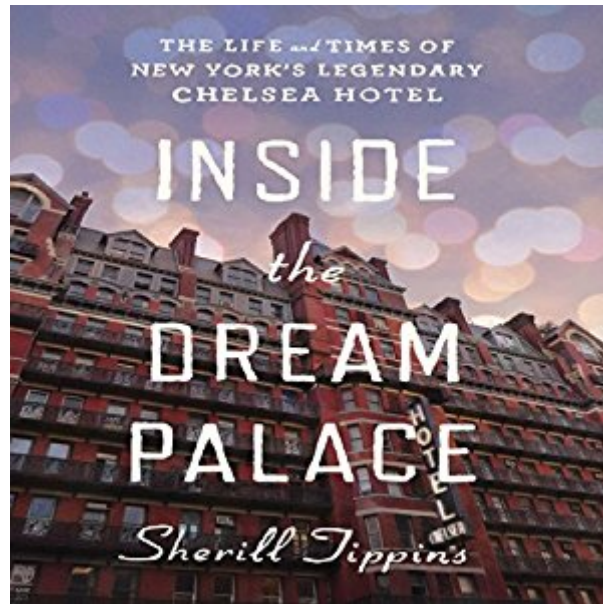


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# Inside The Dream Palace: The Life And Times Of New York's Legendary Chelsea Hotel



## Synopsis

The next best thing to having a room key to the Chelsea Hotel during each of its famous - and infamous - decades is The Chelsea Hotel, since its founding by a visionary French architect in 1884, has been an icon of American invention: a cultural dynamo and haven for the counterculture, all in one astonishing building. Sherill Tippins, author of the acclaimed February House, delivers a masterful and endlessly entertaining history of the Chelsea and of the successive generations of artists who have cohabited and created there, among them John Sloan, Edgar Lee Masters, Thomas Wolfe, Dylan Thomas, Arthur Miller, Allen Ginsberg, Bob Dylan, Janis Joplin, Leonard Cohen, Patti Smith, Robert Mapplethorpe, Andy Warhol, Sam Shepard, Sid Vicious, and Dee Dee Ramone. Now as legendary as the artists it has housed and the countless creative collaborations it has sparked, the Chelsea has always stood as a mystery as well: Why and how did this hotel become the largest and longest-lived artists' community in the known world? Inside the Dream Palace is the intimate and definitive story. Today the Chelsea stands poised in limbo between two futures: Will this symbol of New York's artistic invention be converted to a profit-driven business catering to the top one percent? Or will the Chelsea be given a rebirth through painstaking effort by the community that loves it? Set against these two competing possibilities, Inside the Dream Palace could not be more fascinating or timely.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I had not finished the first chapter of Sherill Tippins' Inside the Dream Palace before I realized the

real estate I have always wanted was being described. I would have liked one of the beautiful, original eighty apartments along with the free thinking, artistic neighbors in the Chelsea Association which later became the Chelsea Hotel. The Chelsea was inspired in part by Charles Fourier, a French utopian writer. The idea was to design an urban environment that would attract artists, intellectuals and progressives who would work in a setting that could inspire creativity and tolerance. The original apartments were designed both for those with wealth and also those with more limited means. The experiment worked. Inside the Dream Palace describes the community that flowered within the walls of the Chelsea for over a hundred years. The lives of musicians, writers, artists and actors are chronicled, framed by the New York City in which they lived. Thomas Wolfe, Mark Twain, Bob Dylan, Patti Smith, Robert Mapplethorpe, Gore Vidal, Edie Sedgwick, Sid Vicious and Arthur Miller, along with many others, make appearances. The influence of the artists on each other both creative and destructive makes an interesting read. Through the years they offered each other inspiration and support as well as possibly a bit too much sex, alcohol and drugs. Their concerns over income inequality, recessions/depressions and unpopular wars and foreign involvements unfortunately sounded very current. Tourists, drug dealers, prostitutes, murderers, along with the eccentric and those just attracted to the action, all fill out the story.

Curious to no end regarding the famous, or infamous, depending on the period of time of the many occurrences that took place at the Chelsea Hotel throughout, I looked forward to this book: Inside the Dream Palace: The Life and Times of New York's Legendary Chelsea Hotel, by a very good writer named Sherill Tippins. To begin with: her command of the language, the number of words I was forced to look at twice, her vast knowledge on the subject, and of course the flow of countless of individuals, characters that lived under such a massive structure, making the place a true unique habitat, make for a serious intriguing read. For some bizarre reason I compared it briefly to the Overlook Hotel from the movie The Shining, but the Chelsea Hotel, as opposed to the scary empty one in the movie, had so many people of caliber inside its walls, it has created its very own ghost stories today. I will not attempt to even bring forth a few of the names that sought residence at the Chelsea, but sufficient is to say that there are more than enough to make for a very and varied compelling read. Perhaps that would be my only criticism of this juicy book, too many characters interloping, not one lasting more than a few pages, as the book moves along from the inception of this hotel, once believed to be the very best of New York living almost to the present days. The abundance of characters, and the passage of time, makes this book one rich experience, so many anecdotes, glimpses at a society that definitely exalted the arts in general, for there were all kinds of

talented people roaming the halls, day or night, I am sure. Is like a slide show with narrative of the glorious, and then not so glorious days of such a legendary building.

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