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VCUQatar Opens Tasmeem Doha 2015

Doha, Qatar – Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar in partnership with the Qatar Foundation launched its biennial art and design conference Tasmeem Doha 2015 on Sunday, 8 March 2015. Tasmeem Doha 2015: ‘3ajeeb!’ is open to the public and takes place at VCUQatar until 12 March, with presentations on Tuesday 2 – 5 pm, Wednesday 1 – 8 pm and Thursday 3 -7 pm. Please see the schedule for more details (<http://www.tasmeemdoha.com/schedule>).

The 2015 edition of Tasmeem Doha focuses on the theme of ‘playfulness’ as expressed by the Arabizi word 3ajeeb! (ahh-jhee-b) meaning “strange in a strange way, cool in a cool way, and slightly weird in a slightly weird way.” Tasmeem Doha 3ajeeb! will foster discussions on playful processes as a creative practice to generate new knowledge, technologies and discoveries.

The first morning of the conference saw participants of the various workshops being briefed about the projects. The 3ajeeb! studios feature 26 workshops led by multidisciplinary artists, designers, architects, performers and musicians. They include: Making Animated Gifs In Fashion; Robots With Character; Turning the Tables on Table Tennis; The Nomadic Doll; Magic stories for the Wonder Box; Phonotropia!; Tokyo to Doha, 3D Print Exchange; Praesentia: Drawing and Code; Arabic Script Light Calligraphy; Now That’s A Zine!; The Moneychanger; Floating Architecture; Mechanisms of Delightful Interaction; Touch the Sound; Upcycling Punch-Card Knitting Machines; Face-Painted People; The House That Knew Too Much; So, What Are You Going To Shoot?; Bamboo Bike Building; Atypical Type; Heya ... Origami!; They Promised Us Jetpacks; Hole in One: Exquisite Corpse Mini-Golf; DIY Battle of the Bands; marionetteKINECT and Portrait Machine. Participation in the 3-day workshops is limited to faculty, students, and select guests.

The studio part of the day came to a close with the opening address by Pors & Rao, a Bangalore-based Indo-Danish art duo, making sculptures and installations that often involve mechanical movement and responsive behaviors. Pors & Rao are particularly interested in the involuntary aspects of human behavior - of what lies outside our knowledge and control.

This was followed by a conversation with special guests, legendary fashion designer and master couturier Valentino Garavani and Honorary President of the Valentino Fashion House, Giancarlo Giammetti. Valentino and Giammetti opened their session with a video presentation of the Valentino Garavani Virtual Museum, a digital fashion experience



showcasing five decades of fashion history. The museum, a downloadable application that uses real time 3D technology, let's visitors explore, in-depth, not just the house's archive, but also Valentino's captivating back story.

Moderated conversations with Valentino and Giammetti, led by VCUQatar Fashion Design Chair Sandra Wilkins, followed the screening, and touched upon the concept of the virtual museum, as well as Valentino's amazing professional and personal insights into the world of couture fashion. Following the conversation, members of the audience, including students, participated in a Q&A session.

"We are grateful to Qatar Foundation for providing such an extraordinary opportunity to our students," says VCUQatar Dean Allyson Vanstone. "It was a once in a lifetime event, and Mr. Valentino and Mr. Giammetti were truly delightful and generous guests."

Notes to editors

Tasmeem Doha 2015: '3ajeeb!' brings together leading designers, artists and creative thinkers, and features several distinct programs that coalesce into five days of workshops, presentations, performances and exhibitions.

The 3ajeeb! studios are 26 workshops lead by international artists, designers, musicians, writers and playful thinkers (8 to 10 March). In addition, a select group of workshop leaders will discuss their creative praxis in short-format presentations during the afternoon "Shawarma" sessions.

Tasmeem Doha 2015 features a unique partnership with the Barcelona based post-digital culture festival OFFF, which curated the Day OFFF on 11 March, showcasing speakers, performances and presentations from fresh, young, fun, contemporary creative thinkers.

The conference will wrap up with the Festival Day on 12 March. Attendees can play an artist mini-golf course, engage in playful performances, enjoy tasty treats, interact with exhibitions, and purchase goods from local artists, designers and creative makers.

The closing event will feature filmmaker and social media phenomenon, Casey Neistat, who lands in Doha and leaps onto the stage for a one night speaking performance on 12 March at 6 pm. For more detailed information please visit www.tasmeemdoha.com.

The event supports Qatar Foundation's mission to unlock human potential through the development of world-class talent in Art and Design, and will also allow the wider public to observe at first hand the latest global developments in this field.

**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.

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, academics and thinkers 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 (QF) 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, the Father Emir, QF is chaired by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser.

QF's work encompasses education, research and community development. World-class universities are brought to Qatar to help create an education sector in which young people can develop the attitudes and skills required for a knowledge economy. At the same time, QF builds Qatar's innovation and technology capacity by developing and commercializing solutions through key sciences. The Foundation also works to foster a progressive society while enhancing cultural life, protecting Qatar's heritage and addressing immediate social needs in the community. For a complete list of QF's initiatives and projects, visit <http://www.qf.org.qa>