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VCUQatar Gallery Presents ‘Confluence: Photographic-based Work from the Contemporary Middle East’

Doha, Qatar – The Gallery at Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar is pleased to present ‘Confluence: Photographic-based Work from the Contemporary Middle East,’ an exhibition that brings together for the first time in Qatar the work of Atfal Ahdath, George Awde and Ali Cherri. The exhibition is scheduled from November 5 to December 24, 2014 with an opening reception and panel discussion on Wednesday, November 5 at 6:00 pm at the Gallery at VCUQatar. The event is open to the public.

The photograph is part of everyday life around the world and is used as a medium to preserve fleeting moments of the mundane, the personal, and the intimate, as well as the monumental, the global and the public. This exhibition of contemporary photography and video installation from across the Middle East demonstrates this thematic diversity. Beyond this, however, it also explores the medium itself – the richness of possibilities, directions and journeys that are open to the artist who uses photography in its broadest sense as a starting point or confluence in his/her work. “Confluence has been a hugely exciting show to curate,” says Exhibitions and Speaker Curator Caitlin Doherty. “Each of the artists use their medium in new and dynamic ways, and explore themes that are relevant to them personally but also to society in a broader sense. In this way they invite us to participate in conversations, and prompt us to challenge previously held notions of what photography is and what it can be.”

George Awde, featured artist and assistant professor of photography at VCUQatar, adds, “It’s an exciting time for photography in Doha - and across the region. This exhibition is a great opportunity to challenge notions of the medium here at VCUQatar. It’s also about bringing the broader community into this conversation of the possibilities of photo based practices across disciplines.”

‘Confluence: Photographic-based Work from the Contemporary Middle East’ will be exhibited in the Gallery at VCUQatar from November 5 to December 24, 2014, with an opening reception and panel discussion on November 5 at 6:00 pm. The event is open to the public. For more information, please visit www.qatar.vcu.edu or email VCUQatar Exhibitions and Speaker Curator Caitlin Doherty at cmdoherty@vcu.edu.

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Note to Editors:

Ali Cherri:

Born in Beirut in 1976, Ali Cherri is a visual artist working with video, installation, performance, multimedia and print. He recently participated in Southern Panorama, VideoBrasil, São Paulo (2013), States in Time, a film screening program at Tate Modern, London (2013), Toronto International Film Festival – TIFF, (2013), International Film Festival Berlinale, Berlin (2013), Film Festival Rotterdam (2013), Mapping Subjectivity at MoMa, NY (2012), the Doha Film Festival (2012), and Dégagements at Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris (2012).

Atfal Ahdath:

Atfal Ahdath is a Beirut based artist collective founded by Vartan Avakian, Hatem Imam and Raed Yassin in 2011. Its work has been exhibited at the 10th Sharjah Biennial, United Arab Emirates (2011), Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan (2012), Sultan Gallery, Kuwait City, Kuwait (2012), Wallach Art Gallery, New York, USA (2012) Gezira Art Center, Cairo, Egypt (2013) and The Running Horse, Karantina, Lebanon (2012).

George Awde:

George Awde is an assistant professor of photography at Virginia Commonwealth University in Doha, Qatar and co-director of marra.tein, a residency and research initiative in Beirut. He received his BFA in painting from Massachusetts College of Art (2004) and his MFA in photography from Yale University's School of Art (2009). He was recently awarded a Fulbright US Scholar Grant to Egypt (2012-2013) and in 2015 he will be an artist in residence at Light Work in Syracuse, New York. Awde's work has been exhibited widely, including his third solo exhibition, 'His Passing Cover,' which was exhibited in 2014 as part of the 15th FotoFest International Biennial in Houston, Texas.

About Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar:

VCUQatar is the Qatar campus of the prestigious Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Richmond, Virginia. Established in 1998 through a partnership with Qatar Foundation, VCUQatar offers students the opportunity to earn a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in fashion design, graphic design, interior design and painting & printmaking, a Bachelor of Arts degree in art history and a Master of Fine Arts degree in design studies.

In addition to a comprehensive annual public events program that includes a wide range of exhibitions, lectures and fashion events, the University hosts the biennial international design conference Tasmeem and the biennial Hamad bin Khalifa Islamic Art Symposium, attracting globally recognized designers, artists and scholars while fostering sustainable, university-community partnerships that enhance the educational, economic and cultural vitality of Qatar. For more information please visit www.qatar.vcu.edu

Qatar Foundation – Unlocking Human Potential

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development is a private, non-profit organization that is supporting Qatar on its journey from carbon economy to knowledge economy by unlocking human potential for the benefit of not only Qatar, but the

world. Founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Amir of Qatar, QF is chaired by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser.

QF carries out its mission through three strategic pillars: education, science and research, and community development. QF's education pillar brings world-class universities to Qatar to help create an education sector in which young people can develop the attitudes and skills required for a knowledge economy. Meanwhile, its science and research pillar builds Qatar's innovation and technology capacity by developing and commercialising solutions through key sciences. Finally, its community development pillar helps foster a progressive society while also enhancing cultural life, protecting Qatar's heritage and addressing immediate social needs in the community.