

# Defending Dylan Thomas: A Legal Battle Rages at Hotel Chelsea

*Former tenant Arthur Nash fights to take back the poet's last home amidst gentrification, multi-million-dollar settlements and broken agreements*

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- A lawsuit was filed on May 5, 2023, in the Manhattan Housing Court (case number 063119/15) by Arthur Nash, a longtime tenant of the Hotel Chelsea, a cultural landmark in New York City that has been home to legendary artists like Janis Joplin, Leonard Cohen, Bob Dylan and Arthur Miller. Nash is suing over physical possession of Welsh poet Dylan Thomas' final home and writing studio after the historical archivist gave up a multi-million-dollar settlement in exchange for contracts ensuring the preservation of the apartment.

Nash, who led a years-long protest against the hotel's gentrification, said, "The Chelsea has been a haven for creatives and a bellwether to the rebellious spirit of New York City. I felt I had a responsibility to ensure the workplaces and memories of its past residents, like Dylan Thomas, weren't lost to history. Placing trust in the promises of developers is where the plan went wrong."



Arthur Nash on Dylan Thomas Balcony at Chelsea Hotel



Bob Dylan and Bob Marley Apartment Illegal Demolition 2008, by Arthur Nash

The lawsuit, filed by attorney and former tenant Daudi Justin, seeks to vacate the Court-ordered stipulation by which keys to the Dylan Thomas apartment were surrendered to Chelsea co-owner Ira Drukier, and to regain physical possession of the unit within the newly reopened, "sterilized" version of the Art enclave. The revived litigation was initially brought against Nash in 2015 when then-owner Ed Scheetz wanted to construct an exit stairwell directly through Nash's apartment, where Thomas edited "Under Milk Wood" and boasted of downing 18 whiskeys. Nash refused, instead negotiating the Preservation Agreement now being violated, says the suit.

The value of Nash's rent-stabilized tenancy was approximately \$3 million in 2015, as evidenced by the settlement that another tenant, the painter David Remfry, was paid to vacate. Nash chose to prioritize the preservation of Dylan Thomas' legacy over financial gain, but the hotel's owners have failed to uphold their end of their agreement, demolishing the original interior and refusing access for inspection. "They turned jackhammers on history and now try to hide what they've done, even altering their corporate name in an effort to lawyer it all away," Nash says.

Nash, who curates an archive dedicated to The Chelsea's bohemian past, is connected to Thomas through his friendship with late poet John Malcolm Brinnin, who brought Thomas to the United States. Nash is determined to ensure that all traces of the "Do Not Go Gentle" poet and other artists who also have a historical connection to the landmark property are not entirely replaced by "crass commercialization, social media influencers and \$30 martinis."

Sunday, May 14, 2023 is International Dylan Thomas Day, marking 70 years since Thomas' reading of "Under Milk Wood" at the 92nd Street Y Poetry Center.



Hotel Chelsea, Dylan Thomas & John Malcolm Brinnin 1953, Photo Credit: Rollie McKenna



Hotel Chelsea Dylan Thomas Balcony 2010, by Arthur Nash

For more information, please contact attorney Daudi Justin at (917) 951-0423 or [dj@daudijustinesq.com](mailto:dj@daudijustinesq.com) and follow @chelseahotelnyc on Instagram.

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Hotel Chelsea Balcony, Artist Rick Librizzi, by Arthur Nash

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