

Chelsea ^{now}

Volume 2, Number 1 | The Weekly Newspaper of Chelsea | October 5 - 11, 2007



Chelsea Now photo by Jefferson Siegel
Hotel Chelsea photographer-in-residence Linda Troeller on her bed with a selection of her work.

Linda Troeller makes room for herself at fair

BY ABBY LUBY

It was advertised as “Art Attack: Pool New York,” and many of the Chelsea Hotel’s resident artists were invited to exhibit their work in 15 pre-selected rooms. But by the time resident photographer Linda Troeller got the invite from curator Giorgio Handman, all the rooms were taken. “I only heard about it a few days before it started,” said Troeller. “Although I was officially in the show, there wasn’t any more space. I decided to have the show in my own room, room 914.”

Troeller placed signs in the lobby and throughout the hotel directing people to her room. For a \$10 contribution in the lobby one visited rooms that had paintings, video and installations. Even the grand stairway was lined with artwork.

Troeller said her signs attracted plenty of people. “Word spread. People started coming up to my room. They thought the room was a complete installation.” Sitting on her bed

covered with a 1994 red bedspread from her first year at the Chelsea, it seemed more a performance piece as Troeller welcomed each visitor and started to chat. Her walls featured large 42 x 57 color prints she shot of fellow hotel residents. Large prints were also in the hallway outside her room.

Troeller's just published "Chelsea Hotel Atmosphere: An Artist's Memoir," is a photo book embracing the hotel as artist colony with letters reprinted by some of the current residents. Troeller said her book represented the residents' ongoing protest to stay in the hotel now that longtime manager Stanley Bard, credited with fostering the Chelsea's artistic spirit, has been ousted from his managerial role by board members who are rumored to have plans of selling what is affectionately called the city's last bohemian outpost. "I was interested in talking about the active, living, breathing space here... There aren't too many artists' communities left in the city."

Over the weekend, visitors purchased Troeller's book (available at blurb.com), which she gladly autographed. After a German couple purchased her book, Troeller noted that she was visited by others from Europe. "The hotel traditionally attracts Europeans. They have a long-standing art connection to the hotel. They are trying to make sense of things that are being lost in New York City."

At one point Troeller took a break and explored the art in the hotel. "I ran into writer Victor Bockris who was in the process of moving out."

After being featured in the New York Times in July, Troeller received an email from the great granddaughter of Hotel architect Phillip Hubert, who designed the 1884 brick building. "She inherited many meaningful documents," said Troeller of Hubert's great granddaughter. "She actually brought the documents over at one point which included diaries written in 1886, when the Chelsea was still an apartment co-op. There was also a photo of Hubert taken in 1880." Troeller's husband Lothar made a stand in the corner of the room for the Hubert documents.

At the after party in Troeller's room, she showed slides with music by Pal Shazar, who is in her book. "We sat around in a big circle, having drinks, talking about how each of us came to the hotel. Some had it in their mind that it was an iconic place. The Art Attack was cool because it was a celebration of the positive feelings of people living in this space."