

## Architecture Abroad

### Project Overview

In my application essay to my major, Global Development Studies, I wrote about my experience navigating this school as someone with a particularly unusual relationship with architecture. “Three decades ago, I wouldn't have been welcome at this school,” I wrote, “I would have been prevented from entering most classrooms, living in the dorms, and using the university bus system. The way that this university had been built at that time told people like me that they lack the legitimacy to be here.” I always knew that accessibility would play an important role in my life, but not until college did I realize the immense impact that it would have on me emotionally, intellectually, and creatively. I seek to discover the limitations of everything that I approach, as I find that constraint often encourages my own creativity to manipulate the space around me to express its fullest potential (as I have explored with my Third Year Arts Award Grant). I've found that a life of facing the obstacles that development has presented has gifted me with a brilliantly challenging relationship with the physical world, and a unique perspective of my surroundings. I believe that what I propose for my grant will allow for my perspective to continue expanding.

For my rising Fourth Year Art Scholars Grant, I propose participation in the Metropolitan Studies and Architecture program in Berlin, Germany. The program takes place over the summer of 2018, from June 5th–July 28th. Enrolling in this program would provide me with a fully accessible place to live for the summer in Berlin, and during the program, I intend to enroll in courses in Architecture, Art History, and Urban and Cultural Studies.

Study abroad programs tend to prioritize giving their students ample free time to explore and experience the city that they are studying in. I will be bringing my Canon DSLR with me to Berlin, and intend to use this free time to photograph the city and continue making films. A major factor in my decision to travel to Germany are the personal connections I have with the country—my grandmother grew up near Berlin, and her remaining family members still live there. In her honor, I've enrolled in two German language courses, and I've begun to explore her memory through my work.

My mother recently discovered some of my family's archived VHS tapes and DVD travel logs that I've begun to digitize. We also have a select few saved voicemails from my grandmother, right before her death. I have started piecing these materials together ([here](#)), and they've inspired me to reflect on my relationship with my family's history. As I have family in Berlin, a fascinating group of women—cousins and their daughters—I fully intend to take advantage of the opportunity to create portraits of them through my films to continue learning through my familial relationships.

In particular, I've recently digitized a few hours of footage from my grandmother's first trip back to Germany after 40 years, since she moved to Canada at age 17. During this trip, she reconnected with her sister, and visited the town where she grew up—and it was all filmed by her husband at the time. From this footage, I've made a short film ([here](#)) in efforts to explore notions of

memory and joy, and themes of sisterhood and relationships, and I intend to create a response to the footage that she has left me while I live in and learn about her home country.

I hope that spending the summer in the country where she grew up will allow her legacy to continue inspiring my work, and I plan to visit the town where she grew up, as well as some of the other spaces that she visited during her trip. I believe that engaging with these spaces—spaces that I have history with, though I have not visited them before, will expand my relationship with history and architecture further, and I intend to document this experience through my artwork.

Understanding where we come from can shape and influence how we face our present in miraculous ways—from a girl’s relationship with her Oma, to a nation’s relationship with its traumatic, gruesome past. Germany presents an incredibly unique case for examining how a past can inform a present. I think that studying how the nation has taken this opportunity to move forward and progress would inform my own work, which is heavily informed by my own identity as someone who experiences navigating spaces which reflect how my presence has historically been unwelcome and prevented. I believe that studying in Berlin, a city whose architecture continues to physically reflect the divisions in their social landscape, will provide me with an unparalleled opportunity to continue exploring the relationship between physical space and human experience.

I’ve included \$1,000 in my budget for “Accessibility Expenses.” This is one of the largest items included in my budget, because accessibility is one of the largest challenges I face when traveling. So often, particularly in European cities, lodging, dining, and transportation options are highly inaccessible. For example, I’m not able to stay at budget-friendly hostels or Airbnbs, rather, I’m often forced to pay to stay in a hotel for accessibility needs. This ends up costing more money, and these expenses are often unpredictable. There are always unexpected costs for me when traveling—for example, I may need to replace my wheelchair charger if the European outlet voltages damage it (over a hundred dollars), or if my wheelchair is damaged in some way, which often happens on flights, I would need to pay for a rental wheelchair (which could also be a few hundred dollars). The inclusion of the \$1,000 for accessibility expenses will allow me to travel to Berlin and participate on field trips and excursions with far fewer worries. If I do not encounter these issues, I will re-route that money for another aspect of my trip, or for purchasing additional art materials.

## **Timeline**

The program begins June 5th and concludes July 28th. It will primarily take place in Berlin, although I intend to travel to nearby destinations as able throughout and after the program.

Throughout the Fall 2018 and Spring 2019 semesters, I will draw from my experiences and materials (photography and film footage) to create my capstone project—a Studio Art project that will also serve as my Global Development Studies thesis. I will also use this time to assemble my Outcome Report and Presentation, which will consist of a description of my experience abroad as well as a presentation of my photographs and/or films.

## Proposed Budget

<b>Budget:</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Housing	\$1,375
Insurance	\$135
Roundtrip Airfare	\$1,950
Museum/Cultural Experience Fare	\$200
Local Transportation	\$200
Meals	\$150
Accessibility Expenses	\$1,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,010</b>

\*I've applied for an additional scholarship to cover the program's tuition.

## Participation in the Arts at UVA

### Studio Art Minor

**Classes taken:** ARTS 2370, ARTS 2372, ARTS 3370, ARTS 3372, DRAM 4590, MUSI 4620, ENCW 2530, MUSI 3570, ARTS 4372

### Extracurricular:

- I am a Lead Digital Media Consultant in the Clemons Digital Media lab, specializing in legacy equipment. Here, I teach patrons how to use video and audio equipment and software, many times for artistic projects.
- I was a participant in the Adrenaline Film Project in the fall of 2016 and 2017.
- I am the Editor-in-Chief of UVA's student-run arts, culture, and fashion magazine, V-Mag. I also act as one of the magazine's lead photographers.
- Each fall since enrolling at UVA, I have helped film the Black Monologues production, as well as promotional materials for the show.
- In the fall of 2016, I designed the sound for a Shakespeare on the Lawn production.
- During the summer of 2016, I was a videographer intern for the UVA Career Center, where I taught myself Adobe AfterEffects and produced promotional materials for the office.

### Art Scholars Participation

I have taken the Art Scholars seminar CASS 1010, and intend to enroll in the seminars throughout my fourth year, given availability in my schedule.