snapped" and used a prop samurai-type sword to kill one colleague and slash two others after being told he was being fired by the production studio where he had been living, authorities said Wednesday.

Police were searching for Stephen Clancy Hill, 34, who performed in a handful of adult videos as "Steve Driver," after the Tuesday-night rampage at Ultima DVD Inc., in the 7600 block of Hayvenhurst Avenue.

Hill, 34, was believed to have fled in a 1998 blue Toyota RAV4 with license plate 5YTC423, police said.

Hill had been told earlier to leave his job at the studio and cease living in the building by Wednesday.

"He just snapped and went off and stabbed people that probably had absolutely nothing to do with him being let go," Detective Joel Price of LAPD's West Valley station told the Associated Press.

Hill attacked one person near the back of the studio and turned on two others when they tried to stop him, police said.

The three victims were taken to Northridge Hospital Medical Center, where a 30-year-old Canoga Park man died after being stabbed in the stomach, said Officer Gregory Baek of LAPD Media Relations. The man was one of the two people who had tried to intervene.

His identity was not released, but one of the company's Twitter pages identified him as "Tom Dong," who had starred in several films, including two with Hill, and was the studio's webmaster.

"Rest in peace, our beloved friend, male talent, and webmaster, Tom Dong," the tweet said. "Your smiles and scenes will live forever in our hearts!"

The two others injured were in stable condition, Baek said. One had been cut on the arm and the other had been slashed on the shoulder, he said.

According to the company's website, the studio specializes in adult fetish footage that includes sexual activities of a violent nature. In another of the company's websites, which focuses on female domination and male castration fantasies, an actress can be seen wielding a samurai sword.

Company officials could not be reached Wednesday for comment.

Hill and the victims worked together at the business, and police and neighbors said he had been living in the studio.

"This has come as total shock that he could do something like this," said Steve Nelson, editor-in-chief and CEO of Adult Industry News, who had met Hill through industry events. "It's very disturbing."

Hill was a newcomer to the porn industry and was eager to promote himself, Nelson said. He carried pictures of himself in hardcore action, he said.

"I just thought he was overly aggressive in trying to promote himself," Nelson said. "He seemed friendly."

In 1999, Hill, who is from Riverdale, Md., was convicted of assault with a firearm for threatening to kill a University of Maryland college professor for not giving him an A, The Washington Post reported.

The attack was reported at about 10:20 p.m. Tuesday in a small industrial park adjacent to Van Nuys Airport.

The next morning, Gary Sanders, who owns a smoking accessories distribution company a few units down, gawked at the trail of blood droplets that circled around an adjacent building to a trash container.

Blood spatters led out the front of Ultima and streaked a cloth chair set next to the door. A small pool of blood had dried just outside a security gate and blood had been smeared on the cement.

"That's why I have a gun in my office," said Sanders, who had heard an aggressive male voice yelling at the time of the attack. "Weird things happen all the time. We're in the Valley."

Neighbors said Ultima's staff kept to themselves and that Hill was among at least three men who worked there to distribute porn on the Internet. It was unclear if the other men were among those injured or killed.

The men also seemed to share the RAV4, said Tony Sullivan, manager at Coral Reef Inc., an aquarium company across the parking lot from Ultima. The car was often the only one in the parking lot late at night and early in the morning, leading Sullivan to believe that they had been living in the office.

"They literally came in, went in and that was it," Sullivan said. "They didn't associate with anyone, but they seemed like really nice guys."