**BOHEMIAN BLOG**

Debbie Martin always dreamed of moving to New York. Not just to New York, but to the Hotel Chelsea, the legendary place where artists paid rent with paintings and the lobby was a salon for some of the most influential thinkers and innovators of the last century. When she first got to the city, she went to the hotel, where she found Stanley Bard, the owner, and asked for a room. “There are no rooms and you can’t afford it anyway,” she remembers him saying. Eventually, she found a sublet in the newspaper. The owner warned that it was in an unusual location, which turned out to be the Chelsea. For Martin, it was “A lifelong dream come true.” Now after nearly 12 years at the Chelsea, she is sharing her dream with others on the “Living with Legends: Hotel Chelsea Blog” (hotelchelseablog.com) which she writes with her partner, writer Ed Hamilton. The pair may post about the Chelsea’s notorious residents, like Sid Vicious, the punk rocker who allegedly stabbed his girlfriend Nancy Spungen to death in Room 100 (and is said to still haunt the elevator), but the real stars of the blog are residents like Storme DeLaVere, the gender-bending cabaret star who threw the first punch in the Stonewall riots and a Chelsea resident since the 70s. Martin and Hamilton have shared a room in the hotel for over a decade, but it was only recently that they got the idea to start writing about it. When a fire in 2005 had residents pouring the street... and passing around a bottle of wine, they realized that they had to write about their eccentric neighbors. “We want the lesser-known people to be known as well,” said Martin. The Chelsea has been having a bit of a renaissance in pop culture recently with the release of the Edie Sedgwick biopic “Factory Girl,” starring Sienna Miller. One of Warhol’s “superstars,” the young socialite briefly lived at the Chelsea. Now, with rising rents throughout Manhattan, the future of the Chelsea as a “rest stop for rare individuals” is precarious, but Hamilton is optimistic, “This place is the last outpost of Bohemia itself.”

_Heather Corcoran_

**CONTEST GIVES NEW ARTISTS A CHANCE**

Soho’s Jen Bekman Gallery is giving new artists a chance to show their work through the “Hey, Hot Shot!” competition. Each season, gallery owner Bekman selects 10 photographers to show in the gallery, which get narrowed to four for the year-end “eye plus ultra” show. Through March 3, this years Ultras will be on display at the gallery. Through its Web site (jenbekman.com) the gallery is accepting submissions for the Winter 2007 competition. “It’s a launch pad for an artist,” said Bekman. “A lot can happen between point A and point B.”

_H.C._

**SPOTLIGHT**

Wallace Shawn may be best known for his work as a character actor in films like “Clueless” and the “Princess Bride,” but in his latest adaptation of “The Fever” at the Acorn Theater he takes center stage. From the beginning, “The Fever” plays with conventions of theater, starting with a pre-show champagne reception with the stars himself before he unceremoniously begins with a casual lamentation of the formality and fussiness of theater. And then, there’s the monologue: a well-off urbanite sick in the bathroom of a shabby hotel in a war-torn country. As Shawn reveals what got him to this point he flip-flops between the narrative and snapshots of his old life. For 90 superbly-acted minutes he reminds theatergoer that they are the same as his character; the spoiled victors in the unfair game of life. While thought-provoking and challenging, without offering a solution, “The Fever” is a little bleak and a bit too long—H.C._