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Author

Keim, Kevin

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Hardly an architect in modern times has nurtured such a wide and dedicated following as Charles W. Moore did. The depth and breadth of his influence are difficult to summarize; does one start with his contributions as an architect, a writer or a teacher? All were enormously important and inextricably linked.

Moore had an uncanny ability to extend this influence beyond the constraints of time and geography, uniting those who worked with him in far-flung places through the power of ideas, images and enthusiasms. When he died in 1993, he left behind those who worked with him at the firms he helped create (MLTW, Centerbrook, Urban Innovations Group, Moore Ruble Yudell and Moore/Andersson), taught with him at various universities (Utah, Princeton, U.C. Berkeley, Yale, U.C.L.A. and Texas) and co-authored some of his many books (*The Place of Houses*, *Poetics of Gardens* and *Chambers for a Memory Palace*, to name a few).

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Yet these collaborators had never all assembled during Moore's lifetime to reflect on his legacy. Even after his death, there were five memorial services with five sets of people in the five places Moore cared about most: Los Angeles, New Haven, Monterey, Austin and the Sea Ranch. A recent symposium at the Charles W. Moore Foundation provided a rare opportunity for these people to come together.

The foundation was established to preserve Moore's house in Austin — the only house Moore had designed for himself that was left as he had inhabited it, filled with his books and his legendary collection of folk toys. It is part of a compound of two homes and two studios, where Moore and Arthur Andersson established Moore/Andersson Architects after Moore began teaching at the University of Texas in 1984.

Discussions about establishing the foundation recognized that Moore would have been uncomfortable with any effort to aggrandize his accomplishments and, certainly, dismissive of any rote attempts to perpetuate his design ideas; indeed, his approach to architecture would have implicitly impeached such an effort. Consequently, the foundation decided to preserve the Austin compound as a vital center of architectural exploration and scholarship, not as a house — museum frozen in time.

What better way, asked Donlyn Lyndon, to inaugurate this new forum than to gather Moore's

colleagues there to discuss the new work that extends from their common legacy? The symposium was not meant to be an opportunity merely to reminisce or exchange anecdotes, but a fruitful working session to share how Moore's lessons were being reinvested with new ideas and images.

Lyndon asked participants to talk about their current work using one of the chapter themes from *Chambers for a Memory Palace*, the book he co-authored with Moore. This approach allowed participants to define their own chambers (which many did, such as John Ruble with "Lanterns that Levitate") and was wholly in keeping with Moore's hope that his enthusiasms would be sign posts to which others could add, subtract or multiply, even divide or rearrange.

Nearly thirty of Moore's colleagues came to Austin, spanning nearly forty years of collaboration. As they gathered in the living room of Moore's house, which had been emptied of its furniture and transformed into a theater for the occasion, there was a sense of camaraderie and shared belief. The discussions were electric, charged with two alternating currents of thought: that architecture is fundamentally about place and that collaboration between architects and inhabitants enriches places.

Moore had no wish to impose his views on anyone or make his own lessons canonical. His ideas were not forced from a single, pre-

World

disposed point of view; rather, he sought to direct challenges into the path of solutions and coax out the best ones possible. Jacquelynn Baas explained it best, quoting Wendell Barry: *There are, it seems to me, two Muses: the Muse of Inspiration, who gives us inarticulate visions and desires, and the Muse of Realization, who returns again and again to say, "It is yet more difficult than you thought."*

Involving people and rallying ideas, including those generated by inhabitants of the places being designed, would enrich the creative process, Moore believed. Moore gathered ideas and images through teaching, lecturing, travel, collecting, studying and writing, all of which he fed back into the design process.

Incessant travel around the world deepened Moore's understanding of the human occupation of places. While this fluency in the languages of architecture and habitation seemed so natural for Moore, it did not come automatically; it required relentless absorption. John Ruble and Buzz Yudell remarked upon learning from Moore, only to grasp the full richness of his lessons later, when they themselves visited places that had so inspired him. Peter Zweig and Simon Atkinson, both of whom taught with Moore, spoke about the necessity of encouraging students to be as active in their own investigations — to remain alert and continually seek out new sources of ideas.

Moore reveled in places where cultures mingled, producing new images with hints and quirks of the old still evident, such as the Spanish in the Americas or the English in India. This cross-fertilization of patterns of habitation, deeply embedded in human memory like fractals encrypted in chaos, rules out any one prescriptive way of designing for places. Mark Simon chased this idea by exploring his fascination with images that blend to produce new ones, the end result being architecture that speaks to people as being like something, of having tangible images to which everyone can relate, however differently people they may view it.

Buzz Yudell spoke of the of the trans-cultural layers of architecture in Morocco and the resulting abundance of details that made people sense that they were members of a place. The fundamental parts of architecture — stairs, platforms, portals, roofs — have meaning for people, and they make buildings understandable and sociable. Alice Wingwall records this in her photographs of platforms, whether a sidewalk on the Berkeley campus, a flight of stairs leading to a Palladian villa or a walled churchyard laid out in front of a New Mexico mission.

Even more fundamentally, Moore probably would have regarded the assumption of any one truth as presumptuous, given the complexity of the world and the wide range of valid attempts

to make places. Moore preferred cycles of journeys, finding glimpses of joy amid all of the passions of life. Jeff Riley related the importance of using architectural elements that relate movement to a sense of being somewhere. A threshold, for instance, provides “the sense of leaving one world and passing through a gate and entering into another world,” he said.

Moore believed that there is no inherent reason that pure geometry or formalism should be the only prescription for making place; this is architecture into which civilization is forced to fit, when things should be the other way around. As many of the presentations demonstrated, architecture is marked by place and time, by memory linked with human anatomy and movement, so that while an underlying geometry can provide a framework for order, corruptions of the larger geometry can accommodate the eccentricities of humanity.

Richard Peters remarked that the gathering was extraordinary and would probably never be repeated again. He was right for several reasons. William Turnbull had hoped to come, but illness prevented him, and some months later he passed away. Fortunately, he participated vicariously by sending a letter (read to the gathering by Lyndon and published here) filled with words of integrity and searching and with the humility and joy of making places in beautiful landscapes.

One reason for the success of this symposium was that it was so unlike a symposium. Moore’s dazzling house propelled the discussions and stimulated them with an exotic energy quite different from the caffeine charge that so many conferences in cavernous auditoriums or hotel banquet rooms seem to require. There was the added thrill of hearing a sublime Kronos Quartet concert that could not have been more fitting; the ensemble collaborated with the Austin vernacular yodeler Don Walser and his True Texas Band, a perfect allusion to Moore’s zeal for juxtaposing seemingly incongruent but equally vibrant forces.

What was most rewarding however, was the chance for the architects and teachers to show not only how their work has flourished in Moore’s absence, but how remarkably rich and diverse the work is. Despite all of these architects having shared a common legacy, Moore’s example of openness, absorption, layering and the thrill of the search has propelled each of them in their own direction. Call it the dogma of anti-dogma; it is pluralism at its best.

The exchange will kick off a series of annual conferences, the next ones to be centered on themes Moore cared about, such as the landscape or dwelling or education, but opened to new ideas and faces. These forthcoming gatherings, I am sure, will be as stimulating. To use a fitting metaphor, the stone has hit the water at the Moore Foundation, now the ripples spread outward.