

VCUQatar's 2013 Summer Program a hit with students

Doha, Qatar – Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar's July Summer Art and Design Community Classes by noted local and international instructors, for students aged 4 and above, were a great success with the students.

The three-week Design Intensive course for students 16 and above had students explore traditional art media, digital media and photography as part of portfolio development. They also created individual projects related to fashion, interiors, graphics, painting & printmaking and art history; and participated in museum and gallery visits with presentations by practicing artists. The 26 students, of which 14 were Qatari, exhibited their work to family and friends on 18 July at VCUQatar.

Creative Discovery, a two-week course targeting students aged 13-15, introduced them to art and design through classes in painting, drawing, illustrating, printing, and using computer graphics programs as well as creativity exercises, and group activities. This class of 24 students (17 Qatari) jointly exhibited their final work with students from the Design Intensive course.

This summer, VCUQatar also offered opportunities for younger students, hosting week-long classes – two Art Exploration classes for 8 to 10 and 11 to 12 year olds; and Art Fun classes for students aged four to seven. 27 students (seven Qatari) in the Art Exploration class explored a variety of media - drawing, painting, collage, experimentation with different art materials, and exhibited their work on 11 and 18 July. The 12 youngest students (four Qatari) in the Art Fun class transformed the Gallery into a wonderland of color, shapes and incredible creations in a whole variety of media.

All students were introduced to the world of art and design through many different art and design projects using a broad range of media, group work and discussions, and exposure to professional work with increasing levels of intensity depending on the age groups. Students visited the Museum of Islamic Art and other commercial art galleries where they were taken on tours and afterwards worked on individual assignments to process what they had seen, and created art to be used in their own final projects.

Current secondary educator and previous VCU art educator Jan Johnston, Associate Professor of Art Education at VCU Richmond Dr. Melanie Buffington and Community Art Class lecturer Verity Watkins taught the various programs with the assistance of VCUQatar students and alumni Noor Suleiman, Samira Abbas, Amani Abbarah, Hisham Dawoud, Omar Ezzeldeen, Omaima Abdulla and Omaima Saad.

"This was a great opportunity again for me to come to VCUQatar and get to teach the summer programs for students," said Dr. Buffington. "Through their work and our discussions I get to learn about the students and their various cultures. It's always a pleasure to be able to connect my work with teachers and university students on the Richmond campus to my work on the Doha campus with children."

"I liked the textures and the swirls like in the Van Gogh paintings. The papier mache was fun as we all got messy and it included a lot of physical work to do it. I even liked drawing the

still life objects,” said Jessie David age 12 years. An older student Yara Tarek Mohammed Elfouly said, “Overall, I believe the classes were very encouraging to attend; they’re loaded with fun.”

“A wonderful and very varied three weeks with artists from 4 years to 12 years. I have loved introducing new artists to some of the old masters and seeing how their work has been influenced by them... such a talented group of young people with creativity and natural flair being able to use and explore a wide range of media to create their own Masterpieces,” said Watkins about the students.

VCUQatar Dean Allyson Vanstone handed certificates to the students of all the programs in the presence of faculty, alumni, students and their families at the end of the course. The next set of Community Classes and Portfolio Development Classes will start in October 2013. Details will be available on the VCUQatar website www.qatar.vcu.edu.

Note to Editors:

About Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar:

Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar (VCUQatar) is the Qatar campus of the prestigious Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Richmond, Virginia, USA and is a fully accredited highly ranked art and design program in the Middle East. Established in 1998 through a partnership with Virginia Commonwealth University and the Qatar Foundation, VCUQatar offers students the opportunity to earn a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in fashion, graphic, interior design and painting & printmaking, a Bachelor of Arts degree in Art History and a Master of Fine Arts degree in design studies. VCUQatar is a center of excellence for education and research in art and design. Through its programs, the university develops individual capacity to lead innovations in the creative and cultural professions in Qatar and the region. Throughout the year, VCUQatar organizes and hosts exhibitions, a lecture series, conferences and an annual fashion show. 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.

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