

**Anthony Holdsworth** paints the Odd Fellows ball: "The place has a kind of bittersweet flavor about it."

# Painter's perspective – not such an odd fellow

BY PHIL TRACY

**T**HE Odd Fellows hall sits across the street from The Extra's offices, on the southwest corner of Market and Seventh. It's a great old building that a couple of years ago became the San Francisco Dance Center and took in Lines Ballet School.

The Odd Fellows like to live up to their name by doing odd things, some of them of great benefit to the community. One of those things is an exhibition of "on site" paintings of San Francisco.

One of those paintings was being done in mid-September by Anthony Holdsworth, who set up his easel catty-corner from the Odd Fellows, where he could see both the 95-year-old edifice and the new federal building going up where the old Greyhound station used to be, which is set for completion sometime in 2006. Although only half-finished, the painting was already beautiful. Half a dozen admirers had gathered behind him.

Asked why he selected this particular location, Holdsworth said: "There's contrast between the new building going up, which is exciting, and the old building, which is beautiful. It lends a dynamic to the scene.

"The location is a study in real contrasts. You have tourists and some business people, but you also have an incredible number of people who are down on their luck. More than I've seen in most places."

Holdsworth, whose studio is in Oakland and has been an artist for 30 years, said it would take him two to three weeks to finish the picture.

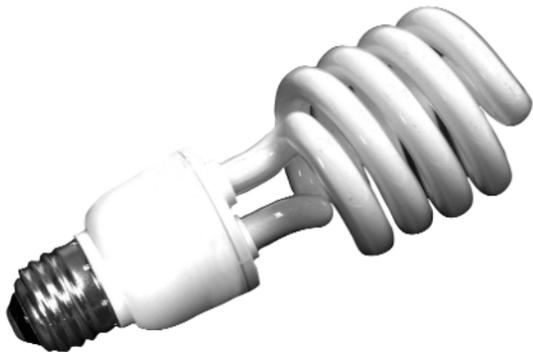
He said this part of Market Street had taught him something. "The place has a kind of bittersweet flavor about it.

"When I first came to the site, I was depressed. But in the process of painting, I've started seeing the place differently. Painting the site has given me a kind of intimacy with the place. It's a bit like becoming part of the scene." The response from people he delicately calls down and out has been positive. "People like it when they see the place they are from being memorialized no matter how bad it may look to others," he says.

Holdsworth was not particularly surprised by this inner transformation. He said his "on site" technique is known for inducing change in the artists who employ it. As he explained, "on site" painting began in Rome in the late 1700s, the late Romantic period. It spread to France and morphed into Impressionism. "Painting on site turned the work into a different kind of painting. They paint what's in front of them rather than a picture or imaginary view."

Holdsworth will be showing at the Market St. Gallery, 1554 Market St., throughout January. ■

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PHOTOS BY LENNY LIMJOCO

**Painting the new federal building under construction:** The "on-site" technique is known for inducing change in the artists.