

# MLL Bellini Colloquium: Stabilizing Portraits: Arab Photography in the Ottoman Era

Professor Stephen Sheehi

March 26, 3:30pm

Washington Hall 315

This presentation argues that indigenously produced photography of turn of the century Arab world operated conterminously on “manifest” and “latent” levels; on a level that interpellates subjects and interpolates them into a “modern” Ottoman-Arab vision of social order, and on a level that contains the photograph’s displaced history that makes the manifest level legible. This presentation examine how the portrait during the 19th century *al-nahdah al-‘arabiyah* (otherwise known, in English, as the “Arab Renaissance”) mediated and stabilized social and economic transformations in the Arab world, enacting a local (class, national, gendered, and individualized) subject, necessary for “social reform” and the establishment of localized capitalist order.

