

Lauren Finch

Why I Wish to Study in Rome

When I first applied to the architecture program at the University of Minnesota, I thought I had a complete understanding on what was considered architecture, but thankfully my courses have opened my eyes about the many aspects of design and the impact that the built environment has on people all over the world. Having never traveled outside of the United States before, I know that my preconceptions about what makes a successful design are likely to change due to my exposure to beautiful architecture outside of America. My time spent in the Eternal City will teach me skills on how to see the world through a designer's lens.

At this point in my academic career, I am on track to graduate early, but this comes with the sacrifice of not being able to study abroad for a semester as I've always dreamed of doing. However, when I heard about the Design in Rome Summer Session, I knew that this program would fit perfectly into my schedule, allowing me to go abroad, which was an opportunity that I could not pass up. After years of learning about ancient Roman architecture from within the walls of my classroom, I am excited about the challenge of immersing myself in another culture and having the city of Rome as my classroom. I know that living within walking distance of these famous buildings will be an experience that I will never forget.

I look forward to the Italian Design Studio where we will explore the many ways that design is incorporated into the city. This will be a rigorous studio, but in the end, it will equip me with the skills needed to improve my sketching, a skill needed for the rest of my academic and professional career. Sketching will be a memorable way to document my summer abroad, rather than remembering the many places we visited solely by the pictures taken on my phone. Another

aspect that drew me to this program is the option to pursue an internship. This will allow me to gain valuable design experience in a professional, cross-cultural environment. Additionally, I will be able to include samples of my work from this summer as a unique aspect of my portfolio.

I am so thankful for the opportunity to study abroad and I know that this summer program will provide me with unforgettable memories and experiences. Thank you to the SPQR Fellowship for financially supporting architecture students each year to help make this trip possible. If selected for this generous award, I look forward to being able to share my experiences and work with the SPQR Fellowship in the future.

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The Importance of Drawing as a Way to Investigate Architecture and Urban Space

In today's technology-driven society, I think it is often easy to forget the value of hand drawing in addition to digital drawing. Even as a student, I know that the architectural profession is a competitive field, always with a fast-approaching deadline. This causes my classmates and often myself to go straight to our computers rather than back to the fundamentals of drawing in our sketchbooks. I admit that drawing can be a time-consuming activity, but in the end, nothing compares to this immediate transportation of observations, thoughts, and ideas from one's brain and onto the page.

Last year as a freshman in the Introduction to Architectural Drawing class I was challenged. This course pushed me to start back at the fundamentals of drawing while simultaneously teaching me new skills. Drawing is a process and skill that will only continue to improve with the right mindset, practice, and dedication to advancing my craft. I look forward to doing this in the design studio class while abroad. Furthermore, this studio will provide me with valuable hands-on experience as we visit numerous historic sites and observe them firsthand. Discovering how to effectively communicate my ideas through drawing is a significant aspect of design and a lifelong skill that I can take back home with me.

I have never traveled outside of the U.S. before so I anticipate using drawing as a way of expressing my emotions as I transition to living in this foreign city far from home. Additionally, I will be able to further investigate Roman architecture by making quick sketches of my initial impressions of the spaces. Furthermore, I have the potential to create detailed drawings of my observations that would otherwise go unnoticed in a photograph. Not only will I be able to

visibly see my progress from this summer through my drawings, but they will also give me something tangible to take home to remember this experience. Overall, I am excited to explore Rome with a sketchbook in hand and discover the many ways that design is incorporated into this city.





