

Drama Festival

College of Arts & Sciences

For the first time in its history, the University organized a Drama Festival during the academic year 2017-2018. The College of Arts and Sciences organized it jointly with the Students activities. Ms. Hajer Nahdi (DFL) supervised the organization of this week-long activity, encompassing dramatic performances and academic presentations. Students and Faculty showed great creativity in this festival, which proved to be a great success, both culturally and academically.

I. Performances

A good few performances took place in the campus. The most noticeable was no doubt the German play performed by the students in German language, directed by Ms. Hajer Nahdi and Ms. Tanja Kaschinski-Arafeh. A crowded audience was very impressed by the performance of students.

The play is written by German post-war dramaturg Wolfgang Borchert. It was first studied in Ms. Hajer's class, and the student's enthusiasm for the text encourages her to transform it into a stage performance, which became the core of the German drama club.



Thirteen students made this dream come true. They managed every aspects of this theatrical performance. They participated in the writing of the script, costume design, make up, lighting, set and sound design. Eight students, seven female and one male, performed on stage during one hour and a half.

Different German teachers and students from other Omani institutions attended the performance. Goethe Institute's director, Lena Schwerdetner, said she was impressed by the language level of CAS' students.

The eight students Arwa Alghaferi, Soad Al Busaidi, Yumna Al Habsi, Sulaiman Alhajri, Athra Al Mabsali, Maria Alfarsi, Zainab Al Blushi and Mariam Al Blushi performed on stage for the first time. However they acted like professionals. The main actress, Arwa Al Ghaferi, memorized an entire script containing more than 6000 word in German with high commitment and incredible discipline.



The preparation took more than five months and was designed for the first Drama Festival at the University of Nizwa.

II. Academic Workshop

On top of the performance, the College presented a Workshop on drama studies, spread out on different venues during one week. Many faculty members and graduate students delivered papers in Arabic and in English, on theater and dramatic problematics. Here are the highlights.

Theatre in Middle Eastern History: Egyptian theatre through the 19th and 20th centuries.

Raymond J Petersen, DFL

Mr. Ray sought an explanation of why Egyptian theatre has not developed apace. It also tried to identify the conscious awakening of Arabic dramatic performance during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The paper concerned itself with ancient history and terminologies, with the more recent Middle East regional history of drama and sought an understanding of the reasons for the place in society today, of the dramatic and performance arts, and their relationship to the contemporary lifestyles of young Arab/Middle Eastern people.





The use of Drama in language teaching and acquisition

Mr. Tammy Monono, *DFL*

Mr. Tammy delivered a paper which investigated the extent of the Drama's effectiveness in language teaching. In light of this, he started with the question of how the brain processes new information delivered through drama. Likewise, he investigated how drama can be used to enhance learning, memory, retention and subsequent appropriate use of the new language?

Teaching drama in an EFL Class: Some Strategies

Prof. Abraham Panavelil Abraham, *DFL*

Prof Abraham tried to examine the use of drama in a class where English is taught as a foreign language. Its opening part looked at the importance of teaching language through literature and argues that the context and form of a literary work like drama arouse a lot of interest in meaningful use of that medium. The paper further discussed the role of the teacher who supports the students' efforts to establish intensive relationship with the dramatic text without interfering too much in their act of creating meaning.



Digital innovative script writing tools for drama, screenplay, and films through Celtx application.

Mr. Ravindra R Dharamshi, *DMPS*

The Objective of Mr. Ravindra was to examine the Celtx digital script writing tools as pre-production application, Celtx been constructive for media projects like drama, theatre act, screenplays, stage show, films and much more.

The paper intended to guide and craft awareness in media field students and user for exploring the Celtx environments effectively for their pre-production process.

Molière in Nizwa, why and how teach classical French drama to Omani students

Dr Guillaume Thouroude, CAS Assistant Dean for Research and Graduate Studies; DFL, French section.

Dr. Guillaume explained how to teach 17th Century Drama through Molière's comedies in the context of an Omani university. He underlined that there are many aspects in the life and work of Molière which resonate in Omani society today such as the fact that education of women is taken seriously; religion is central in family life, marriage is fundamental in society values, etc. This resemblance seems to attract the attention of young students, feed their curiosity and motivate them to read more.



Alf Laila w Laila and the Arabic Drama *Prof. Salah Al Din Boujeh, DAL*

Prof. Salah Aldin Boujah delivered a paper which investigated the history of Arabic Drama. He underlined the influence of the famous *One Thousand and One Nights* on the Arabic Drama and the different adaptations of this for the stage.



Interconnection of Arts in the Theatre *Prof. Mohamed Ghazi, University of Nizwa, CAS: DAL*

This paper explored the theater as the place of encounter of different types of arts. Indeed, drama cannot be seen as an art form beside other forms, but the unification and the enhancement of all the arts put together in a totalizing experience and expression.



The modern Omani Drama,

Ahmad bin Said Alizki, DAL

This paper explored the development of the Omani drama scene and shared his own experience in the drama stage. He underlined the important progress of the Omani drama and the State as an important element of the national culture. He presented an overview of the different Omani theater groups. He discussed further the importance of the students drama activities.

Students presentations

The most special participation in terms of conferences came from Master students who are at the last stages of their thesis in TESOL and focusing on drama's role in the teaching of English as a foreign language. They delivered two papers based on their current research. Both young researchers experienced for the first time the presentation of a paper in an academic event and were very thankful for the opportunity that the university offered to them.

a) Malek Nasser AL-Qanoobi

Malek, supervised by Dr. Serge Gabarre and Dr. Chahrazed Mirza, delivered a paper on *the Effectiveness of Readers' Theatre on Omani Learners' Reading Motivation*. This study explored the effect of repeated reading habits and Reader's Theatre on the reading motivation of Omani 9th grades male students. The research aimed to discover if Reader's Theatre had any effect on Omani learners' motivation to read. This effectiveness was evaluated through a quasi-experimental research design.

b) Manal Ali Saif AL Khaldi

Manel, supervised by Dr. Cecile Gabarre and Dr. Chaharazed Mirza, delivered a paper on *Teaching young learners reading with Jolly Phonics*. The paper presents results from a case study investigating the implementation of the *Jolly Phonics* program in a school in Oman. Findings from this case study highlight the benefits of *Jolly Phonics* and provide recommendations regarding *Jolly Phonics* in teaching young learners reading.

