

VILCEK FOUNDATION

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Inaugural Vilcek Prize for Excellence Recognizes Immigrant Accomplishment in Art History and Museum Work

**\$100,000 prize bestowed to art historian and curator
Carmen C. Bambach of the Metropolitan Museum of Art**

New York, NY, February 4, 2019 — The Vilcek Foundation is pleased to announce **Carmen C. Bambach** as the recipient of the inaugural Vilcek Prize for Excellence. The prize, which includes a \$100,000 award, is bestowed to an immigrant who has had a significant impact on American society and world culture.

“The contributions of both immigrants and curators often goes unheralded and unappreciated,” says Marica Vilcek, co-founder of the Vilcek Foundation. “With the Vilcek Prize for Excellence, we are afforded the unique opportunity to bring them into the limelight to be recognized and celebrated.”

Born in Chile, Bambach is a world-renowned expert in Renaissance art, with a specialization in drawings. In addition to authoring numerous books, catalogues, and over 70 scholarly articles, she demonstrated the functions of full-scale drawings in the complex technical process of producing Renaissance panel paintings and frescoes. Currently the curator of Italian and Spanish drawings at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bambach was the organizer and curator of the 2017-18 Met exhibition *Michelangelo: Divine Draftsman and Designer*, which included drawings that had never been exhibited before, for a once-in-a-lifetime viewing opportunity. Her four-volume study, *Leonardo da Vinci Rediscovered*, is forthcoming from Yale University Press this summer.

Bambach immigrated to the U.S. as a teenager with her parents, fleeing political upheaval in the 1970s. She completed bachelor’s, master’s, and doctorate degrees at Yale University, and among several honors has been named a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a Guggenheim Fellow, and a fellow of the American Academy in Rome and of Villa I Tatti, the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies.

The Vilcek Prize for Excellence is the newest addition to the foundation’s prize program, which spotlights and supports immigrant contributions to American society. Unlike the other prizes, however, the Vilcek Prize for Excellence is awarded at the discretion of founders Jan and Marica Vilcek in a field of their choosing. The other 2019 Vilcek Prizes recognize immigrants in biomedical science and culinary arts, and all prizewinners will be honored at a gala ceremony at the Mandarin Oriental in New York in spring 2019.

The Vilcek Foundation was established in 2000 by Jan and Marica Vilcek, immigrants from the former Czechoslovakia. The mission of the foundation, to honor immigrant contributions to the U.S. and to foster appreciation of the arts and sciences, was inspired by the couple’s careers, as well as their appreciation for the opportunities they received as newcomers. The foundation awards annual prizes to immigrants, sponsors cultural programs, and manages the Vilcek Foundation Art Collections. To learn more, please visit Vilcek.org.