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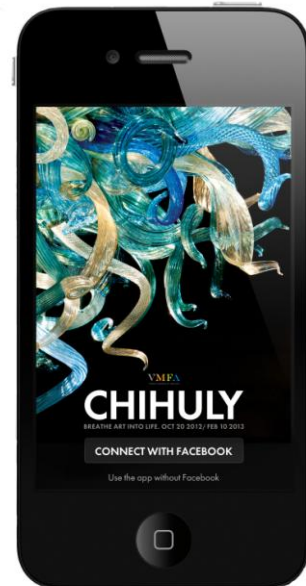
December 5, 2012

Glassblowing Comes to the iPhone

VMFA and The Martin Agency Launch App Inspired by Dale Chihuly's Artwork

The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and The Martin Agency announced today a joint effort that brings to life works of art by artist Dale Chihuly. To complement Chihuly's exhibition at VMFA, The Martin Agency worked with Unit9 in London to create the first ever glassblowing iPhone app, inspired by Chihuly's unique art process.

The app, available on all Apple iOS devices, allows Chihuly fans to design their own virtual creations through a process inspired by Chihuly's series works. The user is able to select from three distinct Chihuly forms: *Fiori*, *Macchia* and *Seaforms*. From there, the user will be prompted to blow into the iPhone to shape virtual molten glass into a unique piece inspired by Chihuly's art. The user can bend, curve and mold their work of art in 3D and add texture, color and more shapes until their creation is complete.



The finished art can be shared on the user's Facebook timeline or Twitter feed as well as posted to the gallery of user creations on VMFA's Facebook page. The Chihuly app is intended to educate users about how glass artworks are conceived and executed. The app is expected to raise the artist's profile with a younger demographic of art enthusiasts as well as those less familiar with his work.

"Chihuly has done for glass art what Fabergé did for decorative art — push the boundaries of a medium beyond what people thought possible," said Joe Alexander, chief creative officer of The Martin Agency. "We thought mobile technology was a perfect way to bring his achievement to life for people outside the museum's traditional audience."

Social media supports the larger campaign effort on the East Coast, where multiple out-of-home elements are working to raise awareness of the exhibition. Transit shelters in Washington, D.C. as well as displays in top shopping destinations around Richmond, Northern Virginia, Virginia Beach, Charlottesville and D.C. currently display ads for the Chihuly exhibition. In addition, Starbucks locations throughout Richmond have partnered with VMFA to promote the exhibition, displaying the Chihuly window cling on their storefronts.

This VMFA event marks Chihuly's third major U.S. museum exhibition in recent years and will run through February 10, 2013. Other recent exhibitions include the de Young Museum in San Francisco and the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, which drew record-breaking crowds in 2008 and 2011 respectively.

Ninety-seven exhibitions in seven countries have presented artwork by Chihuly during the last decade with more than 10 million visitors in all, resulting in high recognition and a solid international fan base for the artist. According to Alex Nyerges, director of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, "The VMFA drew record crowds for the Picasso exhibition last year, and we know that Chihuly will be equally powerful for tourism to Richmond and Virginia. We are pleased to have the savvy, strategic guidance of The Martin Agency to maximize the excitement of this landmark artist."

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About the exhibition:

- TITLE: *Chihuly at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts*
- DATES: Oct. 20, 2012 – Feb. 10, 2013
- LOCATION: NewMarket, Altria and Center galleries, Atrium and Reflecting Pool
- CURATORS: Chihuly Studio; Barry Shifman, VMFA's Sydney and Frances Lewis Family Curator of Decorative Arts 1890 to the Present
- TICKETS: \$20; \$16 for seniors, students with valid ID and groups of 10 or more. Free for members. Timed for access on the half hour. To purchase, visit <http://www.visitrichmondva.com/chihuly/> or call 804.340.1405.
- HOTEL PACKAGES: Hotel and travel packages are posted at <http://www.visitrichmondva.com/Plan/Hotel-Packages>
- SOUVENIR BOOK: *Chihuly | Virginia Museum of Fine Arts* with essay by Dr. Robert Hobbs
- SPONSORS: Organized by VMFA in cooperation with Dale Chihuly. Presenting sponsor is Altria Group. Major sponsors of the exhibition are The Richard S. Reynolds Foundation, and Fred T. and Roddy P. Tattersall. Contributing sponsors include Eda Hofstead Cabaniss, Mrs. Frances M. Dulaney, Frances Lewis, and Andy and Ginny Lewis, True and Charlie Luck, Steve and Kathie Markel, Norfolk Southern Corporation, RBC Wealth Management, The Anne Carter and Walter R. Robins, Jr. Foundation and Dr. and Mrs. Harry A. Wellons, Jr. The Banner Exhibition Program at VMFA is made possible by the Julia Louise Reynolds Fund.

About the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

VMFA's permanent collection encompasses more than 33,000 works of art spanning 5,000 years of world history. Its collections of Art Nouveau and Art Deco, English silver, Fabergé, and the art of South Asia are among the finest in the nation. With acclaimed holdings in American, British Sporting, Impressionist and Post-Impressionist, and Modern and Contemporary art — and additional strengths in African, Ancient, East Asian, and European — VMFA ranks as one of the top comprehensive art museums in the United States. Programs include educational activities and studio classes for all ages, plus fun after-hours

events. VMFA's Statewide Partnership program includes traveling exhibitions, artist and teacher workshops, and lectures across the Commonwealth. VMFA is open 365 days a year and general admission is always free. For additional information, telephone 804-340-1400 or visit www.vmfa.museum.

About The Martin Agency

The Martin Agency offers unified advertising, strategic planning, media, direct response, interactive, data analytics, design and content creation. Clients include the American Cancer Society, BFGoodrich, Discover Financial, GEICO, Hanes, Kraft, Morgan Stanley, PING, Pizza Hut and Walmart. www.martinagency.com

Press Contacts:

Janet Lennon, Publicist for Chihuly Exhibitions
206-914-6175 or janetl@chihuly.com

Theresa Dunn, The Martin Agency
804-698-8314 or theresa.dunn@martinagency.com

Suzanne Hall, VMFA
804-204-2704 or suzanne.hall@VMFA.museum