

**For Immediate Release**

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## **The Vilcek Foundation Opens New Headquarters and Cultural Center in Landmark Carriage House**

**Exhibits by Poursan Jinchhi and Il Lee featured during opening reception**

**New York, May 28, 2008** - The Vilcek Foundation is pleased to announce the opening of its new headquarters at 167 East 73<sup>rd</sup> Street. The building will also serve as a multipurpose space where the Foundation will hold various public, cultural programs free of charge. An opening reception will be held on Thursday, June 5th, beginning at 6:00 p.m.

“New York is the heart and soul of this immigrant nation”, remarks Marica Vilcek, Vice-President and Cofounder of the Foundation, “For the first eight years, we administered the Foundation from our apartment, but always with the goal of growing its assets so that we could hire support staff, expand our programs, and establish a formal headquarters. We are proud to finally present 167 East 73<sup>rd</sup> Street as the Vilcek Foundation’s face to the public.”

The Vilcek Foundation will exhibit the work of innovative foreign-born artists, Poursan Jinchhi and Il Lee, during the opening reception. Curated by Art Projects International, the works of these two artists are deeply rooted in the experience of immigration and the process of integration. Born in Mashad, Iran, Ms. Jinchhi uses traditional Persian calligraphy as a starting point. Ms. Jinchhi deconstructs the formal characters of the Persian alphabet through abstraction, layering and repetition to create dynamic pieces that are definitively contemporary.

Il Lee, a Korean-born artist, is best known for his historically grounded and innovative ballpoint penwork on paper and canvas. Using ballpoint pens on large-scale formats, Il Lee references traditional, Asian ink paintings and aesthetics, while addressing the conceptually contemporary in material and form. Il Lee’s work has been critically received, and in 2007, was the subject of a mid-career retrospective at the San Jose Museum of Art and a solo exhibition at the Queens Museum of Art in New York.

### **About the Building**

A historic carriage house built in the early twentieth century, the building hosts the Foundation offices and a multi-purpose space to be used for a variety of cultural programs including film screenings, musical performance and literary readings. The Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts recently awarded the Vilcek Foundation for a “wonderful historic renovation” of the carriage house.

Although the exterior still retains the original “Beaux-Arts” style façade of the early twentieth century, the interior has undergone extension renovation. Manhattan based, award winning, architect Peter Tow completed the restoration of the building for the Foundation.

In explaining his vision for the building, Peter Tow said, “The goal of the renovation was twofold: to be a good neighbor by providing a historically sensitive renovation; and meet the Foundations programmatic needs. A minimalist white box interior was developed to provide a clean palette for the changing programmatic needs of the Foundation. Although the interior is modern, one is always aware of being in a historic building as the traditional entrance door design is also reflected on the interior.”

### **About the Vilcek Foundation**

The Vilcek Foundation’s mission is to heighten public awareness of the contributions of immigrants to the sciences, arts and culture in the United States. 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 careers in biomedical science and art history, respectively, as well as their personal experiences and appreciation for the opportunities they received as newcomers to the United States.

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