

Chris Peimann  
Dir. of Marketing and Publicity  
[cpeimann@thesheldon.org](mailto:cpeimann@thesheldon.org)  
Ph: 314-533-9900 ext. 19

Olivia Lahs-Gonzales  
Sheldon Art Galleries Director  
[olg@thesheldon.org](mailto:olg@thesheldon.org)  
314-533-9900 ext. 31



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 13, 2018

## THE SHELDON ART GALLERIES TO OPEN EXHIBIT DOCUMENTING ANCIENT PALMYRA

ST. LOUIS, MO - The Sheldon Art Galleries presents *Bride of the Desert: An Exploration of Palmyra*, March 2 – April 21, 2018 in the Gallery of Photography. **An opening reception is scheduled for Friday, March 2 from 5 – 7 p.m.** and the galleries will be open until 9 p.m. for First Fridays in Grand Center. The Sheldon Art Galleries are open Tuesdays, Noon – 8 p.m.; Wednesdays - Fridays, Noon – 5 p.m.; Saturdays, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. and one hour prior to Sheldon performances and during intermission. Admission is free. For more information on exhibitions, visit the galleries' website at [TheSheldon.org](http://TheSheldon.org). *The exhibition is made possible by Yvette and John Dubinsky with additional support from Christner, Inc.; Jeremy Hinton and Barbara and Arthur McDonnell; and in-kind support from Olin Library Special Collections, Washington University in St. Louis.*



### **Gallery Talk: Tuesday, March 13, 2018, 6 p.m.**

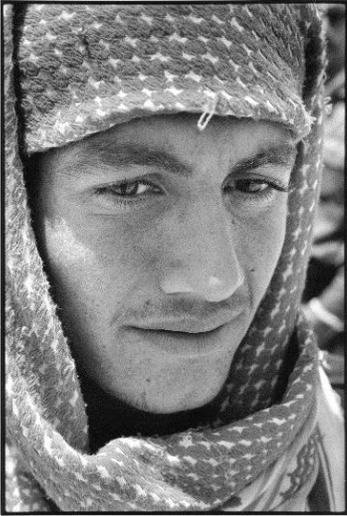
*Ancient Palmyra: Oasis to Empire*, Dr. Michael Fuller, Professor Emeritus, St. Louis Community College, Board Member, Archaeological Institute of America, St. Louis chapter and co-director of American archaeological expedition to Tell Tuneinir, Syria (1986-2001). Introduction by David R. Hanlon. Admission free. Reservations are suggested but not required. Contact Paula Lincoln at 314-533-9900 or [plincolin@TheSheldon.org](mailto:plincolin@TheSheldon.org).

*Bride of the Desert: An Exploration of Palmyra*, curated by historian, educator and photographer David R.

Hanlon, presents descriptions and interpretations of the Palmyrene ruins from the mid-1700s to the beginning of the 21st century through 49 engravings and photographs created by artists, photojournalists, travelers and archaeologists from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. Artists in the exhibit include Sandra Auger, Félix Bonfils, Howard C. Butler, Michael J. Fuller, Frank Mason Good, John Henry Haynes, Louis Vignes, David Hanlon, Don McCullin, Kristen Peterson, Omar Sanadiki and others. Palmyra's allure is reflected in these records, which celebrate its grandeur before its recent destruction. Once a thriving caravan city of the Roman frontier during the 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries C.E., Palmyra contained an array of temples, colonnaded streets, theatres and commercial areas. Today the city, now in war-torn Syria, has been almost completely destroyed by ISIS.

MORE...

In addition to the original photographs and prints, 3-D motion graphics and virtual reality representations of the site have been prepared by local designers and will bring viewers into closer contact with the character of the city and its structures.



**Complementary Exhibit:**

*Faces of the Lost*, on view in the Ann Lee and Wilfred Konneker Gallery on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, is a series of portraits of Syrian citizens taken by curator David R. Hanlon. Of these, Hanlon writes “The war that has engulfed Syria over the last seven years has created an incalculable toll on families throughout the country. Displacement and death has visited every ethnic group and social level, often destroying connections to areas of land or regions where members have lived and worked for hundreds of years. This loss was especially felt in the rural areas of eastern and northern Syria, the places where the Islamic State militants first entered the country to create a stronghold. These portraits represent members of families who, for several generations, had raised animals and cultivated the land along the Khabur River in the northeastern province of Hassake.”

Hanlon photographed in Syria over a period of ten summers and made hundreds of images of their way of life and the ties between extended families. The members of the Diab and Hammid clans were especially involved with this project, allowing Hanlon access to their home life, family gatherings and special occasions. The current fate of these individuals, and their proud families, is unknown.

The not-for-profit Sheldon Art Galleries exhibits works by local, national and international artists in all media. Over 6,000 square feet of the galleries’ spaces on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor are permanently devoted to rotating exhibits of photography, architecture, music art and history, and children’s art. A sculpture garden, seen from both the atrium lobby and the connecting glass bridge, features periodic rotations and installations, and the Nancy Spirtas Kranzberg Gallery on the lower level features art of all media. The Sheldon actively supports the work of St. Louis artists in all mediums and features a dedicated gallery with museum-quality exhibits by St. Louis artists, past and present.

Financial Assistance to the Galleries are provided by the Missouri Arts Council, a state agency and by the Regional Arts Commission and the Arts and Education Council.

# # #

**Image Caption:** Bonfils studio (Fr., active 1867-1907), *Palmyre. Colonnade du temple du Soleil*. ca. 1875-78, albumen print. 21.1 x 27.4 cm, collection of David R. Hanlon.

**Image Caption 2:** David R. Hanlon, *Hamed Said*, 1992, gelatin silver print, 9 x 6 inches, courtesy of and © David R. Hanlon.