

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Vilcek Foundation honors Marica Vilcek's legacy with three \$100,000 prizes in Art History

The Marica Vilcek Prizes in Art History are bestowed on outstanding art historians and museum professionals. The prizes celebrate philanthropist and art historian Marica Vilcek's professional legacy in the arts.

New York, NY, January 4, 2024 — The Vilcek Foundation honors Marica Vilcek's career with a new award: the Marica Vilcek Prize in Art History. In its inaugural presentation, three awards of \$100,000 each are bestowed on foreign-born art history and museum professionals whose work has had an impact on museum culture and curatorial practices in the United States, and in their respective fields of study.

Marica Vilcek is an American art historian and philanthropist, as well as co-founder, vice-chair and secretary of the Vilcek Foundation. She has worked with museums and arts institutions in both Czechoslovakia and the United States. She is renowned for her leadership and mentorship with The Metropolitan Museum of Art and the New York University Institute of Fine Arts, and for her work with the New York Youth Symphony and the Foundation for a Civil Society.

The 2024 Marica Vilcek Prizes in Art History are awarded to three curators for their exceptional work at The Metropolitan Museum of Art: Monika Bincsik, Wolfram Koeppe and Pierre Terjanian.

"Art historians and curators are unsung heroes; their work has broad implications for our understanding of social and cultural values across the globe, and on the history of technology and innovation in the creation of objects," says Marica Vilcek. "These three curators have had a profound impact on the way we think about each of their specialties, offering important insights into the broader context of roles and meanings these objects hold in the time and place in which they were created."

Monika Bincsik receives the Marica Vilcek Prize in Art History for her curatorial approach to Japanese decorative arts and textiles that highlights the complex interplay of the Japanese and international art market, trade, social, and political circumstances over the past five centuries. Born in Hungary, Bincsik is the Diane and Arthur Abbey Curator for Japanese Decorative Arts at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. She has organized several groundbreaking exhibitions to introduce the history of Japanese lacquer, ceramics, and bamboo, anchoring this area at The Met. She is the author of *Kimono Style: Edo Traditions to Modern Design*, and is a Visiting Researcher at Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto.

Wolfram Koeppe receives the Marica Vilcek Prize in Art History for his contributions to the study and curation of European decorative arts objects, and for his work to develop exhibitions and permanent galleries that engage and inspire audiences of all ages. Born in Germany, Koeppe is the Marina Kellen French Senior Curator in the Department of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts at The Met. He serves on the boards of the Association of Art Museums Curators Foundation, the Bard Graduate Center,

and the New York School of Interior Design.

Pierre Terjanian receives the Marica Vilcek Prize in Art History for his work to foster community, dialogue and understanding through his leadership at The Met, and for his thoughtful scholarship on objects of arms and armor. Born in France, Terjanian is a member of the American Alliance of Museums. He was the Arthur Ochs Sulzberger Curator in Charge in the Department of Arms and Armor at The Metropolitan Museum of Art before joining the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, as Chief of Curatorial Affairs and Conservation.

Says Vilcek Foundation President Rick Kinsel, “With the 2024 Marica Vilcek Prizes in Art History, we honor Marica’s career with The Metropolitan Museum of Art—the institution that was her professional home from 1965 through 1996, and one she remains deeply committed to through her philanthropy and trusteeship. As Associate Curator in Charge of The Met’s Accessions and Catalogue Department, Marica’s work was vital to The Met’s function and growth. For more than half a century, her commitment to provide mentorship and support to art historians, anthropologists and curators has never wavered. These prizes are a means by which the Vilcek Foundation can uphold Marica’s legacy and provide meaningful support to professionals.”

Max Hollein, The Met’s Marina Kellen French Director and CEO, said: “The Met is thrilled to see these three outstanding curators recognized for their innovative scholarship. We are grateful to Marica Vilcek and the Vilcek Foundation for their longtime support of The Met, and for the encouragement they provide to foreign-born art history and museum professionals—especially today—through their philanthropy and this prize.”

The Marica Vilcek Prize in Art History aligns with the Vilcek Foundation’s mission to honor and celebrate immigrant professionals whose work has had a profound impact on culture and society, and to foster appreciation for the arts more broadly. The Marica Vilcek Prize is separate from the Vilcek Foundation Prizes in Biomedical Science and the Arts.

The Vilcek Foundation

The Vilcek Foundation raises awareness of immigrant contributions in the United States and fosters appreciation for the arts and sciences. The foundation was established in 2000 by Jan and Marica Vilcek, immigrants from the former Czechoslovakia. The mission of the foundation was inspired by the couple’s respective careers in biomedical science and art history. Since 2000, the foundation has awarded over \$7 million in prizes to foreign-born individuals and has supported organizations with over \$6 million in grants.

The Vilcek Foundation is a private operating foundation, a federally tax-exempt nonprofit organization under IRS Section 501(c)(3). To learn more, please visit vilcek.org.