

VIENNA MOSSE LECTURES

Volkstheater Wien, Rote Bar
Fall/Winter 2026/27

Capitalism in Ruins

Thursday, October 8, 2026, 8pm

Yves Marchand & Romain Meffre (Paris):
»THE RUINS OF DETROIT, 20 YEARS ON«

Introduction by Burkhardt Wolf
Moderated by Roland Innerhofer

Thursday, November 12, 2026, 8pm

Eyal Weizman (London):
»CONDITIONS OF LIFE, CALCULATED...«

Moderated by Burkhardt Wolf

Thursday, December 10, 2026, 8pm

Silvia Federici (Hempstead, N.Y.):
»CAPITALISM IN RUINS
AND FEMINIST ALTERNATIVES«

Moderated by Szilvia Gellai

Friday, January 15, 2027, 8pm

Hito Steyerl (Munich):
»RUINS AT SCALE«

Moderated by Sophie Liepold

Admission is free. No reservations required

Directed by
Prof. Dr. Burkhardt Wolf

Co-Organized by
Dr. Szilvia Gellai
Prof. Dr. Roland Innerhofer (emeritus)
Rafael Jakob

Technical Coordination at Volkstheater
Katharina Gerschler

Graphic Design
Sara Lehn

Video Documentation
Fiona Tommasi Schoenfelder

Instagram Content
Nicolas Theuring

Photo: © Sean Doerr



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Stadt Wien

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The Vienna Mosse Lectures are funded by the Mosse Foundation
and the City of Vienna. The series is hosted by the Volkstheater Wien.

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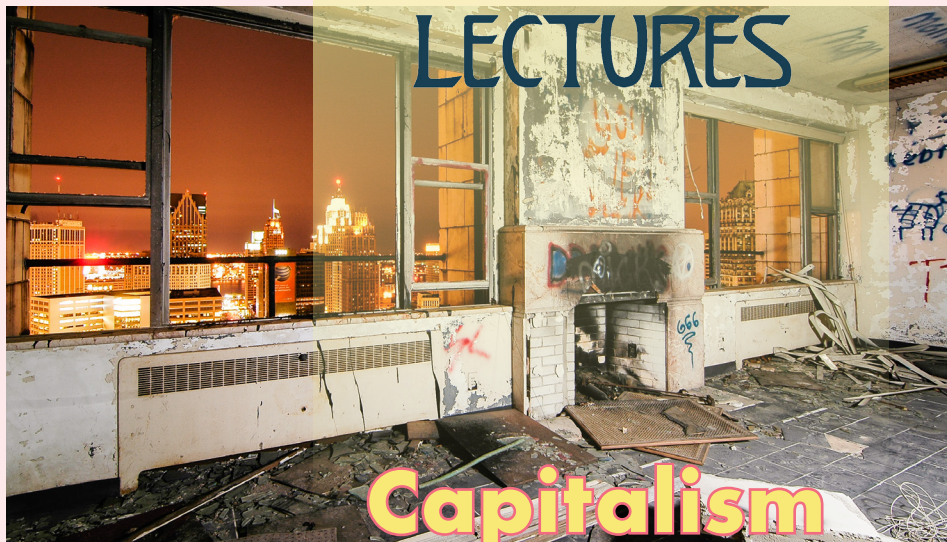


Photo: © Sean Doerr

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Yves Marchand and Romain Meffre are a duo of French photographers working mainly with the view camera on the theme of modern ruins. They seek to draw a portrait of society through its buildings and their transformation.

Their series on the ruins of the city of Detroit, produced between 2005 and 2010 and published by Steidl, brought them to public attention. They returned to the former capital of the automobile in 2024 and 2025 to produce an update of their book and to see how the city and its ruins have evolved over the past twenty years.

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Capitalism has never been afraid of ruins. It develops them: as real estate, as a backdrop, as an investment opportunity. In the logic of “disaster capitalism” (Naomi Klein), the ruin is no limit at all but a supplement, a margin that keeps replenishing itself.

Hence there are at least three readings of the phrase “Capitalism in Ruins”: the utopian hope that the system might finally ruin itself; the daily evidence of its ruinous effects; and the awkward fact that it feeds on them. The Vienna Mosse Lectures 2026/27 ask how “ruination” (Ann Laura Stoler) prepares the ground for enclosure, privatization and deregulation — by shock therapy, by slow decomposition, by the quiet dismantling of social reproduction.

Detroit and Gaza mark the range: on the one hand the photogenic “deindustrial sublime”, whose aesthetic surplus value may as readily expose the accounting behind it as conceal it; on the other the ruin as calculated result, legible only through forensic reconstruction of “de-development” (Sara Roy) and “organized abandonment” (Ruth Wilson Gilmore). And what if ruins are neither empty nor ownerless, but shelter, play, art, “latent commons” (Anna Tsing)? Then rebuilding would mean reparative justice, not another round of project management.