

**LYDIA HARRINGTON**

[lharrin@bu.edu](mailto:lharrin@bu.edu) | [lydia-harrington.com](http://lydia-harrington.com) | 857.488.2878

*Curator and researcher with expertise in project management, community engagement & public programming*

**Research, Archival, and Curatorial Consultant, Boston, MA**

Jan 2024 – present

- Dance Elixir Live: archiving video and photograph archive of performance art: inventory, storage, creating metadata, and making files publicly accessible through an online database
- Arab American National Museum: for an upcoming exhibition on Arab Massachusetts: contributing historical research, connecting with exhibition and program venues in Boston, on the exhibition advisory board
- Al-Bustan Seeds of Culture: consultant on the Philly Arab History Project including grant applications

**Senior Curator, The Syria Museum | Syrian American Council, Boston, MA and Washington, DC**

June 2023 – February 2024

- Established The Syria Museum, a new initiative focusing on Syrian cultural heritage and the Syrian diaspora, constituting a virtual museum and traveling, thematic pop-up exhibitions
- Project management: researched and implemented a strategic plan, developed a collections policy, acquired and photographed objects, and kept object information organized in a digital database with back up
- Communications: created and maintained a network of partner organizations and followers through research and outreach
- Budget: created and worked within a \$50,000 budget and applied for arts and cultural grants
- Formed an advisory committee of experts in museums and cultural heritage that met quarterly

**Co-creator, Researcher, and Curator, Boston's Little Syria - <https://bostonlittlesyria.org>, Boston, MA**

Feb 2020 – present

- Exhibitions: planned, designed and wrote labels for, obtained loans for, and installed exhibitions at MIT (2022-2023), Massachusetts Historical Society (2023), and UMass Boston (2024)
- Collections development: created and maintain multimedia archive of primary and secondary sources and physical objects from national and local archives and libraries, local Arab organizations, and private individuals
- Research: at the National Archives, City of Boston archives, university collections, and private collections (e.g., churches, families)
- Mentorship: recruiting, training, and managing high school, college, and adult interns and volunteers
- Communications: have built a network of over 200 individuals and institutions for collaboration and marketing
- Community engagement: have given 12 neighborhood walking tours to various groups including university and high school students to a total of 300 people; recruiting and training tour guides
- Created a publicly accessible, interactive digital map with a grant from Boston Public Library
- Public speaking: invited lecture at MIT, Massachusetts Historical Society, and University of San Francisco

**Post-Doctoral Fellow, Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, Massachusetts Institute of Technology**

Sept 2022 – May 2023

- Edited book project on modern architecture and urbanism, gave a talk on it, and had article on it accepted to a peer-reviewed journal
- Coursework in ArcGIS, Python, Latex, R, and GitHub
- Gave a guest lecture at Wellesley College on modern architecture and urbanism in Turkey

**PhD Candidate, Boston University, Boston, MA**

Sept 2014 – Mar 2022

- Museum work: Curatorial Research Assistant at the MIT Museum; gallery tour guide at the MFA Boston; Collections Assistant Internship at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, paid through a competitive grant
- Extensive research in archives, libraries, architectural sites in Turkey, Lebanon, the UK, and the US
- Completed a 200+ page dissertation project on architecture and urbanism in the modern Middle East
- Recipient of fellowships, scholarships, & grants totaling over \$150,000 through BU and outside organizations
- Instructor of Record for "Islamic Art and Architecture" in 2016 and 2019 – lecturing, advising, grading
- Research Assistant to three professors in preparing books and articles for publication

## SELECTED TALKS

---

- “Boston’s Little Syria: Doing Digital / Public History,” at *Ottoman Diasporas of New England* symposium, Brandeis University, December 8, 2023
- “Peddlers, Acrobats, and Bootleggers: An Urban Geography of Boston’s Little Syria,” with Chloe Bordewich, Emine Bustani Middle East Seminar, MIT, November 7, 2023
- “Art? Craft? Industry? Education and Emerging Discourses of Creation in the Late Ottoman Empire,” Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting, Montreal, November 4, 2023
- “Syrian American Digital Public History Projects,” Middle East Librarians Association Annual Meeting, McGill University, November 1, 2023
- Panel participant at Syrian Heritage Archive Project International Networking Meeting focusing on reconstruction of Aleppo, Pergamonmuseum, Berlin, September 27-28, 2023

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

---

- “Walking Boston’s Little Syria: Public History from the Ottoman Empire to Urban Renewal” with Chloe Bordewich, in *Arab American Public History*, ed. Edward Curtis IV (under contract with Temple University Press, expected 2025)
- “‘Improve and Reform Them’: Creating Citizenship and Crafts in the Vocational School of Late Ottoman Baghdad,” forthcoming in *Muqarnas: An Annual on the Visual Cultures of the Islamic World*
- “Boston’s Little Syria: The Rise and Fall of a Diasporic Neighborhood” / “Suriya al-Saghira fi Bustan: Qissat Hayy ‘Wulida Abna’uhu Tujjaran” [English/Arabic], with Chloe Bordewich, *Al-Jumhuriya*, November 12, 2022

## EDUCATION

---

<b>Postdoc</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>MIT</b> , Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture
<b>PhD</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>Boston University</b> , History of Art & Architecture (Islamic and modern focus)
<b>MA</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>University of Washington</b> , Near Eastern Languages and Civilization
<b>BA</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Hampshire College</b> , Middle Eastern Studies, Art and Architectural History

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

---

Historians of Islamic Art Association, Middle East Studies Association, American Curators of Asian Art, Middle East Librarians Association, Society of Architectural Historians

## SKILLS

---

Exhibition curating and installation, object handling and repair, object accessioning, program and project management, research, data management, leadership, mentoring, community outreach, public programs, grant writing, budgeting, analytical writing, donor relations, Asana, Canva, Adobe Suite, WordPress, Microsoft Office

## LANGUAGES (in order of proficiency)

---

English, Turkish, French, Arabic (Standard, Levantine), Spanish, Persian