

Old Manhattan, Still Standing, but Owned By Others

by Phyllis Chesler



Both Bemelmén's Bar and the Carlyle Hotel which houses it (pictured above)—are now owned by Katara Hospitality (Qatar); the Plaza Hotel is still standing but the fabled Palm Court is different, the Old World violinist and pianist have been replaced by Muzak, and it is now owned by Rosewood Hospitality (which is Hong-Kong based); the Waldorf Astoria, which I mentioned earlier, is now owned by China. Have we sold the Empire State Building—well yes, but only in part to Qatar. Rockefeller Center is owned by a consortium which at one point included Mitsubishi Estates. Kiehl's Pharmacies are still here but they are now owned by L'Oréal (France). What's wrong with

this picture?

And the movie theaters that once were—are gone, going. I used to go to the Thalia in the late 1950s and early 1960s to see the best foreign films. Long gone. And now, they've shut down Lincoln Plaza Cinema, the Beekman on Second Ave, and the cinema that once stood at 210 East 86th St. Are we all now couch potatoes with unlimited access to Netflix, Amazon Prime, Acorn, Britbox, Hulu, Vudu, MHZ, etc.? What's wrong with this picture?