

Berlin Program Alumni Panel
at the 42nd Annual GSA Conference in Pittsburg, Sept. 29, 2018, 4:15 – 6 P.M. (Liberty)

**State Building as a Cultural Act: Intersections of Bureaucracy with
Art and Architectural Production in German Regimes, 1815-1989**
(Alumni Panel of the Berlin Program for Advanced German and European Studies)

Moderator: **James Brophy, University of Delaware**

Commentator: **Claire Zimmerman, University of Michigan**

Laura diZerega, University of California at Santa Barbara

"Seen from the Rhine, it will make a fine view": Bureaucracy, Resistance, and Rhenish Church Building under Karl Friedrich Schinkel, 1815-40

Naomi Vaughan, University of Michigan

The Bureaucratic & Photographic Architecture of Nazi Sovereignty: Visualizing State Power in the Neue Reichskanzlei's "Vorräume der Macht"

Candice Hamelin, Freie Universität Berlin

The Support and Development of Art Photography in the German Democratic Republic

In his 2007 study on the bureaucratic workings of the nineteenth-century British Department of Science and Art, architectural historian and theorist Arindam Dutta challenged the continued scholarly "reliance on the avant-garde as the primary archive of shifting aesthetic sensibilities," noting that the omission of state bureaucratic apparatuses in critical inquiries reduced the role of government to "a monolith, where the institutional vectors are portrayed primarily as interference in the aesthetic rather than as foundational to it." Taking up Dutta's call to reconsider government agencies as social actors engaged in consequential artistic and cultural activity, this session will focus on encounters between bureaucratic state apparatuses and art and architectural production during three distinct periods of German history: the Age of Reform and Restoration (1815-48), the Third Reich, and the German Democratic Republic. Sociologist Max Weber viewed bureaucracy as the hallmark of the modern state, describing it as "technically the most advanced means of wielding power in the hands of those who control it." While Weber's emphasis on the disciplining, dominating nature of bureaucratic practices is well established, his view of bureaucracy as inherently top-down, efficient, and rational has given way to more recent scholarly narratives emphasizing negotiation, struggle, resistance, and subtle dialogues of control and rebellion between actors on both sides of administrative operations. John Gillis noted that scholarly work in the 1950s, 60s and 70s had already widened the understanding of bureaucracy to include "both institution and social elite—an elite whose members were participants in a specific political context, acting in and being acted upon by the events of their times." By folding artistic production into the current reading of bureaucracy as a participatory, discursive site of control and contestation, this session will explore (1) how state power sought to harness art and architecture for its legitimacy, and (2) how artists and architects negotiated their relationships with bureaucratic power structures. Across diverse examples of cultural production encompassing early nineteenth-century ecclesiastical architecture in the Prussian Rhineland, the intermedial, monumental architecture of sovereignty in the Third Reich, and art photography in the German Democratic Republic, questions to be considered by the panelists include: how did bureaucratic agencies and actors attempt to direct art and architectural production in support of state goals? How did the arts legitimize state authority and vice versa? Within asymmetrical power relationships, how did artists and architects attempt to negotiate, contest, or work around bureaucratic imperatives? Where is there evidence of collaboration and to what ends? What role is played by the material culture of bureaucracy -- forms, reports, tables, graphics -- and how was such ephemera, as well as images, print, and promotional materials, used in these encounters?