



**Smithsonian Institution**

*Archives of American Art*

## **Celebrating 175: Aline Saarinen, Article for Harper's Magazine, "Uncle Sam as an Art Expert," 1954**

Extracted on Mar-28-2024 06:25:50

**The Smithsonian Institution thanks all digital volunteers that transcribed and reviewed this material. Your work enriches Smithsonian collections, making them available to anyone with an interest in using them.**

The Smithsonian Institution (the "Smithsonian") provides the content on this website ([transcription.si.edu](https://transcription.si.edu)), other Smithsonian websites, and third-party sites on which it maintains a presence ("SI Websites") in support of its mission for the "increase and diffusion of knowledge." The Smithsonian invites visitors to use its online content for personal, educational and other non-commercial purposes. By using this website, you accept and agree to abide by the [following terms](#).

- If sharing the material in personal and educational contexts, please cite the Archives of American Art as source of the content and the project title as provided at the top of the document. Include the accession number or collection name; when possible, link to the Archives of American Art website.
- If you wish to use this material in a for-profit publication, exhibition, or online project, please contact Archives of American Art or [transcribe@si.edu](mailto:transcribe@si.edu)

For more information on this project and related material, contact the Archives of American Art. [See this project](#) and other collections in the Smithsonian Transcription Center.

July 19, 1954

Mr. William Goetz  
Delfern Drive  
Holmby Hills  
Los Angeles, California

Dear Mr. Goetz,

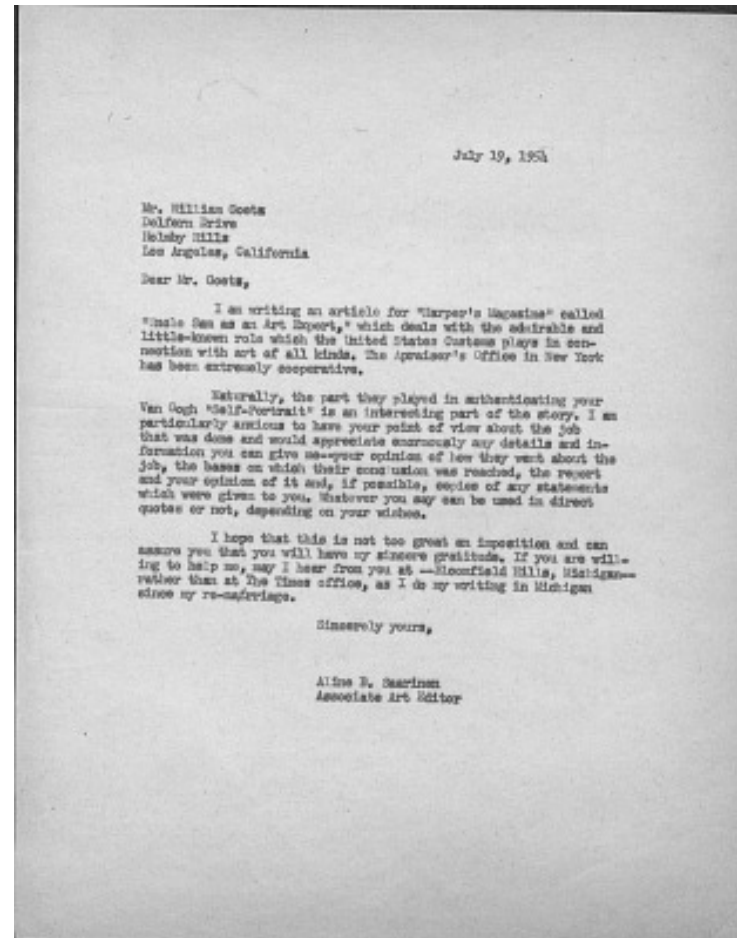
I am writing an article for "Harper's Magazine" called "Uncle Sam as an Art Expert," which deals with the admirable and little-known role which the United States Customs plays in the connection with art of all kinds. The Appraiser's Office in New York has been extremely cooperative.

Naturally, the part they played in authenticating your Van Gogh "Self-Portrait" is an interesting part of the story. I am particularly anxious to have your point of view about the job that was done and would appreciate enormously any details and information you can give me—your opinion of how they went about the job, the bases on which their conclusion was reached, the report and your opinion of it and, if possible, copies of any statements which were given to you. Whatever you say can be used in direct quotes or not, depending on your wishes.

I hope that this is not too great an imposition and can assure you that you will my sincere gratitude. If you are willing to help me, may I hear you at —Bloomfield Hills, Michigan —rather than at The Times office, as I do my writing in Michigan since my re-marriage.

Sincerely yours,

Aline B. Saarinen  
Associate Art Editor



Celebrating 175: Aline Saarinen, Article for Harper's Magazine, "Uncle Sam as an Art Expert," 1954  
Transcribed and Reviewed by Digital Volunteers  
Extracted Mar-28-2024 06:25:50



## Smithsonian Institution

*Archives of American Art*

The mission of the Smithsonian is the increase and diffusion of knowledge - shaping the future by preserving our heritage, discovering new knowledge, and sharing our resources with the world. Founded in 1846, the Smithsonian is the world's largest museum and research complex, consisting of 19 museums and galleries, the National Zoological Park, and nine research facilities. Become an active part of our mission through the Transcription Center. Together, we are discovering secrets hidden deep inside our collections that illuminate our history and our world.

Join us!

The Transcription Center: <https://transcription.si.edu>

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SmithsonianTranscriptionCenter>

On Twitter: [@TranscribeSI](https://twitter.com/TranscribeSI)

Connect with the Smithsonian

Smithsonian Institution: [www.si.edu](http://www.si.edu)

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Smithsonian>

On Twitter: [@smithsonian](https://twitter.com/smithsonian)