Press Release  October 31, 2017

The Charles Moore Foundation Receives the Texas Society of Architects 25 Year Award

Tucked away on a quiet residential street in Austin sits Texas’ newest landmark. The Moore/Andersson Compound has been granted the Texas Society of Architects 25 Year Award for 2017. This is a distinction bestowed upon a building that a quarter of a century after its design and construction is regarded as fundamentally important. The Moore/Andersson Compound, a confederation of homes and studios, was designed by Charles Moore and Arthur Andersson, starting in 1984. This is where Charles Moore spent the last ten years of his life, surrounded by his architectural library, folk art and toy collection, friends, collaborators, colleagues, and students. In the compound’s studios, Moore and Arthur Andersson established their practice, Moore/Andersson Architects, a firm that continues today as Andersson-Wise Architects.

Architects Cesar Pelli (New Haven, Connecticut), Robert A.M. Stern (New York, New York) and Steven Holl (New York, New York) wrote letters in support of the nomination, which was advanced by AIA Austin, led by its Director, Ingrid Spencer and President Luis Jauregui.

This award places the Moore/Andersson Compound in the same honored league as the Kimbell Museum (Louis I. Kahn) in Fort Worth; the Menil Collection (Renzo Piano Building Workshop) in Houston; and Trinity University’s Margarite B. Parker Chapel (O’Neil Ford) in San Antonio. (Interestingly, Charles Moore served as a Post-Doctoral Fellow for Louis Kahn at Princeton University in 1958. Moore was also the first to occupy the O’Neil Ford Centennial Chair at the University of Texas at Austin, starting in 1984.)

This award has only been granted 12 times in 20 years.

In 1994, Paul Goldberger wrote in the *New York Times*: “There aren’t many houses like this: the short list begins with
Thomas Jefferson’s Monticello and continues through Sir John Soane’s 1812-13 house in London, now the Soane Museum, and on to Frank Lloyd Wright’s two Taliesins, Philip Johnson’s Glass House and Frank Gehry’s house in Santa Monica, Calif., all buildings that carry an importance in the history of architecture that far outweighs their size.

Two other Charles Moore buildings have received the 25 Year Award. In 1991, Sea Ranch Condominium One (Sonoma County, California), designed by MLTW Moore Lyndon Turnbull Whitaker, was distinguished with the National 25 Year Award. (The Sea Ranch Condominium One also received the California 25 Year Award in 1992.) And in 2003, Charles Moore and William Turnbull Jr.’s University of California Kresge College was distinguished with the California 25 Year Award.

Charles Moore is one of the very few American architects to have received all of the nation’s highest official awards: the 1991 American Institute of Architects Gold Medal; the 1989 Topaz Medallion for distinction in architectural education; and two individual National Firm of the Year Awards, granted each to Centerbrook Architects & Planners (Centerbrook, Connecticut) and Moore Ruble Yudell (Santa Monica, California).

The Charles Moore Foundation cares for the Moore/Andersson Compound, where it offers residencies for visiting scholars, architects, designers, artists, and curators. The foundation also conducts public programs, is an advocate of preserving Moore’s work on the national level, assists the University of Texas at Austin in the care of Moore’s archive, and publishes the PLACENOTES travel guide.

“Charles Moore was one of the most creative American architects ever. His designs are a blend of rigor and irony. There is always something to smile at in a Charles Moore design, and it is in the home that is now the Moore/Andersson Compound.”

Cesar Pelli

“One of Charles Moore’s last works, it is an outstanding representation of his approach—bold, with a strong sense of urbanism despite its modest size. The swing of its great room in plan and section makes for one of the most memorable interior spaces of our time.”

Robert AM Stern

“My first encounter with Charles Moore was in June 1971, when I graduated from the University of Washington. I drove to San Francisco to work for MLTW (Moore, Lyndon, Turnbull & Whitaker) who had recently completed the amazing architecture of the Sea Ranch and Kresge College. These buildings brought new focus on the preservation of environment and the human scale, shaping space.

I first visited Charles’ Austin home in 1995; and was struck the moment I arrived on the property with a wholly different world of light and color and joy and space. Especially interesting is the preservation of his art collection housed there, so inventive and passionate and full of his spirit. Even after a quarter of a century, this set of buildings is important internationally. They should be treasured and honored by Texans.

The Moore/Andersson Compound should also be honored as a special place that keeps ideas in architecture alive. I believe that institutions and non-profits like the Charles Moore Foundation are what keep the flame burning for the future students of architecture. As we at Steven Holl Architects are engaged in a major work of Texas architecture for the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, which is under construction; today, I pause to think about the great teachers like Charles Moore and compounds like this for the future of architecture education in Texas.”

Steven Holl