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2009

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VCUARTS CONGRATULATES UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH GRANT RECIPIENTS



MULTIMEDIA ART ADVOCACY

Students will generate one multifunctional artwork that personifies a percussion instrument and can take the role of a sculpture. Each student will participate in every phase of development including design, sculpting, and musical composition. Developing the skill to collaborate with artists of other disciplines will build more opportunities for education and employment as well as enlarge audiences.

Players: Kevin Estes, Music Performance; Peter Soroka, Music Performance; Brittany Shade, Sculpture + Extended Media; John Labra, Graphic Design

Award: \$2,500

Faculty Mentors: Robert Carter, Graphic Design; Kris Keeton, Music; Brian Jones, Music



NEW ZEALAND BOUND: WORLD OF WEARABLE ART

This team will create a spectacular garment that will incorporate their specific mediums: fashion and sculpture. They will design, sketch, create and submit their design to the "World of Wearable Art" the world's largest wearable art fashion show held annually in New Zealand. Together they won Richmond's tenth annual Wearable Art fashion show and opened the SEAMLESS: Computational Couture fashion show in Boston, MA. See the last page of this newsletter for details on their garment, which has made it to the final stage of the competition.

Players: Grace D. Johnston, Sculpture + Extended Media; Melanie J. Hearn, Fashion Design

Award: \$3,000

Faculty Mentor: Henry Swartz, Fashion Design & Merchandising



RESURRECTION OF HAUTE COUTURE IN AMERICA

The team will expand their knowledge of the Modaris program while creating a line of women's haute couture clothing. Haute couture embodies the highest quality of craftsmanship, fabric, seam finishes, and incorporates details such as embroidery, beading, feather work, braiding, etc. If selected by the jury, the final collection would be showcased in the VCU fashion show as well and the independent senior fashion show.

Players: Amy Galles, Fashion Design; Carole L. Jones, Fashion Design; Tonya Mixon, Fashion Design

Award: \$2,489

Faculty Mentor: Holly Alford, Fashion Design & Merchandising



RIISING TO THE TOP: PALLADIAN WINDOWS ON RICHMOND ROOFTOPS

The Palladian window, an expensive feature used to light grand spaces, became a common feature of American attics. VCU not only owns the earliest Richmond example but also boasts 13 other historic buildings with this motif. Studying how the influence of these windows traveled widely into Richmond's Fan district can open up the national story. The first part will summarize findings; the second will provide a catalogue of attic Palladian windows in the Fan.

Player: Allison L. Frew, Art History

Award: \$1,800

Faculty Mentor: Charles Brownell, Art History



IDENTITY: RICHMOND

Counter culture is the swift current that moves beneath social experience. For the past two years Sera Tabb and Jon Headlee have challenged themselves to bring this growing phenomenon to a broader audience. From Lucha Libre wrestlers, to fire throwers, to drag queens and many social groups beyond, the Identity: Richmond documentary project has successfully documented Richmond counter cultures actively engaging in the creation of alternative identity.

Players: Eden Papineau, Communication Arts; Adam Parker, Communication Arts; Christina Huther, Communication Arts; Mike Ng, VCU Brandcenter; Jon Headlee, Psychology, Philosophy, Religious Studies; Sera Tabb, Communications Arts, English

Award: \$3,000

Faculty Mentor: Robert Meganck, Communication Arts

Diana Al-Hadid You Heard the Name Here First



You can't go far without reading something wonderful about 2005 Sculpture MFA alumna Diana Al-Hadid. Her work was selected as part of the prestigious American Academy of Arts and Letters Invitational Exhibition of Visual Arts Exhibition. Paintings, photographs, sculptures, installations, and works on paper by 30 contemporary artists were on view at the galleries of the American Academy of Arts and Letters in the spring. Exhibiting artists were chosen from a pool of more than 170 artists nominated by members of the Academy.

About the same time, Al-Hadid received a grant from the New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA). The unrestricted grants were given to 134 artists recognized for excellence in their given disciplines. Additionally, she was recognized by ARTnews as an Artist to Watch. Since graduating, Diana has quickly been receiving well-deserved accolades from galleries and collectors alike. She is represented by Perry Rubenstein Gallery in New York.

Self Melt
Diana Al-Hadid
2008
Polymer gypsum, fiberglass, steel,
polystyrene, cardboard, wax and paint
58 x 56 x 75 inches
(147.3 x 142.2 x 190.5 cm)
Image courtesy of the artist and
Perry Rubenstein Gallery, New York.
Photographer: Tom Powel
© Diana Al-Hadid

Welcome Jack Risley

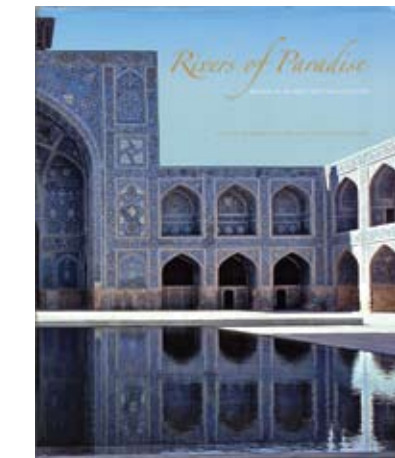


Earlier this year, our friend and colleague Joe Seipel took a position at SCAD. He left us with large vacant shoes, which have now been filled. We are pleased to welcome Jack Risley to his new position as associate dean for academic affairs.

Risley was raised by artists on a college campus. He studied at the Cooper Union and received his BA from Oberlin College. He later received an MFA in Sculpture from the Yale School of Art in 1986 and

has exhibited his work nationally and internationally including exhibitions at the Vienna Secession, The American Academy in Rome, the Brooklyn Museum and Yale University Art Museum. In New York, Risley is represented by Postmasters Gallery where he has had six one-person exhibitions. He is the recipient of the Rome Prize, a Pollock Krasner Foundation grant, a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Award, a Marie Sharpe Walsh Art Foundation Space Program Award and a Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Award among others. Before joining VCU in 2004, he was director of the MFA Program at NYU and previously, a faculty member at the Cooper Union in New York. Before becoming associate dean, Risley was director of the VCUarts Art Foundation Program. He also knows a lot about poodles.

Islamic Art Symposium Travels to Spain This Year



Scholars from around the world will explore the many uses of color in Islamic art and culture during the Third Biennial Hamad bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art November 2-4 in Córdoba, Spain, an important center of Islamic art and architecture.

And Diverse Are Their Hues: Color in Islamic Art and Culture will feature 12 speakers from the Middle East, Europe, Australia and the United States. Topics will span the medieval to the modern and cover a range of disciplines, featuring experts in art, architecture,

literature and philosophy. Fifteen fellows, ranging from graduate students to octogenarians, will receive full funding to attend the symposium.

The symposium is co-sponsored by the Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts, the VCU School of the Arts in Qatar and the Qatar Foundation. Sheila Blair and Jonathan Bloom, shared holders of the Hamad bin Khalifa Endowed Chair of Islamic Art at VCU, are the organizers and keynote speakers.

The topic of water in Islamic art and culture is beautifully captured in the new book about the 2007 Hamad bin Khalifa Islamic Art Symposium, held in Doha, Qatar. This beautiful and weighty tome was edited by Sheila Blair and Jonathan Bloom and published by Yale University Press.

www.islamicartdoha.org

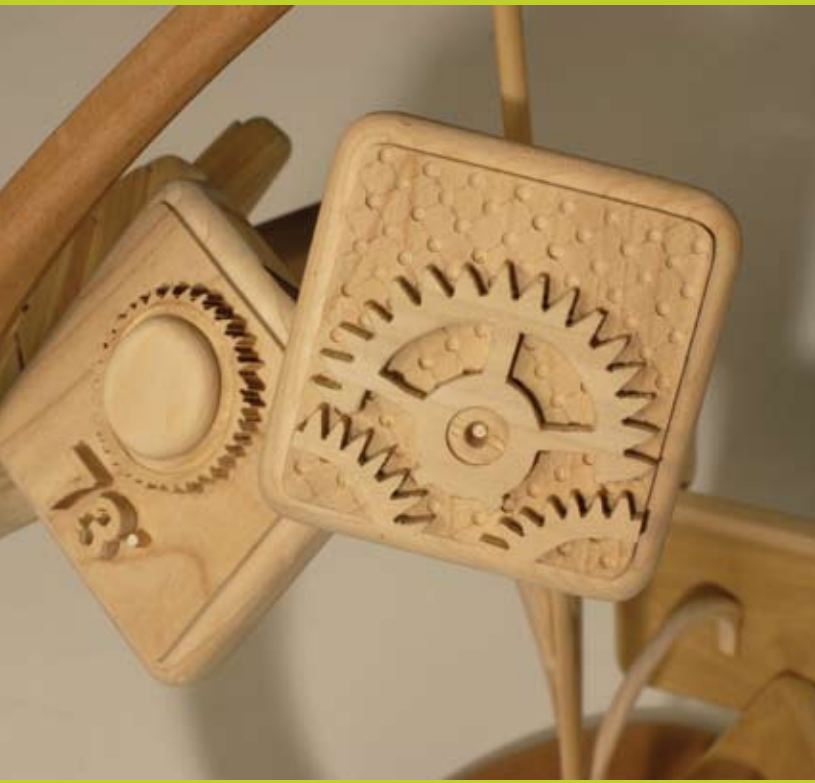


Photo credit: Cody Whitby

Don't Know Where to Put Your iPhone? VCUarts Student Has an App for That

As part of an assignment for his Art Foundation Space Research class, Kyle Buckner created an intricate wood pedestal to hold his iPhone. Buckner's sculpture received attention from classmates, professors and even Apple Inc. The iPhone pedestal was displayed in Richmond's Apple retail store and featured in an article on the MacLife web site. Kyle was invited to show his sculpture, along with a second original piece, in a New York City art exhibition sponsored by technology blog Gizmodo.com. Photos of Kyle's iPhone pedestal were posted on the Gizmodo web site and were viewed by 6,000 people in 12 hours!



Communication Arts Graduate is Shortlisted for National Portrait Gallery Award

The powerful and intimate work of painter and 2009 VCUarts alumnus Stanley Rayfield has been selected by The Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery. A portrait of Rayfield's father will be included in the Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition 2009. This juried exhibition includes 49 works on view through next summer. Submissions came from across the country and only seven were selected for the shortlist.

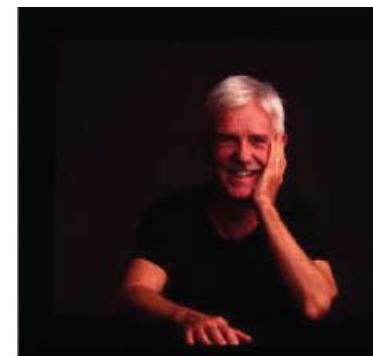
Each of the seven will win cash awards, and the first prize will include an award of \$25,000 and a commission from the museum to create a portrait of a living individual for the museum's permanent collection.

The Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition is a triennial event that invites figurative artists to submit entries in all media to be considered for prizes and display at the National Portrait Gallery. Museum and web site visitors can vote for their favorite pieces as part of the People's Choice Award.

<http://npg.si.edu>

"My dad, Ralph Gabriel Rayfield, is my hero. This painting is a narrative about aspects of his life, and his struggles as a man. My dad is an acute diabetic. He has had this disease long before he became my father. While he raised me I watched how this illness caused tremendous complications. My dad has had heart surgeries, amputations, vision problems, infections, and a host of other medical traumas that have taken a toll on him and my family. Despite the trials my father has faced, he always put me first and gave whatever energy he had into raising me and teaching me how to be a man. My dad has endured very much in his life. I hope in this painting to convey even a portion of his vitality."
-Stanley Rayfield

Richard Carlyon: A Retrospective



VCUarts Anderson Gallery is collaborating with 1708 Gallery, Visual Arts Center of Richmond and Reynolds Gallery for this exhibition of the artistic career of Richard Carlyon (1930-2006). This multi-site retrospective opens at all four venues with concurrent receptions. A performance piece conceived by choreographer Chris Burnside as a tribute to Carlyon's intellect, innovation, and wide-ranging perspective will take place at 8pm on September 26, at the Grace Street Theater.

While Carlyon's reputation as an influential and highly regarded teacher is legendary, he also maintained an active studio practice for over five decades, producing an extensive body of paintings, drawings, videos, collages, and constructions. Thematically grouped selections from these extensive holdings—most of which have never before been on public view—together with loans from private collections, will give a comprehensive overview of his development and accomplishments. The artist's studio will be reassembled as another component of the show.

Carlyon studied painting and dance at Richmond Professional Institute (now VCU), earning a BFA in Fine Arts in 1953. After being drafted into the Army and later moving to New York City, he returned to RPI for an MFA in 1963 and ultimately joined the faculty. He was named professor emeritus in 1996. Carlyon remained a highly productive artist until his death in 2006, working simultaneously in painting, drawing, and other media.

Top: Richard Carlyon in his Richmond studio, 1005 West Grace Street, Winter 1958-59

Above: Trinity for a Nomad, 1975; Liquitex and acrylic polymer emulsion on canvas; 80 x 73 inches. Courtesy of the artist's estate. Photo by Travis Fullerton.

www.vcu.edu/arts/gallery

Art Education Team Receives Huge Grant



Dr. Pamela G. Taylor, chair of the Department of Art Education, and her interdisciplinary research team, Dr. Joan Rhodes and Dr. Frances Smith from the School of Education, and Jan Johnston from the Department of Art Education, have been awarded a \$1,050,000 grant under the 2nd cycle of the Qatar National Priorities Research Program (NPRP) for their proposal, "Research for eLASTIC: Electronic Learning and Assessment Tool for Interdisciplinary Connections among the Visual Arts, Reading, and Writing."

This proposal, along with 92 others from such prestigious institutions as Princeton, University of Pennsylvania, Rutgers, Ohio State, Carnegie Mellon, MIT, University of British Columbia, and the University of Malaysia, was selected from 482 international submissions with an approximate 20% success rate. This is a tremendous achievement for our Art Education team.



Art Ed Students Teach and Learn in Guatemala

A group of Art Education students spent their spring break in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala with the Richmond nonprofit, Highland Support Project. While there, the students and adjunct instructor Jan Johnston worked through their sister organization the Asociacion de las Mujeres del Altiplano (The Women's Association of the Highlands) to perform arts based service-learning. AMA and the women they serve arranged for the team to work in the village of Cantel in a bilingual Mayan school teaching art to elementary age children. The goal for this weeklong arts intensive was to work alongside a Mayan teacher and provide her with culturally sensitive and unique art lessons that would then become part of an arts education program serving five additional schools. The students and teachers in this school were excited to have Americans interested in sharing and learning about their culture and customs. When not teaching art, the team focused on a school beautification project and artistic exchange.

Markels Make Leadership Gift in Support of VCUarts



Many thanks to Steve and Kathie Markel who have made a significant commitment to support VCUarts in the last year. Already generous supporters of VCU, the Markels formalized an unrestricted gift of \$5 million through a Charitable Lead Trust to establish a new level of leadership giving to the top-ranked School of the Arts.



Scout Design Gets Props for Poodle Poster

In 2002, VCUarts alumni Angeline Robertson and Charley Foley founded the print and interactive design firm Scout Design. Since then, the couple has designed impressive communication materials for several VCUarts departments including Sculpture + Extended Media and Painting and Printmaking.

Scout's attention-grabbing poster for Sculpture's MFA program was included in AIGA's "365" – the organization's national Year in Design competition. Work admitted into this competition represents the best work across all disciplines of communication design and strategy.

"To promote Sculpture's outstanding MFA program, we wanted to engage potential students with an image that was both conceptually rigorous and purely visual," explains Charley. "After a meeting with Sculpture's chair Amy Hautf a few years ago, we met her beautiful poodle Petula. We loved the amazing texture of her fur, her interesting proportions. When Amy later asked us to design a promotional piece, we decided Petula would make the perfect subject." The poster's oversized scale helps give the image a monumental and possibly human quality. "Ideas about culture, art and the ability to see the world in an unexpected way are all suggested." And, of course, Angeline adds "poodles are just fun."

The poster also won Best in Show at the AIGA Richmond's biennial design competition GRADE5 and has been selected for inclusion into Print magazine's Design Annual 2008.

www.stateofscout.com

REVIEW OF POSTER FROM AIGA (GRADE5) JUDGES:

"I approached this poster appreciating its spare appearance and in-control, well-handled typography. Next, the image intrigued me as I tried to decipher the furry/felt loop uniform of the sculpture. What an interesting transition from the skinny neck to the puffy head. What a nice, lyric curve to the torso. And the sleeves that end in mittens. How MFA-arty it all is. What? It's not a sculpture? Oh, that's amazing. To have my expectations and perceptions twisted and then rewarded in such a simple, perfectly crafted poster was an exceptional experience. I love this poster." — Antonio Alcalá

"Just before we saw this piece we talked about a way to choose a Best in Show – ask yourself which piece would you like to take home? Suffice it to say – who got the poster was the only thing we disagreed about. It's a great image and its power sneaks up on you – is it an abstract, soft sculpture figure or not... It's perfectly executed – and the fact that it's not actually a sculpture makes it even more compelling." — Marcus Hewitt



Posters Win Pencil

The One Club, the world's foremost non-profit organization for the recognition of excellence in advertising and design, awarded VCUarts and The Martin Agency a bronze "pencil" in the category of public service poster campaign. Only 60 pencils and one best of show were awarded in this international design competition, which was held in May. The winning campaign was created as part of The We Campaign, a project of The Alliance for Climate Protection — a nonprofit, nonpartisan effort founded by Al Gore. Jamie Mahoney is art director and designer for 2 of the 3 posters. Christine Coffey is the art director and designer for the third poster. John Mahoney is the copywriter.

For the blue NoCo2 poster above, Coffey created typographic cut-outs to cover portions of blue non-archival paper and put these in direct sunlight on the roof of our Pollak building. The longer the sun exposure, the more the paper faded.

www.wecansolveit.org



Students Take Part in Rebirth in New Orleans Project

Interior Design students Cari Lowe and Caroline Nance spent two months last summer interning for The Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana with The Office of Disaster Relief. As crew chiefs, they led volunteer groups that traveled through the New Orleans area weekly. They taught construction skills to help finish houses that were in the process of being rebuilt due to Hurricane Katrina devastation. They gutted, hung dry wall, laid flooring, installed cabinets, doors and trim to make the houses livable again, all at an economical price for those who would otherwise not be able to afford such renovations. It was an educational experience for both and they can now apply many of these new skills to their Interior Design repertoire. The students admit it was also a very meaningful experience because they worked so closely with the families they were helping and saw the tremendous impact they made in their lives.

VMFA Fellowships Go to Many With VCUarts Ties

We're pleased to announce that 20 of the 33 2009–10 Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Fellowship Awards have gone to those with ties to VCUarts. Special congratulations to the departments of Photography and Film (6 connections) and Painting and Printmaking (5 connections).

RECIPIENTS WITH CONNECTIONS TO VCUARTS

Professional Awards: Sonali Gulati, Heather Harvey, Paul Ryan, Heide Trepanier, Hillary Wilder

Graduate Awards: Sam Hunter: Carolyn Porter, Lana Waldrep

Undergraduate Awards: Joshua Bennett, Shane Butler, Ashleigh Hobson, Meagan Jenigen, Grace Johnston, MyungSun Lee, Patrick Phillips, Charles A. Ponticello, Melanie Seeger, Arlie Trowbridge, Rachael Wheeler, Janpim Wolf

Donors Contribute to Permanent Funds

What happens during an economic downturn when a university's endowment, which provides support for scholarships, falls 22%? This was the scenario across the country this past year, as universities struggled to ensure that students relying on endowment income would not be left without resources. VCUarts, like the rest of the university, found itself in a similar situation this past spring and resolved to go to our alumni and friends for help. The Development office contacted all donors of endowed scholarships to let them know that their endowment would be generating little to no income this year, and suggested that they make a gift directly to the scholarship fund to enable the scholarship to be awarded. Many of them did just that, resulting in a steady flow of scholarship awards.

We also sent both an electronic and snail mail plea to all of our alumni (if you didn't get one we may not have current contact information for you) asking them to consider a gift in any amount that would go into a pooled scholarship fund. Again, the response was encouraging and gifts came in from \$10 to \$2000 – and have built a scholarship fund, which will enable the Scholarship office to continue to support those students who would be adversely affected in the year ahead. This pooled scholarship fund is now a permanent fund and can be added to at any time. Please see our website for information on how to give directly online.

www.vcu.edu/arts/support_vcuarts

Michelle Obama Taps Designer With Ties to VCUQatar



Isabel Toledo is one of the year's hottest names in fashion. She is the creator of Michelle Obama's memorable inauguration day ensemble and has received international attention for her design. In spite of her recent celebrity, Isabel Toledo's is a familiar face to faculty and students at Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar. In 2006, Isabel, along with her husband and fellow designer Ruben Toledo, spoke at Tasmeeem Doha, VCUQatar's third annual international design conference. The Toledos also served as guest designers for VCUQatar's ninth annual fashion show, Bling, in May 2008, providing a collection of twenty original pieces for the event. Shortly afterward, Isabel spoke to the graduating class of 2008 at VCUQatar's seventh commencement ceremony. Last summer, she invited VCUQatar fashion students Latifa Al Medaihki and Nayla Al-Mulla to intern in her New York studio. Toledo described her two interns from VCUQatar as "exceptionally motivated and focused... much loved by all our staff!"



Babatunde Lawal

Art History's



Traci Horne, gallery coordinator of the VCUarts Anderson Gallery, sat down with Dr. Babatunde Lawal at the gallery to talk about his accomplishments, upcoming projects and his tenure at VCU. A professor in VCUarts Department of Art History, Dr. Lawal teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in African and African Diaspora art. A renowned scholar in his field, Dr. Lawal leads an active professional life—teaching and conducting research in Africa and the Americas.

Above images: Babatunde Lawal at the Festa de Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte, Cachoeira (Bahia), Brazil, 2008; with distinguished professor, artist and author, David Dnskell, College Park, MD, 2006



HORNE: To give readers a bit of perspective, what is your main area of scholarship?

LAWAL: Although I have published on a wide range of topics, my main area of scholarship focuses on African art and iconography with an emphasis on the ancient and contemporary arts of Nigeria, particularly the visual culture of the Yoruba and its impact on the Americas. I have done extensive fieldwork in Africa, the United States, the Caribbean and Brazil.

Apart from authoring books and exhibition catalogues, I have had articles published in leading journals such as *The Art Bulletin*, *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, *Studio International*, *African Arts*, *Afro-Asia*, *Journal of African History* and *Presence Africaine*. In sum, my publications have contributed significantly toward a worldwide appreciation and acceptance of African art and aesthetics.

HORNE: I recently had the pleasure of learning more about Yoruba art from you while working on the exhibition *Embodying the Sacred in Yoruba Art*: Featuring the Bernard and Patricia Wagner Collection, which was on view at VCU's Anderson Gallery in early 2009. It drew in a very large and diverse crowd. Many visitors were particularly fascinated by the masks - those associated with Gèlèdè. You are the author of *The Gèlèdè Spectacle: Art, Gender and Social Harmony in African Culture* published in 1996 by the University of Washington Press. Would you explain what Gèlèdè is about?

LAWAL: Gèlèdè is a Yoruba masquerade that honors, in essence, the physical and spiritual aspects of womanhood. Through a celebration in which participants wearing elaborate costumes and headdresses perform songs and dances, Gèlèdè endeavors to promote the social and spiritual well-being of a given community. In addition, it cultivates good gender relations by advocating respect for motherhood within the patriarchal culture of the Yoruba.

Apart from drawing attention to the interplay of the visual and performing arts in Gèlèdè, the book places this interplay within a broader historical, aesthetic, social



Gèlèdè Headdress, 20th century
Nigeria, Yoruba
Wood, pigment
h. 19 in. x w. 12 in. x d. 14 in.
Collection of Bernard and Patricia Wagner
Promised gift to The Newark Museum



Yoruba deity of thunderstorm, Sàngò

and cultural framework. As a result, the book has been very popular, attracting international attention to Gèlèdè and apparently contributing significantly to its recognition by UNESCO in May 2001 as one of Africa's contributions to "the masterpieces of oral and intangible heritage of humanity."

HORNE: Certainly you foster that appreciation with all of the lecturing and teaching that you do throughout the US and abroad, as well?

LAWAL: Yes, I have lectured, presented papers, chaired panels and given keynote addresses throughout the US and in Africa, Europe, China, Australia, New Zealand, Trinidad and Tobago, Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Brazil. In 2006, the Brazilian government invited me to chair two sessions at the Conference of Intellectuals from Africa and the Diaspora. Co-sponsored by the African Union, the conference was attended by the president of Brazil and some heads of state from Africa, the Caribbean and South America.

HORNE: You showed me some of the photographs you took while doing fieldwork. Would you elaborate on one or two examples of the unique imagery within the African Diaspora that you have seen lately? For example, the sculpture of Sàngò in a photograph we just looked at.

LAWAL: Sàngò is the Yoruba deity of thunderstorm, vitality and social justice; his most popular symbol is a staff surmounted by a double-axe. Because of Sàngò's association with social justice, the deity is popular in the African Diaspora. His double-axe staff (osé-Sàngò) has become a symbol of the human quest for vitality and social justice. Little wonder that this staff featured prominently in the arts of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States during the 1960s and 1970s. Public monuments to Sàngò can be found all over the Americas. In Brazil, the face on Sàngò's double-axe staff may sometimes be covered to relate the deity to the Western concept of "Blind Justice." This is a good example of the reinterpretation of African icons to make them relevant to the black experience in the Americas. Incidentally, I am working on a book on Sàngò Art in Africa and the Americas, partly funded by a research grant from the VCU School of the Arts.

There is also a photograph of me in the middle of a Roman Catholic ceremony. It was taken in July 2005 in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) during a public procession in honor of the Virgin Mary. While a good majority of the celebrants were singing "Ave Maria," some blacks in the procession were chanting, "Yemaya! Yemaya!" This is the name of the Yoruba Great Mother (Yemoja), who reportedly gave birth to all the deities (òrìsà) and has since been equated with Virgin Mary in Brazil and several other Latin American countries. There is an African American Society for the Children of Yemoja in New York City.

It suffices to say that the equation of certain Yoruba deities (òrìsà) with Roman Catholic saints of similar attributes enabled much of Yoruba religion to survive the Middle Passage in many parts of the Caribbean and South America. Indeed, the Vodou religion of Haiti and New Orleans (in the US) also has a large dose of Yoruba influence. Altars dedicated to the òrìsà during the slavery era had the non-figurative symbols of the òrìsà concealed among crucifixes and other Roman Catholic symbols. Since the end of slavery, Yoruba-influenced American religions such as Candomble of Brazil and Santería of the Caribbean and US have been de-emphasizing the use of Christian motifs in favor of Yoruba-inspired images, though some altars combine both.

HORNE: You spent a good part of July (2009) in Brazil serving as a visiting professor at the Universidade do Estado da Bahia in Salvador—the most recent in a long line of appointments you have held. Where else have you served as a visiting professor?

LAWAL: I have been invited to a number of institutions, including Dartmouth College, Columbia University and Harvard. I had the honor of being appointed the first Dorothy Hohenberg Chair of Excellence in Art History at the University of Memphis. In 2008 (Spring Semester), I served as the Robert Sterling Clark Visiting Professor of Art history at Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts.

HORNE: You came to VCU in 1992 as a Visiting Professor from Dartmouth, initially with the intention of teaching here for a year or two. What attracted you to VCU?

LAWAL: First, I was impressed both by the high quality and diversity of the curriculum being offered by the VCU School of the Arts. Second, the department of Art History, in particular, promotes an interdisciplinary approach that complements my personal teaching philosophy. Third, we have a lot of bright students not only in Art History, but in other VCUarts departments. Fourth, the VCU School of the Arts has had a good leadership and many internationally acclaimed faculty since its inception. So, I am happy here because of these reasons, among others, and the fact that the university has always supported my research projects.

HORNE: You mentioned your teaching philosophy. Tell me more about how you approach the courses that you teach.

LAWAL: My courses at VCU endeavor to introduce students to the various ways in which the forms, styles, contexts and functions of African and African Diaspora art have been shaped by environmental, cultural and historical forces. In the process, students are acquainted with different methodological approaches. Above all, my courses are designed to enable students to develop the skills necessary for interpreting visual forms, in general, and for exploring the aesthetic and cultural ramifications of African and African Diaspora art, in particular.

HORNE: In addition to everything else, you are in the process of writing a book, in which you will address the idea of African and Western traditions merging in African American art. Tell me more about your book.

LAWAL: Commissioned by Phaidon Press of London, the book is tentatively titled *Continuity and Change in African American Art*. It traces the roots of African American creative expression back to Africa, drawing attention to the historical, social, cultural, economic and ideological forces that shaped its diverse forms, styles, functions and meanings, as well as the extent to which it has captured the spirit of the black experience in the United States.



Lawal in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 2005

VCUQATAR STUDENT DESIGNS ARE **IN DEMAND**



Students Design Equestrian Trophies

VCUQatar and the Qatar Racing and Equestrian Club announced the trophy design student winners for the Qatar Prix de l' Arc de Triomphe and the Qatar Arabian World Cup at a press conference in April at VCUQatar.

The winning entries belonged to Noura Mohammed Al-Khulaifi, first place; Zlatan Pejdah, second; and Maryam Al-Khalifa, third place. Noura Al-Khulaifi's trophy design was inspired by the Qatari flag and Rocco French style.

The winners for the design of the Qatar Arabian World Cup are Yang Soon Ju, first place; Geysa Araujo, second; and Hanin Bader, third place. Yang Soon Ju said she integrated European and Arab cultures and brought together the Greek water vessel for the body, a coat of arms and pearl for the shell and a racing horse with the jockey to crown this trophy.

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Faleh Al Thani said the competition was not easy to judge. "Thanks to the panel, the dean and teachers, it was made easier," he said. "All the trophy designs were beautiful, but we chose the ones that incorporated all the elements we were looking for when we made our choice."



VCUQatar Designs Uniforms for the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra



In the spring of 2008, VCUQatar was contacted by the Qatar Foundation with a request to assist the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra in designing uniforms for the 101 member ensemble. Faculty from the Department of Fashion Design along with members of the department's senior class worked to conceptualize and craft the uniforms as part of VCUQatar's yearly community service activity in support of the State of Qatar.

After reviewing the design concepts with faculty, Dean Allyson Vanstone stated, "VCUQatar is proud to create meaningful contributions to the development of Qatar's cultural life. I am delighted that our students' work will be showcased through the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra. We are all looking forward to attending the upcoming performances."



Gina Kang and her mother in Korea this summer

First Akira Ouchi Graphic Design Scholarship Awarded

When Akira Ouchi, retired VCUarts associate professor of communication design, passed away in December, 2003, a number of his friends and family made gifts to the school in his memory. His widow, Michi Ouchi, added to this fund and created an endowed scholarship in the Department of Graphic Design named for him. When Michi learned from the executive director of the VCU Foundation that this year's earnings would cause the scholarship award to be delayed for a year, she very quickly sent in a check to allow the scholarship to be awarded this academic year as planned.

Selected by the Department of Graphic Design, the first recipient of the Ouchi Scholarship is Gina Kang, a student from Maryland. Gina hopes to go on to get her MFA in graphic design, and become an art director or editor of a magazine. An outstanding student, Gina is of Korean ancestry and wants to master the Korean language and travel and work in Korea one day. She is a member of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars Honors, and a founding member of the Kappa Pi International Honorary Arts Fraternity Eta Mu.

Akira Ouchi was a dedicated and gifted teacher. This scholarship will serve as a permanent and loving legacy to him, as well as a permanent source of support for our graphic design students.

Film Festivals are Buzzing About Bee Documentary



The experimental documentary, Beekeepers, is the first major film for Photography and Film alumnus Richard Robinson. The film, which explores why bees are dying although beekeepers have kept them for more than three thousand years, was one of very few short films to be chosen in the cutting-edge New Frontiers segment of the Sundance Film Festival. Before earning his MFA in the Department of Photography and Film, Robinson worked as a photographer. In addition to Sundance, Beekeepers has made the film festival rounds, including 2009 Official Selection HotDocs, Best Documentary Short at Atlanta Film Festival 2009 and Official Selection, 2009 Mountain Film in Telluride.

www.robinsonphoto.com/film.html



Windgate Charitable Foundation Supports Emerging Artist Residencies in Craft/ Material Studies

The Arkansas-based Windgate Charitable Foundation has awarded the School of the Arts a \$150,000 five year grant to provide residencies in Craft/Material Studies for emerging artists. Working in conjunction with Richmond developer and arts supporter Tom Papa, Craft Chair Sonya Clark has designed a highly competitive program for emerging artists to study and teach at VCUarts and in Richmond.

This program will allow VCUarts to support a total of ten talented craft artists through two twelve-month teaching residencies per year over the five-year funding period. These residencies will support ten of the best and brightest recent graduates during a period of great economic uncertainty by allowing them to continue building their careers as established artists and teachers in the artistically fertile environment of VCUarts. The goal of the Windgate residencies is to attract, for each of the five years, two recent MFA recipients from other top institutions.

The Windgate support is augmented by the generosity of Fountainhead Developers, who are providing private living accommodations and a separate studio space for each of the chosen artists at their new property, New Manchester Flats. The Windgate Residents are also guaranteed an exhibition at one of two partner galleries.

Recent Sculpture and Painting/ Printmaking Alumni Exhibit: *For Lovers*

The work of 24 2008 and 2009 MFA VCUarts graduates were on view at two New York Galleries from June 26 – July 25, 2009. The exhibition name ...*For Lovers* plays off the longtime Virginia marketing slogan.

PAINTING AND PRINTMAKING



At Denise Bibro Fine Art, the work of the following Department of Painting and Printmaking alumni was exhibited:

Leah Beeferman, Josh Bonnet, Kate Kisicki, Tony Klotz, Jessica Langley, Ryan Lauterio, Carmen McLeod, Theresa Marchetta, Valerie Molnar, Monica Palma, Alexis Semtner, Jill Ann Zevenbergen

The work of the Painting and Printmaking alumni reveals a remarkable diversity of approach to the contemporary practice of painting and printmaking.

SCULPTURE



At Kim Foster Gallery, the work of the following Department of Sculpture + Extended Media alumni work was exhibited:

Sami Ben Larbi, Patrick Cadenhead, Lily Cox-Richard, Mia Feuer, David Grainger, Eli Kessler, Julie Ann Nagle, Chris Mahonski, Maria Pithara, Jesse Robinson, James Sham, Brian Taylor

This exhibition demonstrates the broad and eccentric talents with which the highly regarded Department of Sculpture + Extended Media has become identified. The ambitious projects run the gamut of materials and themes, all with a marked sense of materiality and presence – each set off by an abiding sense of curiosity and intellect.

2 Students Receive Prestigious Javits Fellowship



Untitled, Ian McMahon

Sculpture + Extended Media graduate students Ian McMahon and Nataliya Slinko have been selected to receive the prestigious Jacob K. Javits Fellowship. Both will receive four years of financial support. Ian and Nataliya join fellow graduates Angie White, John Blatter, Sami Ben Larbi as recipients for the award. In seven years, the Department of Sculpture + Extended Media has had six of its alumni awarded this incredible honor.

Summer Research Fellowships



Four VCUarts students have been awarded the new 2009 VCU Summer Research Fellowships. This summer's fellowships provided student and faculty support for mentored research and creative scholarship experiences. Congratulations to Phillip Cardwell, Music; Blue Clements, Sculpture + Extended Media; Melanie Seeger, Craft/ Material Studies; and Bonnie Gabel, Theatre.

The above image is a poster for Melanie Seeger's project. She is taking portraits of mixed/biracial individuals between the ages of 18 and 35. The goal is to have the portraits shown in a Richmond gallery and have visitors guess the race/ethnicity of each portrait subject.



Toni-Leslie James Wins OBIE Award

The 2008-09 year was full of accomplishment for TheatreVCU's Director of Costume Design Toni-Leslie James. Last fall, James designed costumes for two world premier productions directed by Tony-nominated director Tina Landau. *Wig Out*, by Tarrell Alvin McCraney, played at New York City's Vineyard Theatre and *A Civil War Christmas*, by Pulitzer Prize-winner Paula Vogel closed 2008 at the Long Wharf Theatre in New Haven, Connecticut. James was also well represented in the New York Performing Arts Library's exhibition *Curtain Call: Celebrating a Century of Women Designing for Live Performance*.

Her costume design from the Broadway productions of *Angels in America* and *The Wild Party* were on display at the Donald and Mary Oenslager Gallery from November 2008-May 2009. Last March, James, assisted by VCUarts MFA graduate Christopher Mueller, designed The New York City Center Encores! production of Finian's Rainbow. The show later transferred to the St. James Theatre and was revived as a full-scale Broadway production. In spring 2009, James' design for the off-Broadway production of *Wig Out* was nominated for a Lucille Lortell Award for outstanding costume design. Her work was also nominated in the 54th annual Village Voice OBIE Awards, where James received an OBIE for sustained excellence of costume design.

Planned Giving: Another Way to Make a Difference

In the next decade, philanthropy experts predict that the largest gifts college and universities receive will be "realized" estate gifts. Established through donors' estate plans, these gifts take the form of bequests, trusts, insurance and retirement beneficiaries, and charitable gift annuities. With careful planning, donors can provide handsomely for an institution and sometimes receive an income stream and significant tax gains.

Two recent gifts illustrate the ways in which friends of the School of the Arts can make such provisions. Martha (VCUarts alumna) and John Rhodes of Roanoke, Virginia, have established two charitable gift annuities to benefit the School of the Arts. These annuities, which require a minimum of \$10,000 to establish, provide a guaranteed income for the donor (or anyone the donor indicates) over a period of time, and provide a gift to VCUarts at the time of the donor's death.

Jean Renick, sister of Charles Renick and a longtime supporter of the School of the Arts, passed away this past winter. Not only had she made a number of significant gifts to our Department of Sculpture over the course of her lifetime, but she had also added a provision in her will for the School. At her death, the Charles Renick Scholarship received an additional \$20,000 from Jean, making it one of the most generous scholarships for VCUarts, and for our top ranked Sculpture program.

Please consider the ways that you can benefit VCUarts, often far more generously than you realize, through an estate provision. Call or email Jayne Shaw for more information at jdshaw@vcu.edu or 804-827-4676.

New Program for the Deaf is First of its Kind in Qatar



VCUQatar, in cooperation with the Office of Her Highness Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser Al Missned and the Qatari Center of Social Cultural Development for the Deaf put together a full semester program in which 13 deaf students were taught jewelry making, drawing and Arabic. Sign language expert, Haya Obaid Al-Sunari who is the programs and projects supervisor at the Qatari Center of Social Cultural Development for the Deaf, was the force behind the initiative. Participating students learned the basics of communicating with the deaf, the culture of the deaf and the challenges faced.

"Their aspiration, motivation, drive to succeed, and desire to learn, inspires me and overwhelms me with appreciation. Art and design have broken the barriers, offering wonderful opportunities for these astonishing individuals to express themselves. It has genuinely been an eye-opening and emotionally stirring experience," said VCUQatar student volunteer Yasmeen Suleiman.



Two VCU Fashion Design Students in Fur Design Competition Finals

Fashion design students, senior Ra Jang and junior Shannon Kesler, were selected as two of the three North American finalists for the REMIX 2009 International Fur Trade Federation's (IFTF) 2009 International Fur Design Competition. These students are among hundreds of design students from 21 countries who have participated in this annual competition since its inception in 2003.

Following the preliminaries, the actual garments were presented in Milan, Italy in March 2009 for a final runway showing. Ms. Ra Jang was invited to attend the March event in Milan with all of her expenses paid by IFTF. She was awarded fourth place internationally.

For more information about the competition go to:

www.iftf.com/#/remix

Still Number One

VCUarts is once again ranked the #1 public university school of arts and design in the country by *U.S. News & World Report* (2009). Specialty rankings from that report honored the following nine VCUarts graduate programs:

SCULPTURE: #1 OVERALL

GRAPHIC DESIGN: #4 OVERALL – #1 among public university programs

FIBER ARTS: #4 OVERALL – Department of Craft/Material Studies; #1 among public university programs

GLASS: #5 OVERALL – Department of Craft/Material Studies; #1 among public university programs

PAINTING: #8 OVERALL – Department of Painting & Printmaking; #3 among public university programs

MULTIMEDIA/VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS: #9 OVERALL – likely a combination of our departments of Communication Arts, Graphic Design, Photography and Film, and Kinetic Imaging; #3 public university ranking

METALS/JEWELRY: #10 OVERALL – Department of Craft/Material Studies; #5 among public university programs

CERAMICS: #12 OVERALL – Department of Craft/Material Studies; #6 among public university programs

PRINTMAKING: #17 OVERALL – Department of Painting & Printmaking; #10 among public university programs

Top Ranked. Top Value.

OUT OF STATE ANNUAL TUITION AND FEES COMPARISON

THE TOP 10 SCHOOLS OF ART AND DESIGN

#1	Rhode Island School of Design	\$36,659
#2	Yale University	36,500
#3	School of the Art Institute of Chicago	34,600
#4	VCUarts	20,341
(tie)	Maryland Institute College of Art	34,090
(tie)	Cranbrook Academy of Art	25,460
#7	California Institute of the Arts	35,406
(tie)	Carnegie Mellon University	40,920
(tie)	University of California: Los Angeles	28,162
#10	Alfred University	25,246

Rankings come from *U.S. News and World Report's* 2008 rankings of graduate school programs. You can see the complete directory at www.usnews.com/rankings

Annual out-of-state tuition and fees come from College Board's 2009–2010 college prices. www.collegeboard.com

2009–2010 VCUarts in-state tuition is \$7,117.

THE TOP 10 PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF ART AND DESIGN

#1	VCUarts	\$20,341
#2	Temple University	21,044
#3	University of California: Davis	32,033
#4	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	26,024
#5	University of Texas at Austin	30,006
#6	Ohio State University: Columbus	21,918
#7	University of California: San Diego	31,467
#8	University of Wisconsin – Madison	21,818
#9	University of California: Los Angeles	28,162
#10	University of Iowa	22,198

New Offerings Coming to VCUQatar

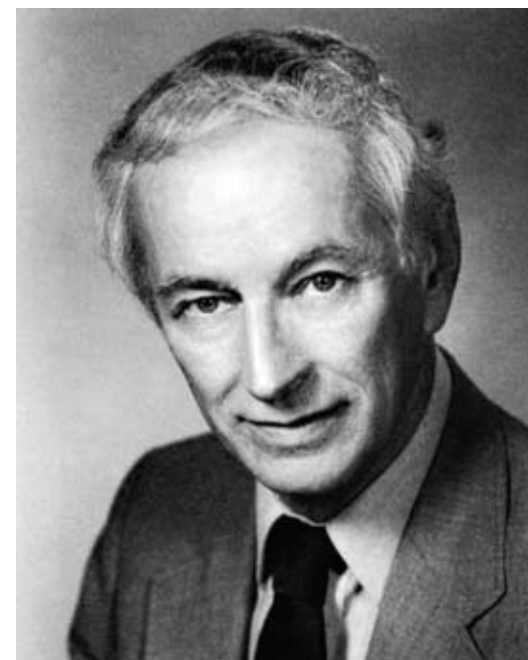
A new course of study is coming to the VCUQatar campus. In 2010, a BFA in Painting and Printmaking will be offered in addition to the majors, which have been there since the School's inception—Fashion Design, Interior Design and Graphic Design. The painting program on the VCU Richmond campus is ranked 8th overall and third among public university programs according to *US News & World Report*, 2009.

The Painting and Printmaking curriculum enables students to have a specialized education in painting and printmaking as well as access, through electives, to the other disciplines at VCUQatar and in the Education City community.

Also new to the campus is the MFA in Design Studies. This is the first graduate program in design in the Gulf Region. Graduate students are expected to develop an individualized program of study within a context of cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural design issues. They will expand and deepen their abilities and increase their motivation to contribute directly to innovation, education and leadership in design thinking and making.

www.qatar.vcu.edu

Former Theatre Chair Creates New Endowed Scholarship



Richard Newdick, retired TheatreVCU chair, recently endowed a new scholarship for Theatre students in his and his brother William's names. Newdick, now a resident of Sarasota, Florida, joined VCU in 1966 and went on to transform the Department of Theatre into one of the most highly regarded academic theatre departments in Virginia and across the country. He retired in 1996 as professor emeritus of Theatre.

A tireless and generous supporter of VCU and TheatreVCU, Newdick is a graduate of the University of Maine, with a master's degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He was awarded the VCU Presidential Medallion in 2000.

In addition to this recent outright gift, Newdick has named VCUarts the beneficiary of a portion of his, and his brother William's, trusts. The proceeds will benefit the Richard and William Newdick Theatre Scholarship. The Newdick Scholarship will be awarded to a deserving Theatre student in the fall of 2011.

Student Resources

EVENTS – To find out about VCUarts shows, guests, alumni and faculty activities and lots more, visit esterknows.com

OPPORTUNITIES – VCUarts students are made aware of opportunities including competitions, internships and fellowships through ester's sister site, prudence. prudenceknows.info

CAREERS – Great faculty isn't the only way arts students have a leg up. Helpful information for those about to embark on a job search is at jeanetteknowsjobs.com

EXCHANGE – Students looking to buy or sell items have the VCUarts Student Exchange! vcuartsexchange.com

YOUTUBE, FACEBOOK, TWITTER – Keep up with VCUarts!



Cover Image

Sculpture + Extended Media student Grace Johnston and Fashion Design student Melanie Hearn created this amazing dragon garment based on a dream Melanie had. The costume was submitted to the World of Wearable Art competition in New Zealand and has been accepted. Grace and Melanie will soon know if they've won one of the monetary awards. But they say just being accepted into the show is reward enough.



Chicago

Theatre VCU's Chicago was the only production allowed in the U.S. while the Broadway company is on tour. This extraordinary exception was granted only because of Patti D'Beck's long-term professional relationship with the Broadway Chicago company.