

Cultural Treasures from the Caves of Dhofar: Photographs of the Painted Rock Art Heritage of Southern Oman

20 Feb 10:00 - 03 Mar 16:00

Sultan Qaboos Cultural Center, 1100 16th St NW



Sultan Qaboos Cultural Center grant recipient Dr. William Zimmerle has spent more than two years documenting the cave inscriptions of Dhofar as part of a digital humanities preservation project in the Sultanate. Protected by the natural environment, the inscriptions are remarkably well-preserved, and give us an unprecedented glimpse into Oman's early history. The inscriptions extend from the coastal plain to the Rub' Al Khali desert, and to the Jebel Qara mountains at the beginning of the famed incense trail where the history of frankincense began. The rock art of the Dhofari mountains, painted in red and black, tentatively date to at least the late first millennium B.C., and depict animals indigenous to the local landscape, as well as hunting and battle scenes, anthropomorphic stick and dressed figures, dhows and other ships, narratives of pastoral life, and ritual emblems invoking protection inside cave shelters above the wadis.