

Bohemian Rhapsody: Ed Hamilton

YOU COULD WRITE A BOOK on the role that Manhattan's grand, seedy Chelsea Hotel played in the lives of the countless artistic greats who stayed there.

Ed Hamilton did just that. "Legends of the Chelsea Hotel: Living With Artists and Outlaws in New York's Rebel Mecca" fuses personal stories of his life in the residential hotel over the past 12 years with funny, detailed portraits of both the hotel's towering talents and many unheralded loons.

On Thursday, the [blogger](#) will appear at Olsson's. Hamilton's stories about living with Dee Dee Ramone, Harry Smith and Ryan Adams, unearthing Charles James' drafting table and the like will attract many. But the chapters about being threatened by Storme DeLarverie (the drag king who says she threw the first punch at Stonewall) and combating hordes of junkies using beat writer Herbert Huncke's erstwhile restroom are even better.

"It's the last outpost of bohemia," Hamilton said. "It's not all about the bottom line. Our owner, Stanley Bard, kept rents affordable and would give people a break if they couldn't pay for a while."

Bard would even take paintings in lieu of rent, Hamilton said, which was the type of thing his partners cited last year in banning Bard from running the hotel for a decade. The weirdest thing Hamilton's seen? "I like the one about Dee Dee Ramone encountering the ghost of Sid [Vicious] in Sid's room. Dee Dee always had a story."

» [Olsson's](#), 1307 19th St. NW; Thu., 7 p.m., free; 202-785-1133 (Dupont Circle)

Written by Express contributor Tim Follis

Photo courtesy Rita Barros

