REPORT OF THE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION COMMITTEE FOR
CHARLES WILLARD MOORE

The special committee of the General Faculty to prepare a memorial resolution for Charles Willard Moore, Professor, Architecture, has filed with the Secretary of the General Faculty the following report.

John R. Durbin, Secretary
The General Faculty

IN MEMORIAM
CHARLES WILLARD MOORE

Charles Willard Moore was born in Benton Harbor, Michigan, on October 31, 1925. He studied architecture at the University of Michigan, taught first at the University of Utah, served in the army during the Korean War, worked briefly in the Bay Area, and then returned to study for a master’s degree and PhD at Princeton. He went on to teach at Princeton and was assistant to Louis Kahn in the conduct of the master’s studio for 1958-59. He became one of the most influential architects of the 20th century and an innovative educator in several of the nation’s top schools of architecture. He taught at The University of Texas School of Architecture from September 1984 until his death on December 16, 1993.

In his graduate studies, Charles was a distinct presence at Princeton, lending his wry, exceptional insights and comments to any who discounted his initial shyness. Charles was always extending the range of what students saw in the drafting room. His subjects of study bypassed the conventions of the profession, his drawings had unfamiliar proportions, his references to other places were exotic and captivating. As an assistant teacher, first to Enrico Peressutti and then to Louis Kahn, he was extraordinarily helpful, teasing out design moves from students that they would not otherwise have known they could make, proffering confidence in the force of imagination. Outside the studio, he led students to see voraciously and sympathetically, reaching out to places with an abandon that mocked the strictures of stylistic dogma. He brought a range of knowledge that was inspiring and a capacity for recollection that was continually astounding. He referred to Walter Pater’s injunction to "Burn with a hard gem-like flame." He lived that way, but in such an unassuming, humorous way that the heat of the flame spread almost surreptitiously through his surroundings and among those who knew him.

Moore was recruited to the University of California at Berkeley faculty by William Wurster in 1959. He taught and served as chairman of the architecture department until 1965, when he moved to head the Department of Architecture at Yale University, where he later became dean. Later still, he moved to UCLA and finally to The University of Texas at Austin, where he held the O’Neil Ford Centennial Chair. He was recruited to UT by Dean Hal Box to conduct a post-professional graduate program in the School of Architecture.

In each of these schools, Moore created a legacy of innovation in architecture. At Berkeley he was instrumental in expanding the department’s mission, initiating new courses, encouraging broader interest in history and research, fostering an exploratory attitude toward design, and recruiting many of the faculty who have subsequently become identified with Berkeley’s leadership in education.

At Yale, Moore presided over a transformation in the school’s orientation and initiated a building program for the first-year graduate students that is still an honored part of the curriculum. At UCLA, Moore’s leadership as program chair brought many interesting faculty to the school and was central to the formation and success of the Urban Innovations Group, a practice wing in the school that created new opportunities for students and faculty to become actively engaged in real projects.
At UT, Charles initiated a program of travel and study for graduate students, connecting their studio experience to that of actual conditions of specific places, and turning attention to the variety of places that can stimulate design ideas. He encouraged students to “Look at places, listen to people.” In his ten years at Texas, Charles attracted students from around the world as well as a continuous flow of professional colleagues.

At each stage of his career, he initiated architectural offices (always in generous collaboration with younger colleagues) and created startling, provocative buildings that have continued to be important in architectural discourse. At Berkeley, the construction of his own house in Orinda served as inspiration to a generation of students, and the work of MLTW (Moore Lyndon Turnbull Whitaker) became known internationally, especially their work at Sea Ranch, beginning in 1964. (In 1991 the Sea Ranch Condominium won the AIA Twenty-Five Year Award.) While teaching at Yale he created the firm now known as Centerbrook. At UCLA, in addition to the Urban Innovations Group, he was a founding partner of Moore, Ruble, Yudell. In Austin, Moore and Arthur Anderson formed a partnership that has operated out of a compound that included the house and studio in which he lived and worked, surrounded by his library, portions of his extraordinary toy collection, and many colleagues, friends, and travel plans.

Moore’s writings have also proven to be very influential, including early, formative articles in *Perspecta* and *Landscape* magazines and a succession of twelve co-authored books, including: *The Place of Houses; Dimensions; Body, Memory, and Architecture; The Poetics of Gardens; Water and Architecture,* and *Chambers for a Memory Palace,* which Donlyn Lyndon co-authored.

In 1991 the American Institute of Architects awarded Charles Moore its Gold Medal in recognition of the scope and importance of his contributions to architecture. The University of Texas Tower was lit with orange lights as it is when faculty receive a Nobel Prize. In 1989 he received the AIA/ACSA Topaz Medallion for lifetime achievement in architectural education. These awards were the highest honors awarded in his professions, architecture and teaching. Charles and his collaborators received many design awards and his works have been published in every major architectural magazine, in most anthologies of contemporary architecture, and in a dozen monographs devoted to his work.

An extensive bibliography, as submitted by the memorial resolution committee, is on file in the Office of the General Faculty.

This memorial resolution was prepared by a special committee consisting of Professors Hal Box (chair), Richard Dodge, and Simon Atkinson, adapted from a brief biography by Professor Donlyn Lyndon, University of California at Berkeley.

Distributed to the Dean of the School of Architecture, the Executive Vice President and Provost, and the President on February 21, 2000. Copies are available on request from the Office of the General Faculty, FAC 22, F9500. This resolution is posted under “Memorials” at: http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/