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'Restrepo' Director and a Photographer Are Killed in Libya

By C. J. CHIVERS

BENGHAZI, Libya — Tim Hetherington, a conflict photographer who was a director and producer of the Afghan war documentary "Restrepo," was killed in the besieged city of Misurata, Libya, on Wednesday, and three photographers working beside him were wounded, one fatally, when they came under fire at the city's front lines.

Chris Hondros of the Getty Images photo agency died later of devastating brain trauma. Guy Martin, who was filing photographs to the Panos agency, suffered a severe pelvic wound, said Andre Liohn, a colleague who was at the triage center where the photographers were rushed by rebels after they were struck.

Mr. Hondros suffered an extensive loss of brain tissue and was revived twice before being triaged from care. He spent several hours in a coma and died after 10 p.m., Mr. Liohn said.

Mr. Martin, a British citizen, underwent vascular surgery Wednesday night, according to the same account. As the night progressed, Mr. Liohn said that Mr. Martin's bleeding had been stopped and that his prospects had improved, though a doctor said his condition was not yet stable.

The fourth photographer, Michael Christopher Brown, suffered shrapnel wounds to his left shoulder, but his life was not in danger. He was back in surgery late Wednesday night, Mr. Liohn said.

Misurata, Libya's third-largest city, has been cut off by land from the rest of the country by military forces loyal to Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi. It has been the scene of intensive, close-quarters fighting for weeks. Hundreds of Libyans have been confirmed killed.

The photographers had reached the city by sea from Benghazi, the rebel capital. Mr. Liohn said they had been working together on the rebel side of the front lines on Tripoli Street, one of the city's main battle grounds. Watched by snipers and struck by all manner of incoming fire, from tank rounds to cluster bombs, it is an extended boulevard of ruins.

Mr. Liohn said rebels had been fighting house-to-house and making progress clearing blocks of buildings. There had been pitched fighting overnight Tuesday, he said, and the four photographers had arrived in the area late Wednesday morning.

Mr. Liohn said he worried that the Qaddafi forces would counterattack in the afternoon, then added, "And that's what happened."

About 3 p.m., Mr. Liohn said, the four were struck by a rocket-propelled grenade. Nicole Tung, another journalist in Misurata, who helped the wounded photographers, said she thought the men might have been hit by a high-explosive mortar blast. Both weapons are in use by the Qaddafi forces fighting for Tripoli Street.

Rebels sped them to the triage center. All four were alive, but it was obvious from the outset, Mr. Liohn said, that Mr. Hetherington and Mr. Hondros were gravely wounded.

Mr. Hetherington had lost a large amount of blood, Mr. Liohn said, and doctors were unable to stabilize him.

"They tried to do cardiac massage for a very long time," he said. "Maybe 15 minutes or more. Then they declared him dead." Mr. Hondros was unconscious and died late at night.

Covering the war in eastern Libya and Misurata in the west has proved to be especially treacherous for journalists, who have been subjected to airstrikes, and artillery, rocket, rifle and machine-gun fire, and they have faced the risk of arrest, beatings and detention from the pro-Qaddafi forces.

The risks during the fighting have been compounded by the difficulties of moving protective equipment into Libya through Egypt, where customs officials have tried to block the transit of helmets and flak jackets. Some journalists have managed to move the equipment to front lines, but most have not. Neither Mr. Hetherington nor Mr. Brown had protective gear in Misurata, Mr. Liohn said.

It was not immediately clear how Mr. Martin and Mr. Brown might be evacuated.

The Ionian Spirit, a vessel chartered by the International Organization for Migration, was in port in Misurata to evacuate migrant workers, having just completed a third relief trip from Benghazi and loaded evacuees.

[Human Rights Watch](#), the New York-based organization, whose staff members know the photographers, contacted the vessel and found it was prepared to evacuate the two injured photographers back to Benghazi as well. But the two men were not deemed fit for travel, especially on a voyage that could last 20 or more hours.

The organization made arrangements late at night to move Mr. Hetherington's and Mr. Hondros's remains to the vessel for the journey to Benghazi. Consular officials from England and the United States were beginning to organize their repatriation from Libya after the voyage.

The remains of Mr. Hetherington and Mr. Hondros were confirmed to be on board the vessel.

Two other journalists were killed last month in the Libyan conflict, according to the [Committee to Protect Journalists](#): [Mohammed al-Nabbous](#), the founder of the online [Libya Alhurra TV](#), who was shot as he was streaming audio reports of the fighting in Benghazi; and [Ali Hassan al-Jaber](#), a cameraman with [Al Jazeera](#) who was shot when his crew was ambushed near Benghazi.

In addition to the four who were killed, 49 journalists have been detained, according to the [Committee to Protect Journalists](#).

The loss of Mr. Hetherington, 41, reverberated in many circles, including among the journalists, aid workers, soldiers and victims of war he had befriended in [a distinguished career](#). A British citizen who lived in New York, he had covered conflicts with sensitivity in Liberia, Afghanistan, Darfur and, in recent weeks, Libya.

"This is a devastating loss to many of us personally," said [Kenneth Roth](#), the executive director of Human Rights Watch. "But it is also a devastating loss to the human rights community. His work has raised the visibility of many of the world's forgotten conflicts. May the legacy of his exceptional photographs serve to inspire future generations."

Mr. Hetherington's family released a brief statement: "Tim was in Libya to continue his ongoing multimedia project to highlight humanitarian issues during time of war and conflict. He will be forever missed." Mr. Hetherington was between assignments at *Vanity Fair* when he was killed. He had traveled to Libya on his own to work on a multimedia project while he and his editors tried to figure out what his next series of photos for the magazine would be.

[Graydon Carter](#), *Vanity Fair*'s editor, said the sudden death of someone who was so well regarded and well liked by his colleagues had left the staff stunned.

"We're just devastated here," Mr. Carter said. "But he lived for this. And this sort of thing did not faze him. It's what gave him life, and it's what took it away from him."

Mr. Hetherington last contacted his editors on Tuesday. "Am currently in Misrata — would have made interesting article with SJ," he wrote in an e-mail, a reference to his friend and fellow *Vanity Fair* contributor [Sebastian Junger](#), who was his co-director on "Restrepo."

The two men had put themselves in harm's way together on many occasions, chronicling the war in Afghanistan.

Mr. Hetherington's final Twitter post, sent Tuesday, was eerily prophetic: "In besieged Libyan city of Misrata. Indiscriminate shelling by Qaddafi forces. No sign of NATO." Mr. Hetherington embedded with American troops on numerous occasions. His work shooting still photography and film [was celebrated for how it often captured soldiers' humanity](#).

As the vigil ended for Mr. Hondros, his friends expressed pain, grief and respect for him and [his body of work](#), built over a career of two decades. Soon to be married, he had been one of the most familiar names in the business in recent years, covering conflicts in Africa, the Middle East and Africa.

"Chris never shied away from the front line, having covered the world's major conflicts throughout his distinguished career and his work in Libya was no exception," Getty Images said in a statement. "We are working to support his family and his fiancée as they receive this difficult news, and are preparing to bring Chris back to his family and friends in the United States. He will be sorely missed." Tyler Hicks, a photographer for *The New York Times* who worked alongside Mr. Hondros in several wars, paid a tribute in an e-mail.

"Chris made sacrifices in his own life to bring the hardships of war into the public eye, and that dedication created award-winning photographs that shaped the way people viewed the world," he wrote. "He was a close friend for nearly 20 years. The tragedy of his death had brought so many memories to the surface, and I'm grateful to be among the many people who were lucky enough to know him. He will be missed."

Jeremy W. Peters contributed reporting from New York.

This article has been revised to reflect the following correction:

Correction: May 10, 2011

An article on April 21 about two war photographers who were killed in fierce fighting in Misrata, Libya, erroneously included a survivor for one of them, Chris Hondros. Mr. Hondros had no children; he did not have a 3-year-old son.