

Chasing Ghosts and Trespassing at the Chelsea

by Anthony Van Hart



I recently spent some time in New York and obviously felt my lungs and eyes awaken. While I won't bore you with all of the particulars, the two most memorable snaps of time were:

walking past Tompkins Square Park, the place where Jean Michele Basquiat spent many nights in a cardboard box, homeless

and

walking into the Chelsea Hotel, now a permanent residence that doesn't allow random history seekers to stroll in, only to find 3 residents milling around the lobby - 2 junkie looking types mildly appalled that we ignored the obvious sign declaring we weren't welcome and an older gentlemen, wider than he was tall, passed out in la-z-boy with his dog at his side and a portable record player screaming dixieland jazz.

In a city full of bright lights and tall buildings, it was the brief glimpse at some of what's beneath its fingernails that I'll remember most.

