

For Immediate Release

**Dr. Rudolf Jaenisch and Denise Scott Brown
Named Recipients of
The 2007 Vilcek Foundation Prizes**

Honoring the Achievements of Prominent Immigrants

Prizes To Be Awarded at Annual Awards Dinner on Wednesday, March 14, 2007

New York, NY, January 19, 2007—The Vilcek Foundation announced today the names of the recipients of its annual Prizes in biomedical research and in the arts and humanities. The 2007 Prize recipient for biomedical science is developmental biologist and stem cell researcher, **Dr. Rudolf Jaenisch**; architect, urban planner, author and educator, **Denise Scott Brown** is receiving the Prize for arts and humanities. The Vilcek Foundation Prizes are awarded annually to foreign-born individuals for extraordinary contributions to society in the United States. The Vilcek Foundation is one of the very few foundations to bring together the fields of science and arts, and to acknowledge the contributions of some of their most prominent figures. The mission of the Foundation reflects the careers and passions of its founders, Dr. Jan and Marica Vilcek.

The Prizes will be given to their recipients during the second Annual Awards Dinner on Wednesday, March 14, 2007 at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel in New York, an event to which some 250 guests will be invited, among them prominent scientists, architects, cultural leaders, opinion-makers, and arts patrons.

“We are delighted that two outstanding, creative and influential individuals have been named as our 2007 Prize recipients”, said Jan Vilcek, President and co-founder of the Vilcek Foundation. The 2007 Prize recipients have been selected by panels of prominent independent experts.

About the Prize Recipients:

A native of Germany, **Dr. Rudolf Jaenisch** is a Professor of Biology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and founding Member of the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research. He demonstrated for the first time that foreign DNA could be taken up by the DNA of mouse embryos, and that mice derived from these embryos carried the foreign genes in their tissues. This work established the feasibility of gene therapy. Dr. Jaenisch is also a leader in the field of therapeutic cloning, called nuclear transfer, in which the genetic information from a cell is transplanted into an unfertilized mouse egg. Though incapable of developing into an embryo, the progeny of such eggs can serve as a source of stem cells. Furthermore, Dr. Jaenisch showed that embryonic stem cells can be procured without harming a viable embryo. There is hope that it will be possible to adapt these techniques for human therapeutic applications. Dr.

Jaenisch's work has earned him much recognition and numerous awards, including the first Peter Gruber Foundation Prize in Genetics, the Robert Koch Prize for Excellence in Scientific Achievement, the Charles Rodolphe Brupbacher Foundation Cancer Award, and the Max-Delbrück Medal for Molecular Medicine.

Born in Zambia and raised in Johannesburg, **Denise Scott Brown** has helped open the field of architecture to the ideas of pluralism and multiculturalism, social justice and activism, pop art and other contemporary influences. Ms. Scott Brown received her education at the University of Witwatersrand in South Africa, the Architectural Association of London, and the University of Pennsylvania. She received master's degrees in city planning and architecture from Penn and spent five years on its faculty. She also taught at UC Berkeley, UCLA, Yale, Harvard, and Princeton, and lectured worldwide on architecture, urbanism, and education. The influential 1972 book "Learning from Las Vegas", which Ms. Scott Brown co-authored with Robert Venturi and Steven Izenour, stirred controversy by suggesting that "low art", such as supermarket parking lots, the roadside commercial strip, and gambling casino advertising, provide valuable lessons in architectural design. Ms. Scott Brown has been a principal at the Philadelphia firm Venturi, Scott Brown and Associates, whose projects include the Sainsbury Wing of the National Gallery in London and the Conseil Général complex in Toulouse. She is a noted expert on campus planning and has recently written on urban planning and design for the World Trade Center site and New Orleans. Ms. Scott Brown has received many honorary degrees and awards, including the ACSA-AIA Topaz Medallion for Architecture Education, the Chicago Architecture Award and the Radcliffe Institute Medal.

About The Vilcek Foundation:

The Vilcek Foundation strives to increase public awareness of the enormous role immigrants play in enriching professional, academic and artistic activities in the United States. The Vilcek Foundation was established in 2000 by Jan and Marica Vilcek, immigrants from the former Czechoslovakia, and its programmatic mission was inspired by their careers in biomedical science and art history, respectively, as well as their personal experiences and gratitude as successful immigrants.

The Vilcek Foundation Prizes are important national awards that honor outstanding creative achievements by immigrants to America. These prizes were first awarded in 2006 to cancer researcher Joan Massagué, Chairman of the Cancer and Biology Genetics Program at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York, and to the artists Christo and Jeanne-Claude, creators of *The Gates* project installed in Central Park in 2005. Vilcek Foundation Prize winners receive a \$50,000 cash award and a trophy created by designer Stefan Sagmeister.

The Vilcek Foundation recently purchased a former carriage house on East 73rd Street. Once renovated, the building will house the Foundation's administrative office and serve as a venue for its programs, including lectures and exhibitions.

The Vilcek Foundation is a 501(c)(3) private operating foundation based in New York City.

For further information on The Vilcek Foundation, please visit www.vilcek.org or call (212) 472-4720.

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