



## Peer Reviewed

### Title:

Caring About Places... Attentive Imagination

### Journal Issue:

[Places, 9\(1\)](#)

### Author:

[Lyndon, Donlyn](#)

### Publication Date:

1994

### Publication Info:

Places

### Permalink:

<http://escholarship.org/uc/item/14b7815s>

### Acknowledgements:

This article was originally produced in Places Journal. To subscribe, visit [www.places-journal.org](http://www.places-journal.org). For reprint information, contact [places@berkeley.edu](mailto:places@berkeley.edu).

### Keywords:

places, placemaking, architecture, environment, landscape, urban design, public realm, planning, design, attentive, imagination, caring, Donlyn Lyndon

### Copyright Information:

All rights reserved unless otherwise indicated. Contact the author or original publisher for any necessary permissions. eScholarship is not the copyright owner for deposited works. Learn more at [http://www.escholarship.org/help\\_copyright.html#reuse](http://www.escholarship.org/help_copyright.html#reuse)



**eScholarship**  
University of California

eScholarship provides open access, scholarly publishing services to the University of California and delivers a dynamic research platform to scholars worldwide.

Donlyn Lyndon  
**editor**

James F. Fulton  
**publisher**

Todd W. Bressi  
**associate editor**

Randolph T. Hester, Jr.  
Allan B. Jacobs  
Alice Wingwall  
**consulting editors**

Jennifer Corazzo  
**assistant to the  
associate editor**

Zophonias Bjorgvinsson  
**designer**

Kenneth J. Rich  
**development associate**

Dana Forio  
**business manager**

**Contributing Board**

Stanford Anderson  
Richard Bender  
Christine Boyer  
Catherine Brown  
Clare Cooper Marcus  
Lois Craig  
John de Monchaux  
N. John Habraken  
Raymond Lifchez  
Roger Montgomery  
Anne Vernez Moudon  
William R. Morrish  
John R. Myer  
William L. Porter  
Ron Shiffman

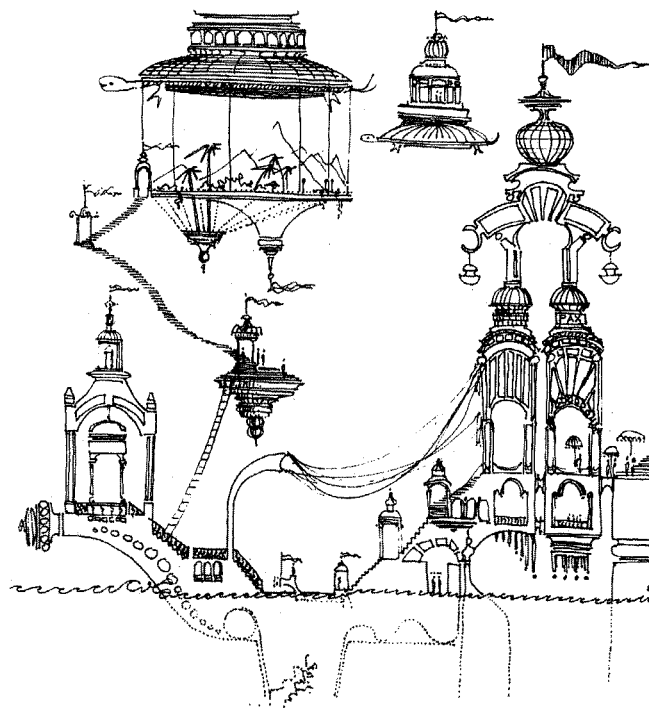
**Board of Directors  
Design History Foundation**

Donald Canty  
W. Russell Ellis, Jr.  
James F. Fulton  
Lawrence Halprin  
Frances Halsband  
Donlyn Lyndon

## Attentive Imagination

As I was preparing to write this editorial, I learned that Charles Moore, my mentor, teacher and cherished friend, had died, quietly and unexpectedly. His passing leaves an enormous void in the lives of all those with whom he shared his love of the imagination. Yet, like his favored image of the geode, that chasm is filled with sparkling wonders; with brilliant buildings, passages, courtyards and phrases; with memories of the gifts he so freely bestowed, the gifts of attention, empathy, humor, vision and a special kind of canny wisdom.

Reflecting on the things Charles valued and espoused I realize that much of my understanding of



the mission of *Places* has been informed by his thinking and example. He was obsessively curious about the places around him, always seeking lodes of imaginative energy deposited in buildings, landscapes and ornament. He took inspiration from the care invested by others, not just from the canon of exemplary architecture, but from folk and vernacular structures, from gardens, toys and miniatures. He took special pleasure in finding (and sharing with others) things that embodied particularly apt, intense or even peculiar aspirations that demonstrated diverse visions of human possibility.

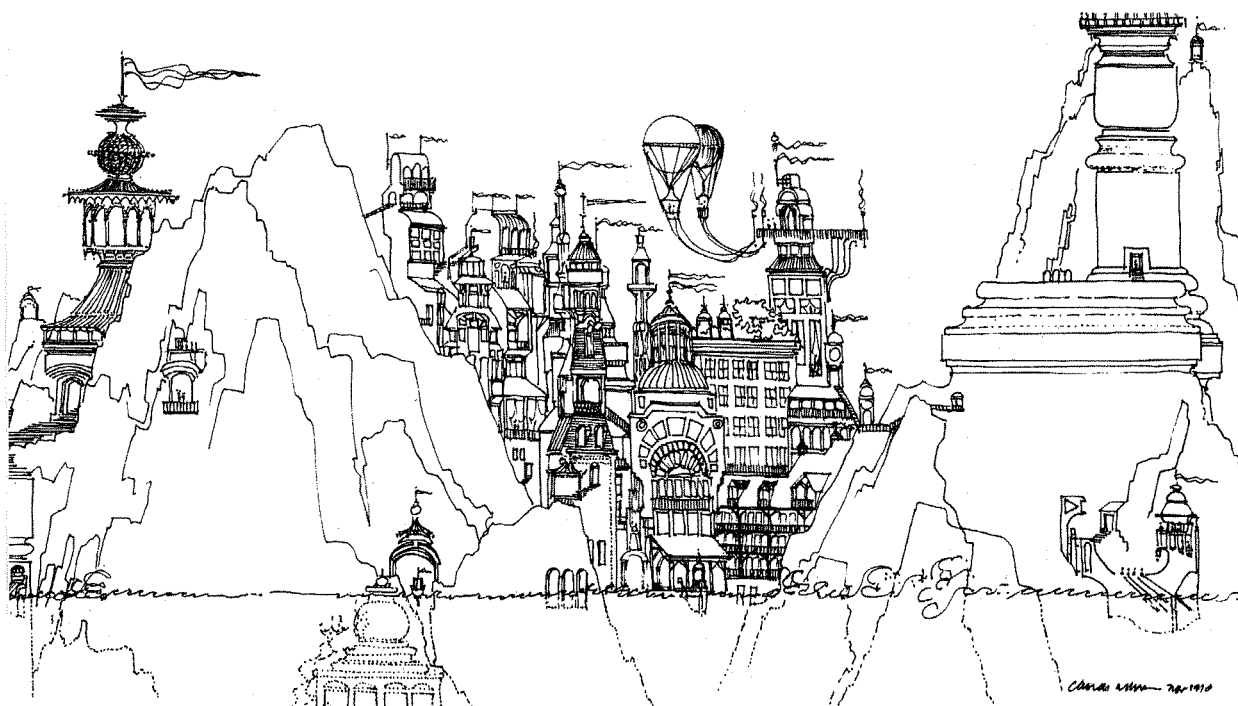
This issue begins with passages from *Chambers for a Memory Palace*, a work that Charles and I co-authored and that will be published this summer. The book is cast as an exchange of letters that elaborate on themes we devised for describing how places can be composed. Charles' letter, with its whimsical analogies and unexpected references, reflects both the scope and tone of his imagination. The pair of letters

is a call to readers to gather inspiration from things and places they hold dear.

At the heart of this issue is N. John Habraken's eloquent invocation of an attitude towards understanding, elaborating and repairing the texture of the city. Other articles from settings as diverse as a New England town green and a bustling Malaysian city examine the multiple and sometimes unexpected implications of such a charge.

We conclude with reviews of an unusual set of conferences last fall that suggest a growing sense of urgency for recasting our cities in habitable form. These conferences also proceed from concerns about the fabric of the city. But to make places that are truly habitable, we must couple attention to physical and social patterns with the genuinely caring imagination that is necessary to bond people to places. It is this spirit of attention and imagination that Charles embodied and implanted where he could.

— Donlyn Lyndon



Inspirations.  
By Charles W.  
Moore.