



July 10, 2006

**Woodberry Poetry Room: an Online Forum by DOCOMOMO US**

The Woodberry Poetry Room in the Lamont Library at Harvard University (1949) is one of only four extant designs in the United States by the great Finnish architect, Alvar Aalto. Aalto designed the room and, working with his wife, Aino, its furnishings. Harvard College's Library's plans for a careful renovation of the space and its fittings have inspired a lively exchange of views among members of the architecture, design and preservation communities. DOCOMOMO-US has offered to serve as an electronic forum for this debate, beginning with today's posting of the correspondence between Toshiko Mori, the Robert P. Hubbard Professor in the Practice of Architecture and Chair of the Department of Architecture, and Nancy M. Cline, the Roy E. Larsen Librarian of Harvard College, and Sidney Verba, Carl H. Pforzheimer University Professor and Director of the Harvard University Library. We are also posting supporting documentation by the architect, David N. Fixler, AIA, of Einhorn Yaffee Prescott; bibliography; and links to press coverage. DOCOMOMO US will update this posting as warranted.

Comments can be sent directly to Professor Mori and to Ms. Cline at the following addresses:

Professor Toshiko Mori  
Chair, Department of Architecture  
Harvard Graduate School of Design  
Gund Hall 207  
48 Quincy St  
Cambridge MA 02138  
Toshiko@tmarch.com

Nancy M. Cline  
Harvard, HCL Widener Library  
Office of the Librarian, Room 110  
Harvard Yard  
Cambridge MA 02138  
ncline@fas.harvard.edu

DOCOMOMO US would appreciate being copied on any correspondence connected to our posting. As the space was little published at the time and only became known in 1979, DOCOMOMO US welcomes the contribution of any further documentation on the original room and its subsequent states.

Bibliography and Links

Abercrombie, Stanley. "Alvar and Aino Aalto Woodberry Poetry Room: A little-known 1949 design of the late Finnish master is a Harvard treasure." *Interiors* 138, no. 2 (1979): 74 – 75.  
—. "Aalto's 1949 Poetry Room at Harvard." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 38, no. 2 (1979): 120 – 122.

*New York Times*, 10 July, 2006:

[http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/10/arts/design/10aalt.html?\\_r=1&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/10/arts/design/10aalt.html?_r=1&oref=slogin)