

Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar announces 20th Anniversary Celebration

School unveils new logo to coincide with anniversary events

Doha, Qatar (September 6, 2017) -- Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) School of the Arts in Qatar is set to celebrate its 20th anniversary in Education City. The school is the international branch campus of VCUarts, a top-tier arts and design school in the United States.

The school began as the Shaqab College of Design Arts, offering majors in Graphic Design, Fashion Design, and Interior Design, with the first classes enrolling in September 1998. In 2001, the Virginia State Council of Higher Education recommended to the Governor and the General Assembly that Shaqab College of Design Arts become a formal branch campus of VCU. It was authorized by the Commonwealth of Virginia's legislature in 2002. In 2009, two academic programs were added to the School of the Arts in Qatar: a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in Painting and Printmaking and a Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in Design Studies. During the fall semester of 2012, VCUarts Qatar welcomed the first group of students into the new BA Art History program.

VCU was the first U.S. university in Education City, followed by other prestigious U.S. institutions. [In 2001, Weill Cornell Medical School signed an agreement with the Qatar Foundation, followed by Texas A&M University in 2003, Carnegie Mellon University in 2004, Georgetown University in 2005, and Northwestern University in 2008.] Activities to celebrate the 20th anniversary will begin in September 2017, kicking off with the 20/20/20 Alumni Exhibition, which will celebrate the diversity of alumni and their successes in the art and design fields. More events will follow through the end of the academic year of 2018.

As part of the 20th anniversary, VCUQatar will henceforth be known as VCUarts Qatar, reflecting a brand alignment and new logo based on the main campus's identity. This change, which includes changing VCUQatar's logo to VCUarts Qatar, will now reflect the full name of the branch campus: Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar.

According to VCUarts Qatar's Executive Director of Communications, Hallema Sharif, designing a brand mark to work seamlessly across all digital platforms, while preserving its heritage, was key to the overall effort that also includes one of the most comprehensive brand systems ever introduced to the VCUarts family.

The brand alignment demonstrates the university's commitment to fostering a global arts community, exemplified by establishing the campus in 1998 and offering fully accredited American art and design degrees in an international context.

"VCUarts and VCUarts Qatar's brand alignment is a tangible, visible expression of our commitment to art and design in Qatar and beyond, and to remain steadfast in our goals to empower our students to become leading artists and designers who will preserve culture while creating the innovation that will drive Qatar towards its goals," said Akel I. Kahera, PhD, VCUarts Qatar's Dean.

The evolved brand identity will be rolled out to all VCUarts Qatar channels, partners, communications, and experiences beginning in September 2017.

To learn more about VCUarts Qatar, please visit www.qatar.vcu.edu

About Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar:

VCUarts Qatar is the international branch campus of Virginia Commonwealth University's School of the Arts, a top-ranked art and design program in the U.S. Established in 1998 through a partnership with Qatar Foundation, VCUarts Qatar offers students the opportunity to earn a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in fashion design, graphic design, interior design, and painting and printmaking, a Bachelor of Arts degree in art history and a Master of Fine Arts degree in design.

A vibrant community with global reach, VCUarts promises students a lifelong passion for and conversation about the arts. As the foremost example of its commitment to global outreach and education, VCUarts Qatar presents valuable opportunities for cross-cultural exchange and connects VCUarts to the influential art and design world of the Middle East. The campus attracts renowned contributors to contemporary visual culture

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for speaking and teaching engagements, and hosts two major international events--the design conference Tasmeeem Doha and the Hamad bin Khalifa Islamic Art Symposium.

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.