Hilltop House and Studio receives multiple preservation grants

Grants from local organizations to fund preservation work on indoor plant room at the mid-century modern Hilltop House at Stone Quarry Art Park in Cazenovia.

Cazenovia, New York (December 2021) – The Dorothy Riester House and Studio (Hilltop House) at Stone Quarry Art Park is proud to announce two recent grant awards to support the preservation of the Hilltop House. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places and a member of the Historic Artists’ Homes and Studios (HAHS) program of the National Trust, the Hilltop House embodies the creative spirit and progressive nature of artist and Art Park founder, Dorothy Riester. The home is a sculptural work of Riester’s situated in direct conversation with the environment and landscape and showcases a life lived in art. The preservation and stabilization of the Home and Studio is an integral part of the Art Park’s mission. The funding provided by The Gorman Foundation, The Dorothy and Marshall M. Reisman Foundation, and The John Ben Snow Foundation sets in motion the preservation work needed to keep this site a vital and vibrant resource for the community and artists.

The Gorman Foundation, The Dorothy and Marshall M. Reisman Foundation, and The John Ben Snow Foundation are esteemed local private foundations that share a commitment to supporting arts and culture, education, and other community-driven initiatives in Central New York. Grant funding will support the preservation and stabilization of the Hilltop House plant room, a unique indoor atrium designed by
Dorothy to connect two wings of the home, which she filled with a collection of plants and hand-crafted sculptural indoor fountain. In support of Stone Quarry’s ongoing commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, 5% of grant money will create stipends for BIPOC artists interested in working with the plant room, Hilltop House and/or Riester Collection. This direct support for artists carries the Riester ethos forward, fostering an exchange of creative ideas and diverse perspectives.

“Grant support from these three foundations is a profound affirmation to the historic and artistic value of The Dorothy Riester House and Studio. The Hilltop House is nationally recognized for contributing to conversations that demonstrate the importance of artistic thinking,” said Stone Quarry Hill Art Park CEO, Emily Zaengle. “As an artist Dorothy Riester asked questions and pushed boundaries in every area she worked. Her home, and specifically the plant room, is an architectural manifestation of that thinking. Stone Quarry Art Park is grateful to The Gorman Foundation, The Dorothy and Marshall M. Reisman Foundation, and The John Ben Snow Foundation for their support—for recognizing the importance of the Hilltop House and Studio and working with us to strengthen this architectural feature so that it may continue to serve as an opportunity and an inspiration for future artists and creative thinkers.”

Stone Quarry Art Park will work with Ashley McGraw Architects, D.P.C, a Syracuse-based firm with specific expertise in mid-century historic structures to address multiple issues related to the stability of this small-yet-significant portion of the Hilltop House. The planning process of the project will begin this fall, with the construction phase anticipated to begin in late Summer of 2022.

“The Hilltop House is a celebration of Riester’s artistic sensibilities and practices and embarking on the preservation of the plant room is an exciting and integral first step in the overall preservation and stabilization of the Hilltop House and Studio structures,” said Hilltop House and Studio Director Sarah Tietje-Mietz.

These preservation grants follow grants Stone Quarry Art Park received in 2020. Support from the CNY Arts COVID-19 Arts Impact Fund, the William G. Pomeroy Foundation, and the John E. Streb Fund for New York of the National Trust for Historic Preservation helped initiate a project to catalog and digitize the Dorothy and Robert Riester Collection and Archives. Looking ahead, additional preservation goals for the structures include addressing aging windows and repairing the home’s attached garage. As Tietje-Mietz states, “the support of our local and national foundations ensures that this sculptural structure can continue to inspire and awe.”

About the Hilltop House and Studio at Stone Quarry Art Park
The Dorothy Riester House and Studio (Hilltop House and Studio,) including the original 23-acres, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2014 and is also a member of the esteemed Historic Artists' Homes and Studios program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, a coalition of over 40 museums that were the homes and working studios of American artists.

The landscape of Stone Quarry Art Park is an interaction of art and nature that changes with sunlight, weather, and time. As an organization, the Art Park honors Dorothy’s legacy, leveraging its programs and special events to catalyze the creation of new work and to inspire the next generation of artists and creative thinkers. For Dorothy and Bob Riester, the house and studio atop the hill at 3883 Stone Quarry Hill Road was more than a home, it was, and will continue to be, a place where art, landscape, and people connect.

Stone Quarry Art Park is open from dawn to dusk and encourages the public use of its trails 365 days a year. For more information, visit www.sqhap.org.