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The Omani School of Arabic Language and Literature

As part of the World Arabic Language Day celebrations which took place last month on 8th December, the National Museum's Director General, Jamal al-Moosawi, as well as the Head of Curatorial Unit, Moza al-Wardi, take a look at contributions in Arabic language by Omani scholars. (With photography by Saleh al-Ruzaqi/The National Museum).

Oman: A culture of literary vigour

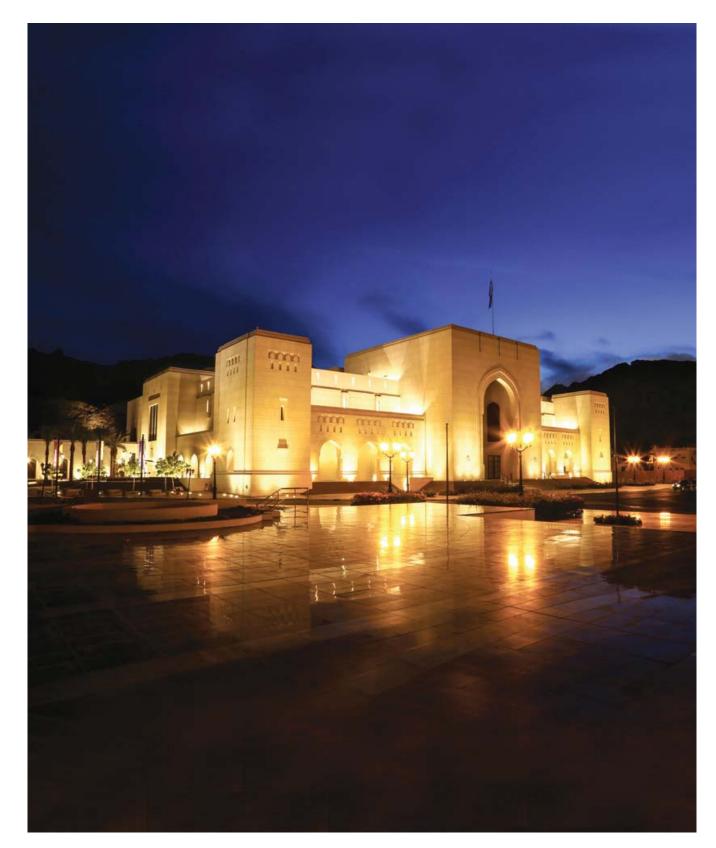
Since the earliest days of Islam, Oman has been characterized by a culture of literary vigour. Oman's Abu Abd ar-Rahmān al-Khalīl bin Ahmad al-Farahīdī (100–170 AH/718–786 CE) was one of the earliest Arab lexicographers and philologists, and his book Kitab al-Ayn is regarded as the first dictionary of the Arabic language.

Al-Farahīdī introduced the current standard for vowel marks (harakat) and was an innovator of prosody (al-orūdh), the science of language relating to the rhythms and patterns of sound in poetry. Poetry has traditionally enjoyed a special status in Oman. Many of the early sultans and imams were poets. Sultan Suleiman bin Suleiman bin Mudaffar an-Nabhani wrote a famous book of

love and war poems and the Yaruba imams were well known for their encouragement of poets and poetry. Today, Oman's literary culture is flourishing under the rule of the al-Busaid Dynasty, and the widespread publishing of manuscripts is inspiring new generations of authors and poets throughout the Sultanate.

al-Khithawi Collection (Diwan al-Khithawi)

Author: Musa bin Husain bin Shawwal al-Husaini (12th c AH/18th c CE)
Transcriber: Sa'ad bin Abdullah bin Said al-Hinai (Oman)
Materials: Ink and opaque watercolour on paper
Period: 29 Shawwal 1163 AH/30 September 1750 CE (al-Busaid Dynasty)



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The National Museum is open daily from 10:00am – 5:00pm (except on Fridays 2:00pm – 6:00pm). The ticket desk closes half an hour before the Museum's closing times.