

Booklist

Advanced Review – Uncorrected Proof

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Legends of the Chelsea Hotel: Living with the Artists and Outlaws of New York's Rebel Mecca.

Hamilton, Ed (Author)

Oct 2007. 320 p. Thunder's Mouth, paperback, \$15.99. (1568583796). 974.7.

This book is an outgrowth of hotelchelseablog.com, Hamilton and girlfriend Debbie Martin's ongoing project to immortalize the seedy New York hotel and waystation for the wayward that has been home to the likes of Sarah Bernhardt, Edgar Lee Masters, Virgil Thomson, Arthur Miller, Charles Bukowski, Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, and many other theatrical, musical, and literary notables. William Burroughs wrote *Naked Lunch* there, and Sid Vicious killed Nancy Spungen in Room 100—perhaps (she was dead, alright, but Sid was “in a confused state, alternately denying and confessing” when the gendarmes showed). Obviously, Hamilton has no shortage of stories to tell. One of the oddest is that of underground filmmaker and folk-music collector Harry Smith and the zombie he reanimated on the premises, which was matter-of-factly accepted by the Chelsea's other denizens. And there are Ethan Hawke (“that little shit,” another resident opines) on the rebound from Uma Thurman, a séance to contact Thomas Wolfe, and sundry other exploits too numerous to mention. Wicked good dishing.

— *Mike Tribby*