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Title: Factoring the Adjoint and modules over the generic determinant

Abstract: I'll talk about joint work with Ragnar-Olaf Buchweitz, inspired by the following question of G. Bergman: "Can one factor the classical adjoint of a generic matrix?". This unassuming (and not terribly motivated) question has unexpected connections to topology, representation theory, and commutative algebra. I'll describe some of these connections, focusing on the connection with the theory of matrix factorizations (a.k.a. maximal Cohen-Macaulay modules).