

State of California ☐ The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #____
HRI #____
Trinomial____
NRHP Status Code 3S

Other Listings _____
Reviewer _____ Date _____

Review Code _____

Page 1 of 7 *Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 2365 11th Street

P1. Other Identifier: Miné Okubo Childhood Residence

*P2.Location: ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted *a. County Riverside
and (P2c, P2e, and P2b or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad _____ Date _____ T ____ R ____; ____ of ____ of Sec ____ B.M.

c. Address 2365 Eleventh Street City Riverside Zip 92507

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone ____ mE/ ____ mN/

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate)

APN: 221031014

*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

The single-family property located at 2365 11th Street is situated on Lot 119, subdivision Garfield Place, in the northeastern area of the city of Riverside. The one-story building faces south onto 11th Street. It is rectangular in plan, with the narrow end of the plan the main facade of the building, running parallel with the street and the long side of the plan running perpendicular to the street.

See continuation sheet.

*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP2

*P4. Resources Present: ☒ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐ Site ☐ District ☐ Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (view, date, accession #) January 28, 2011; Photo shows the front facing south onto 11th Street.

*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source: ☒ Historic ☐ Prehistoric Both
1900-1905 (Assessor's records)

*P7. Owner and Address:
Not Available

*P8. Recorded by: (Name, affiliation, and address)
Jenn Wilson
University of California
Riverside
900 University Avenue
Riverside, CA 92507

*P9.Date Recorded: March 10, 2011

*P10.Survey Type: (Describe)
Intensive Level

*P11. Report Citation (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter

"none.") _____

*Attachments: NONE Location Map ☒ Continuation Sheet ☒ Building, Structure, and Object Record
Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record
Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List): _____

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

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*NRHP Status Code 3S

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) 2365 11th Street

B1. Historic Name:

B2. Common Name: Miné Okubo House

B3. Original Use: Single-Family Residence B4. Present Use: Single-Family Residence

*B5. Architectural Style: Colonial Revival

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

*B7. Moved? ☒ No ☐ Yes Unknown Date: N/A Original Location: N/A

*B8. Related Features:

Rear shed/barn

B9a. Architect: Unknown b. Builder: Unknown

*B10. Significance: Theme Japanese in Riverside: Settlement & Community Development, World War II Forced Removal and Incarceration, and Return and Recovery; The Quest for Japanese American Citizenship & Civil Rights in Riverside Area: City of Riverside

Period of Significance 1925-1945 Property Type HP2 Applicable Criteria A/1, B/2 (Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

This residence is significant under National Register and California Register Criteria A/1 because it is associated with events that convey the experience of the Japanese American community as a whole, and Criteria B/2 because it is associated with the life of prolific artist Miné Okubo. It is the remaining home that has the longest period of association with Miné during her productive period of life in Riverside. The Okubo's moved there in 1925, and in 1931, Miné's father purchased the house in the name of Yoshi Okubo, Miné's eldest sister—then 24 years of age, due to the Alien Land Law. The residents were displaced as a result of World War II forced removal and incarceration. Miné was able to translate the experience into powerful artistic records of what they and their families endured. Miné died in 2001 and left her collection of letters, paintings, and drawings to Riverside City College. They are on display and available for research in the Center for Social Justice & Civil Liberties.

Please see continuation sheet.

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP 36 (JA)

*B12. References:

See continuation sheet.

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Jenn Wilson

*Date of Evaluation: March 10, 2011

(This space reserved for official comments.)



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P3a. Description (cont.)

The home is a wood-frame structure sheathed with clapboard siding. There is a detached shed/barn to the rear of the house that is not visible from the street but is visible from the alley. A 1908 Sanborn map indicates that there were three smaller structures in the northeast section of the property in back of the main building. By 1952, another Sanborn map reveals that two of the three smaller structures were no longer present, and an addition was added to the east side of the building. Neither the remaining detached structure nor the addition is denoted by the Sanborn map for the purpose of housing automobiles.

The roof is high-pitched, gable-on-hip, sheathed with composition shingles. The gable roof dormer is located on the top, center of the roof, with one gable facing east and the other facing west. A shed roof extends out a few feet beyond the front of the house and is supported by what appear to be four wooden columns. The classical columns are relatively narrow in width and are cylindrical in shape, with capitals. Two steps lead to a stoop, but there does not appear to be a raised floor that would indicate the existence of a porch. The front door is centrally placed on the main facade, with a large, rectangular one-over-one double hung wood window to the right of the door and a larger appearing window to the left. A portion of the right elevation appears to be board and batten, while the left side of the house is clearly horizontal siding like the front.

A chain-link fence, about five feet high, surrounds the property. Two concrete block pillars, each about a foot wide, stand on either side of the front chain-link gate that is situated about 6 feet from the front door of the building. There are overgrown bushes that surround the fence, making it difficult to see the home clearly. Two large trees on either side of the home block the side views of the building, and cover a good portion of the front sides of the facade, including the windows. The landscape in front of the sidewalk consists of grass and a large tree on the right hand-side of the home next to the mailbox. The landscape does not appear to be well kept, as most of the grass is dead.

The exact year that the residence was built is not yet clear. The city of Riverside states that the building was constructed in 1913, while a survey done on the property in 2001 dates the construction of the building in 1910. However, the structure can be observed in a Sanborn map dating back to 1908. Additionally, the County of Riverside Assessor's Office records indicate that the building was present before 1913. The first sign of structural activity on the property took place in 1899, when owner J.A. Clendenen—who also owned lots 118-125—made "improvements" on the land, which valued the property at \$50. According to Assessor's Office archivist, Jim Hofer, the dollar amount suggests the construction of a shed or some other small structure. In 1900, Peter Schwab purchased lots 118 and 119. Land improvements were made, placing the value of the property at \$150. Hofer argues that this could be the construction of a small home. In 1905, under the ownership of Geo Ward, improvements were made again, putting the value at \$225. This most certainly suggests that the original structure was present by this year. Improvements were not made again until 1910, but only increased the value by \$50, suggesting no major work was done. The improvement values stayed relatively the same until 1924. I therefore place the year of the building's original construction between 1900 and 1905.

An inspection was done on the property on April 20, 1993, which indicated that electrical and structural repairs were to be made to the bedroom, bathroom, laundry room, front room, and roof. No additional records have been found to clarify what, if any, restorative work has been performed on the property.

B10. Significance (cont.):

Famed Japanese American artist, Miné Okubo, and her family once occupied the home at 2365 11th Street. Miné's father, Fame Okubo, a scholar in Japan, first emigrated from Japan in 1900.ⁱ Miné, the youngest of four, was born in Riverside on June 27, 1912. Earliest accounts on the Okubo's residence show that Miné and her family lived at 160 (3038) Denton Street as early as 1915 (*Please see Okubo Residences Chart below).ⁱⁱ 1920s Census indicates that the Okubo's rented the property at 608 11th Street. However, the house number 608 was not found on our address converter, though 680 was found on the converter, which is the property at present day 2142 11th St. In 1921, the Okubo's moved again, just about a block away, on the same street, to 756 W 11th Street (Miné's father was listed at

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B10: Significance (cont.):

756 West 11th, while her mother, Miyo Okubo, was listed at 756 East 11th Street; another typo), which is currently 2054 11th Street.ⁱⁱⁱ According to Miné's biography, she grew up in a home off of Kansas Avenue and 11th streets.^{iv} Supporting this, the property the Okubo's possibly lived in anywhere from 1915-1920, present day 2142 11th St, is just west of Kansas Avenue, while the property they occupied beginning in 1921, present day 2054 11th Street, is just east of Kansas Avenue.

OKUBO RESIDENCES CHART

Census Year	Old Address	New Address	Street	Owned	Did not own	Miné's Age
1915	160	3038	Denton St.		X	3
1920	608 or 680	No new address for 608; 2142 for 680	11 th St.		X	8
1921	756	2054	11 th St.		X	9
1925	535	2365	11 th St.	X Owned in 1931		13

Census records show that by 1925, the Okubo's had moved two blocks west to 535 11th Street (present day 2365 11th Street), when Miné was about 13 years old.^v They rented the property until 1931, when Miné's father, purchased the property in the name of his eldest, American-born daughter Yoshi Okubo--then 24 years of age.^{vi} This event exemplifies the pattern of home ownership of many minorities at the time, and is a direct result of fellow Riverside Japanese immigrant Jukichi Harada's case against California's discriminatory Alien Land Law of 1913, which prohibited aliens from owning land or property. It remained in Yoshi's name until 1951, when the family sold the property.^{vii}

The precedent for property ownership by American-born children of Japanese immigrants was established by the Harada case. The case attracted wide attention because it was the first to test the constitutionality of an alien land law in California. In December 1915, Jukichi Harada purchased a home in Riverside in a middle-class neighborhood at 3356 Lemon Street. Because the Alien Land Law of 1913 prevented him from owning land, he purchased the land under his three minor American-born children's names, Miné, Sumi, and Yoshizo. The Harada's faced discrimination and hostility in their new neighborhood, but Jukichi refused to move. Many neighbors brought charges against the Harada family, claiming that under the laws of the United States Jukichi was an alien not eligible for citizenship and therefore it was illegal for him to own property in the state of California. On December 14, 1916, the case went to trial. *The People of the State of California v. Jukichi Harada, et al.* Two years later, on September 17, 1918, Judge Hugh H. Craig of the Riverside County Superior Court reached a judgment in favor of the Haradas.^{viii} While he agreed that the law did declare that aliens ineligible for citizenship could not own land, their children born in the United States, however, did have constitutional rights equal to those of any other citizens. This momentous event presented the possibility for many immigrants, including the Okubos, to establish their roots in America and build a more stable, thriving community.

While living at 2365 11th Street, Miné attended Riverside Polytechnic High School and befriended the Harada's youngest daughter, Sumi.^{ix} Theirs was a friendship that lasted far into their elder years.^x After high school, Miné attended Riverside Junior College (now Riverside Community College) from 1930-1933, focusing on art. She

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B10. Significance (cont.):

remained at 2365 11th Street until she left to study art at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1933.^{xi} She received her bachelor's from UC Berkeley in 1935, and her Master's in fine art in 1936. In 1938, UC Berkeley awarded Miné with a fellowship to study art in Europe for 18 months. World War II had already broken out upon her arrival back in the states. From 1939-1941, Miné was commissioned by the Federal Arts Program (part of the federal Works Projects Administration) as an artist to work on public art projects including painting, murals, mosaics and frescoes at Government Island, Oakland Hospitality House, Treasure Island and Fort Ord. During this time, she also worked for famed artist, Diego Rivera, in San Francisco. As Rivera was painting murals, Okubo was below, explaining his work to visitors.^{xii}

In 1942, Miné, along with her brother, Toku, who was residing with her in northern California while he attended the University of California Berkeley, were forced to evacuate her home under Executive Order 9066. Miné's family, residing at 2365 11th Street, in Riverside, was also at internment camps, but was separated in various camps.^{xiii} Miné was just one of 120,000 Japanese American evacuees incarcerated in America during World War II.^{xiv} She and her brother were first at Tanforan Relocation Camp in San Bruno, California. Six months later, Toku and Miné were transferred to Topaz Relocation Center in Utah.^{xv} It was during this time that Miné sketched over 2,000 drawings of her experience in the camp.^{xvi}

Many of the sketches depicted the hardships that she and fellow evacuees endured in the camps. She submitted a sketch of a camp guard to an art contest in San Francisco. It caught the attention of Fortune magazine, which hired Okubo to illustrate a special issue on Japan. The job offer allowed her to leave the camp and head to Fortune magazine headquarters in New York City.^{xvii}

Miné Okubo's sketches of her internment experience continued to attract attention, and eventually led to the publication of her book, *Citizen 13660*, in 1946.^{xviii} The book includes roughly 200 drawings along with Okubo's accompanying text. It was the first account by a WWII American Internee to show the experience of the internment camps. Miné's work throughout her life gained her much recognition. She received the San Francisco Museum Annual Prize in 1948; taught art at the University of California, Berkeley, from 1950-1952; made an appearance in the televised program, *The Nisei: The Pride and the Shame*, Twentieth Century TV, CBS News with Walter Cronkite, in 1965; was selected by the California State Department of Education as one of twelve women pioneers in *The History of California (1800 to present)*; received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Women's Caucus for Art of the College Art Association, in 1991; had a play written about her life called "Miné: A Name for Herself"; and in 2006 Riverside Community College debuted Miné Okubo Drive on their campus.^{xix xx xxi}

Before her internment, Miné thought of herself as being American first, and Japanese second.^{xxii} She spoke little to no Japanese and knew little of her Japanese roots or traditions.^{xxiii} However, her experience in the internment enforced the harsh reality of racial discrimination. Life would never be the same for Miné, nor was it for most Japanese and Japanese evacuees. Like many of those at internment camps, Miné never returned to her home in California. Her father, however, did return to the family home at 2365 11th Street.^{xxiv} Miné continued to work for various magazines in New York and began taking an interest in her Japanese ancestry. Most of her artwork after her internment was Japanese inspired, including the signature Japanese character, representing her name, which she stamped on many of her later works.

Miné Okubo died on February 10, 2001, at the age of 88, in Greenwich Village in New York City, New York. Although she spent the majority of her life in New York City, Miné held a special place in her heart for Riverside and was diligent about keeping in touch with friends and relatives in the area. In one of her many letters to her notable friend, Sumi Harada, Miné mentioned that she considered Riverside as her "beginning."^{xxv} In her book, *Miné Okubo: an American Experience*, she also noted on the significance that her experience Riverside had on her, saying, "I have a very strong attachment to Riverside and my early life there."^{xxvi}

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B10. Significance (cont.):

Just as significant as Riverside was to contributing to Miné Okubo's legacy, so too is Miné Okubo significant to Riverside's. Her family's acquisition of the property at 2365 11th Street under the name of their American-born daughter, their internment, and the national success of Miné's first-hand account of being interned all exemplify the Japanese experience in America at this time.

The property retains much of its architectural integrity, and clearly contributes to an understanding of contextual significance of the Japanese experience in Riverside during World War II. Thus, the property is determined eligible for local listing, under Criterion A, for its association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

ⁱ Nealon, Sean, The Press Enterprise Website, "Materials left by late artist provide look into Japanese-American experience," http://www.pe.com/localnews/inland/stories/PE_News_Local_S_okubo15.430182c.html.

ⁱⁱ 1910 Census.

ⁱⁱⁱ 1920 Census.

^{iv} Nealon.

^v 1930 Census.

^{vi} Riverside County Assessor's records.

^{vii} Riverside County Assessor's records.

^{viii} Riverside Metropolitan Museum, Mine' Okubo collection, "About the Harada House," <http://www.riversideca.gov/museum/harada.asp>.

^{ix} Okubo, Mine and Shirley Sun Okubo, *Mine Okubo: an American Experience*, Publisher: Museum (1972), found at Riverside Metropolitan Museum archives, Mine' Okubo collection.

^x Collection of letters from Mine' to Sumi at the Riverside Metropolitan Museum.

^{xi} Okubo.

^{xii} University of Minnesota Website, Voices From the Gap, "Mine Okubo," <http://voices.cla.umn.edu/artistpages/okuboMine.php>.

^{xiii} Okubo.

^{xiv} Riverside Community College, "Mine' Okubo Collection," <http://library.rcc.edu/riverside/okubo/>.

^{xv} Riverside Metropolitan Museum, Mine' Okubo collection, Printout from website, website address: "content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/ft996nb5q61/?NaANN=13030&docID=ft996nb5q6&brand=oac." Website currently not found online.

^{xvi} Nealon.

^{xvii} Okubo.

^{xviii} Niiya, Brian Japanese American history: an A-to-Z reference from 1868 to the present, Checkmark Books; Updated edition (December 2000) p. 274.

^{xix} Okubo.

^{xx} Nealon.

^{xxi} Riverside Community College, "Mine' Okubo Collection," <http://library.rcc.edu/riverside/okubo/>.

^{xxii} Riverside Metropolitan Museum, Mine' Okubo collection, Pamphlet on Mine' Okubo from Riverside Community College, 18 Jun 1974.

^{xxiii} Okubo.

^{xxiv} Assessor's records 1931-1951.

^{xxv} Okubo, Miné, personal letter to Sumi Harada, 1983, Riverside Metropolitan Museum, Miné Okubo collection.

^{xxvi} Okubo.

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B12. References:

Japanese American National Museum
Japanese City Directories (1930-1962)

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. 2000. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.: New York.

Nealon, Sean, The Press Enterprise Website, "Materials left by late artist provide look into Japanese-American experience," http://www.pe.com/localnews/inland/stories/PE_News_Local_S_okubo15.430182c.html, accessed February 2, 2011.

Niia, Brian Japanese American history: an A-to-Z reference from 1868 to the present, Checkmark Books; Updated edition (December 2000)

Riverside, City of
Assessor's maps (1895-1956)
Building permits
Census records (1890-1950)
Sanborn Fire Insurance maps (1895, 1908, 1952)

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Okubo, Miné and Shirley Sun Okubo, *Mine Okubo: an American Experience*, Publisher: Museum; 1972.
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Pamphlet on Mine' Okubo from Riverside Community College, 18 Jun 1974.

University of Minnesota Website, Voices From the Gap, "Miné Okubo,"
<http://voices.cla.umn.edu/artistpages/okuboMine.php>, accessed January 30, 2011.