

CT Trust Resource ID: 2430

HISTORIC RESOURCE INVENTORY – BUILDING AND STRUCTURES

State Historic Preservation Office, DECD, One Constitution Plaza, 2nd Floor, Hartford, CT 06103

*Note: Please attach any additional or expanded information on a separate sheet.

Inventory form modified for the Creative Places - Arts & Letters Project

GENERAL INFORMATION

Building Name (Common): Ezra Winter House/Dorothy and Gertrude Lathrop House

Other Name(s) (Historic): Ezra Winter House, Dorothy and Gertrude Lathrop House

Street Address or Location: 71 Under Mountain Rd., Canaan

Town/City: Canaan

Village: Falls Village

County: Litchfield

Designation(s):

Owner(s): Mordechai and Elizabeth Kubany

Public/Private: Private

Latitude: 41.9736 Longitude: -73.3194

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Residential: single-family dwelling

Historic Use: Residential: single-family dwelling

Accessibility to public: No Exterior visible from public road? No

Interior accessible? If yes, explain: NA

Style of building: Bauhaus - International Date of Construction: c. 1932

Material(s) (Indicate use or location when appropriate) Stucco

Structural Systems(s): Load bearing masonry

Roof(Type): Flat (Material): Asphalt Shingle

Number of Stories: 2 Approximate Dimensions: 100' x 35'

Structural Condition Excellent

Exterior Condition: Excellent

Locational Integrity: On original site Moved, When: NA

Alterations?: If yes, explain: NA

Related outbuildings or landscape features: Barn

Surrounding Environment: Woodland, Woodland, Woodland, Woodland

Interrelationship of building and surroundings: The house sits on an 82-acre parcel that consists mostly of forested land. A long driveway extends to the north off Under Mountain Road and leads to a parking area to the north of the house. To the northeast of the house is an outbuilding. A waterfall is located within the property, in the forested area, and stone walls are found throughout. Sitting close to the road, to the southwest of the house is what was once a barn but has since been converted to a house and located on a separate parcel.

Other notable features of building or site: This Bauhaus style house faces north and is set far back from Under Mountain Road. It was built c. 1932 and is a large rectangular block (in the east) with stucco siding and a flat roof with a smaller rectangular block (in the west) attached to it, also clad in stucco with a flat roof. It has steel industrial casement windows throughout. The main doorway is located in the breezeway connecting what was once the studio (the large block) with the residential portion of the house (the smaller block). Three floor-to-ceiling windows are spaced evenly across the north side of the addition. The breezeway includes floor-to-ceiling windows flanking the main door, and it is protected by an overhang protruding from the exterior wall. To the west, in the original portion of the house, is a large 22-pane, rectangular ribbon window.

Architect: Unknown Builder/Maker: Unknown

Historical or Architectural importance:

Dorothy and Gertrude Lathrop were born (Dorothy in 1891 and Gertrude in 1896) in New York to Ida (Pulis) and Cyrus Clark Lathrop. Their mother was a painter and their father was involved in many Albany businesses before he founded the Albany Boys Club in the late 1890s. Because her father did not believe art could support a living, Dorothy attended Columbia College for three years earning a teaching degree, and studied illustration at Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts for a year. Two years after graduation, she taught art classes at Albany High School before giving up teaching to illustrate full-time. She began illustrating for children's book authors before setting out on her own to write as well as illustrate books for children. In 1938, she won the first ever Caldecott Medal for her illustrations in *Animals of the Bible*, *A Picture Book*. During the 1950s Dorothy and Gertrude purchased Ezra Winter's home where they lived and worked until their deaths. Dorothy continued to illustrate late into her life before her death in 1980. Gertrude Lathrop was a well-known sculptor during her time. She studied under Gutzon Borglum and was practiced in not only sculpture but creating medals as well. She was greatly inspired by the natural world

around her, and found her home in Falls Village to be a great inspirational place. Most of her sculptures were of animals, many of them were inspired by the animals she saw on the property she and Dorothy owned. After Dorothy died, Gertrude Lathrop remained living in the house until her death in 1986.

Ezra Winter (1886-1949) was born in Michigan in 1886 and studied at the Chicago Institute of Fine Arts. In 1911, he won the Prix de Rome which earned him a three-year long fellowship at the American Academy in Rome. After his fellowship ended, Winter and his family toured Europe while he became more enamored with ancient and traditional styles of art during a time when many were turning towards Modernist styles. He and his family returned to the United States before World War I. During World War I, Winter was a camouflage designer for the United States Shipping Board. Afterwards, Winter received many prestigious commissions including painting murals for the Library of Congress in Washington D.C., Radio City Music Hall in New York City, and the Guardian Building in Detroit. In 1930, Winter purchased the property in Falls Village, a community of Canaan, Connecticut. He may have been drawn to the area because of its bucolic scenery, and its quiet surroundings. Working with a local builder, he designed a modern Bauhaus style home and studio. Construction of his home was completed c. 1932. At this time he was married to Edna Albert, an entrepreneur who had already invented and marketed an antiperspirant for women. She and Winter called their Canaan estate Juniper Hill. In the late 1940s while Winter was working on the 7th mural for the Bank of Manhattan, he slipped and fell off a scaffold. He fractured his coccyx which was inoperable. After his accident, he was in constant pain, couldn't hold a paintbrush, and often complained of other ailments. In April of 1949, at the age of 63, Winter walked into the woods on his property and committed suicide.

Sources:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dorothy_P._Lathrop, <http://50watts.com/Forgotten-Illustrator-Dorothy-P-Lathrop>, <http://www.bpib.com/lathrop.htm>, <http://www.bpib.com/dlathrop.htm>, <http://artofnarrative.blogspot.com/2012/01/dorothy-lathrop-little-boy-lost-1920.html>, <http://dorothyathrop.blogspot.com/>, <http://www.ortakales.com/illustrators/lathrop.html>, <http://www.bpib.com/glathrop.htm>
Dorothy Lathrop Obituary - New York Times - 1981-1-8, Ezra Winter - Winterhouse_2011-2
http://www.askart.com/askart/l/gertrude_katherine_lathrop/gertrude_katherine_lathrop.aspx, <http://dorothyathrop.blogspot.com/>, <http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artist/?id=2814>, <http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=14337>, <http://www.ortakales.com/illustrators/lathrop.html>, <http://connection.ebscohost.com/c/articles/52664756/sculpture-by-gertrude-k-lathrop>, http://www.dogpainting.com/info_detail.cfm?type=artist&arts_id=GKL, <http://www.bpib.com/glathrop.htm>
Ezra Winter - Winterhouse_2011-2; McAlester, Virginia & Lee. 2003. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Photographer: Canaan Tax Assessor **Date:**

View:

Organization: Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address: 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517-4002

Form completed by: Kristen Nietering **Printed On:** December 21, 2015

Threats: None known

Subsequent field evaluations:



Ezrah Winter House - Canaan (vision appraisal)

FOR OFFICE USE:

Town # _____ **Site#** _____ **UTM** _____

District ☐ S ☐ NR **If NR, specify:** ☐ Actual ☐ Potential