

**Vienna: An Urban and Architectural Center over the Centuries**

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**Syllabus**

Few places have cast such enduring fascination as Vienna in the last 500 years. The grand rival of Paris for splendor and political ambition, this city experienced hyperbolic growth in the age of empire collecting some of the finest expressions of human culture. From music to the performing and fine arts, to architecture, to sciences, Vienna has inspired artistic and scientific experiments of profound consequences in Western civilization. This course delves into the glorious urban and architectural history to the present day of one of the most prominent capitals.

**Lesson 1. FROM ITS ROMAN FOUNDATION TO THE RENAISSANCE**

This opening talk covers a vast historical period starting from Roman times all the way to the Renaissance. Architecturally, however, it is its Gothic age that will leave a profound mark in the city. Prominently amongst all its enduring structures is St. Stephens Cathedral, located in the absolute center of old Vienna. The cultural orbit of the city has remained Germanic throughout the centuries, triggering reciprocal influences in the major centers in Central Europe. Vienna's membership into the North-Eastern European cluster of kingdoms, before they were nations explains the urban and architectural culture of one of the most important cities on the Danube River.

**Lesson 2. VIENNA: FROM FISCHER VON ERLACH TO THE 19<sup>th</sup> CENTURY.**

The Baroque period was a time of splendor for Vienna. The visionary of its iconography was the architect Fischer Von Erlach, whose landmarks defined the rise of the city on the European stage. His Schönbrunn Palace, Karlskirche, and the Austrian National Library are his most renown works in the capital. But as Vienna grew in political and economic importance, its rapid territorial expansion led to the demolition of the 13<sup>th</sup> century fortifications that surrounded its historical center. As a result, the Ringstrasse was born, one of the most celebrated public spaces across Europe, comparable in scale to what Hausmann did in Paris in the same decades.

**Lesson 3. Guest Speaker: RAYMOND NEUTRA**

Raymond is the third son of the Viennese-born famed architect Richard Neutra (1892-1970). Since his retirement as an epidemiologist, he has been rediscovering the cultural roots that sustained his father throughout his life. Neutra's direct relationship with pioneer modernists Otto Wagner and Adolf Loos, to name a few, as well as his friendship with one of Sigmund Freud's children making of Richard a routine presence in the household of the father of psychoanalysis will be some of topics that his lecture will expound on. Through his personal quest to understand how the Vienna of the fin-de-

siecle leading the collapse of the Habsburg Empire and the ensuing revolution in the arts, sciences, and humanities in the Austrian capital propelled Neutra's output among the most notable achievements of 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture, Raymond will convey the extraordinary vitality of the modernity of Vienna, a metropolis without cultural limits.

**Lesson 4. VIENNA TODAY: RECENT TRENDS IN ARCHITECTURE**

In this closing lecture, an overview of the latest production will be surveyed. However, Vienna's contemporary scene has roots in the revolutionary propositions generated in the 1970s, when architects such as Hans Hollein and Wolf D. Prix, founder of the famous office Coop Himmelblau, assertively bursted onto the scene with highly provocative projects. Following a decisive post-modernist phase, Vienna's architectural circles have embraced hypermodernity to express their currency in the field. Practices such as Delugan Meissl Associated Architects (DMAA), Share Architects, and Sohne & Partner Architects, to name a few, are redefining the city's skyline.