

000- S. 10th St. #2
Philadelphia, PA 19107
xxxxx@sas.upenn.edu
July 13, 20XX

Professor XXXXXXXX
Department of Art and Art History
X University
One X Place
San Antonio, TX 78212

Dear Professor XXXXXXXX,

I am writing to express my interest in the position of assistant professor advertised in the CAA positions listings. I am currently completing my PhD at the University of Pennsylvania in the Department of the History of Art, working with Professor YYYYYYYY. I expect to graduate in May of 20XX.

I read with enthusiasm the description of your available position to teach 19th- and 20th- century architecture and urbanism. It has been my hope to have the opportunity to teach at a liberal arts college; my own undergraduate experience was at Trinity University, and therefore I have experienced first-hand the benefits for students and faculty that are a result of the smaller class sizes, increased individual attention, and the tight-knit community at smaller institutions. My own work to date has focused on the architecture and city planning of the United States and Europe, with a particular emphasis on questions of place, space, and memory.

With the support of a Dissertation Research Grant from the Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst (DAAD), I will be spending the 20XX-20XX academic year in Berlin completing my dissertation, entitled “Capital Building: Anxiety and Memory in Berlin’s *Regierungsviertel*.” My project looks at the buildings that were designed after German reunification for the new capital, specifically the Reichstag, the Chancellery, and the other buildings clustered around Berlin’s Platz der Republik. These new government buildings are charged with an enormous burden that calls upon them to satisfy an international audience with diverse demands. Perhaps unexpectedly, the various pressures placed on the new *Regierungsviertel* have resulted in a set of structures that are less examples of architecture than theoretical statements *about* architecture, employing strategies of transparency and display to cope with Germany’s troubled history.

I will be delivering a paper entitled “Encountering the Uncanny in Daniel Libeskind’s Jewish Museum,” at the Congress of the Comité International d’Histoire de l’Art (CIHA) in Melbourne, Australia this January. In this paper, I address the productive relationship between Libeskind’s building and Freud’s theory of the uncanny, as well as questioning the role of museum architecture in contemporary society. Rather than seeking to edify, elevate, or enlighten the viewer, the architecture of the Jewish Museum is tended to destabilize, disconcert, and upset. This change in affect is typical of contemporary museum

architecture, a result of changing attitudes towards history and how architecture can formally express them.

During my time at the University of Pennsylvania, I have been privileged to have a number of teaching opportunities. I have served as a teaching assistant for a range of classes, including Impressionism, Modern Architecture, and the second half of the department's Visual Media survey course. I have also taught my own class on Modern Architecture. Furthermore, I spent two semesters as a writing instructor for these classes, and spent another year teaching my own writing seminar on Frank Lloyd Wright under the auspices of Penn's Critical Writing Program.

These experiences, particularly the latter, have allowed me to develop my teaching skills and to help students become familiar with and excited about art and architecture. In the classroom, I strive to serve as both a lecturer—someone who communicates key information effectively and engagingly—and a facilitator of conversations among students. I have found that students respond positively to a collaborative classroom environment, where every individual (not just the professor) is accountable for helping others work through our subject matter. I have grounded my teaching thus far in using writing as a cognitive tool, so my classes typically incorporate a number of writing projects, both informal and formal. My hope is that students leave the classroom with not only a working knowledge of our content, but also a honed set of critical thinking skills that they can use throughout their university careers. I would be eager to try similar strategies with your excellent students at X University.

Along with this letter, I include my c.v. and a chapter from my dissertation. Letters of recommendation will arrive to you under separate cover from Professors XXXXX and AAAAA (Department of the History of Art) and Professor LLLLLL (Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures). Please feel free to get in touch with me for any reason; my contact information is included above, and I would be pleased to forward to you any other information that would be helpful.

With warmest regards,

(Signature)