

# VILCEK FOUNDATION

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## **Vilcek Foundation Announces Winners of 2014 Vilcek Prizes for Design**

### **Neri Oxman Selected as Winner of Vilcek Prize for Design**

### **Yasaman Hashemian, Mansour Ourasanah, and Quilian Riano receive the Vilcek Prizes for Creative Promise in Design**

**New York, NY, January 27, 2013** — The Vilcek Foundation is pleased to announce the winners of the annual Vilcek Prize and Creative Promise Prizes, recognizing immigrant contributions to the American arts and sciences. The Vilcek Prize and Creative Promise Prizes in the Arts will honor the field of design in 2014. Neri Oxman will be awarded the \$100,000 Vilcek Prize for Design. The Creative Promise Prizes, which include awards of \$35,000 each, will be presented to Yassaman Hashemian, Mansour Ourasanah, and Quilian Riano.

“We are privileged to honor these outstanding individuals for their contributions to the field of design,” said Marica Vilcek, vice president of the Vilcek Foundation. “Design plays an integral role in our everyday lives — from product design to social design, the convergences of art, enterprise, and creativity are shaping the way the world interacts, and these tastemakers are setting a new paradigm for a strong future.”

The Vilcek Prize for Design goes to architect and designer Neri Oxman, who was raised in Israel and relocated to the United States in 2005. Acknowledged for coining the phrase “material ecology” to define her work, Oxman is often referred to as the leader of the biological revolution in design. Through her work, she challenges traditional design principles across architecture, product design, and fashion by juxtaposing material properties and environmental constraints to generate breathtaking new forms. Her designs are created using modern technologies, such as 3D printing, but are inspired by elements of nature. Oxman has received multiple awards and recognitions, and her work has been displayed in institutions worldwide, such as the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York City, the Pompidou in Paris, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and the Smithsonian. Oxman resides in Boston, where she is the Sony Corporation Career Development professor and assistant professor of Media Arts and Sciences at the MIT Media Lab. She is the founder and director of the Mediated Matter design research group.

The Vilcek Prizes for Creative Promise in Design complement the Vilcek Prize and are awarded to foreign-born individuals who have demonstrated exceptional achievements early in their careers. The 2014 winners in design include:

**Mansour Ourasanah**, a senior designer for Whirlpool’s Advanced Studio in Chicago, where his role is to create innovative user-centric solutions for a new generation of global and hyper-connected consumers. His work focuses on the importance of storytelling in the design of products that address complex emotional and environmental challenges. His most recent

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project, [LEPSIS: The Art of Growing Grasshoppers](#) — a vessel that can be used to grow insects for food in efforts to promote sustainable meat production and consumption amongst urban populations — is one example of his achievements in the design arena. Ourasanah was born in Togo.

**Yasaman Hashemian**, who is involved in a number of health-based research projects, which provide the basis for her work as a game and usability designer, data analyst, and game producer. Most notably among her works, [Virtual Sprouts](#) presents gardening and cooking as an exciting and fun activity to children reluctant to try unfamiliar fruits and vegetables. Budded from her own childhood experiences in which her parents encouraged her to engage in outdoor activities, exercise, arts, and education, Hashemian seeks to teach children the value of healthy-living practices, creativity, and teamwork through her games. Hashemian was born in Iran.

**Quilian Riano**, the founder of DSGN AGNC, a practice focused on housing and public space design. Riano seeks to address social issues that negatively affect communities by bringing together trans-disciplinary groups and community leaders to create proposals that acknowledge and navigate the complex interactions of social, political, economic, and spatial urban processes. The agency has taken on several projects in the United States and in Latin America; Riano's social design efforts with the [Corona Plaza Engagement Project](#), [La Union Community Project](#), and [Casas De La Esperanza Community Project](#) have earned him much recognition. Riano was born in Colombia.

The prizewinners were selected by panels of independent experts in the field of design. All prizewinners will be honored at a ceremony in New York City in April 2014. Paola Antonelli, senior curator of the Department of Architecture and Design at the MoMA in New York City, will present the arts prizes.

In addition to prizes in the arts, the Vilcek Foundation also awards prizes in the field of biomedical science. The 2014 Vilcek Prize in Biomedical Science will be awarded to Thomas Jessell, Claire Tow professor in the departments of Neuroscience and Biochemistry & Molecular Biophysics at Columbia University. The Vilcek Creative Promise Prizes in Biomedical Science will be awarded to Antonio Giraldez, Stavros Lomvardas, and Pardis Sabeti. For more information on the Vilcek Prizes, please visit [www.vilcek.org](http://www.vilcek.org).

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The Vilcek Foundation was established in 2000 by Jan and Marica Vilcek, immigrants from the former Czechoslovakia. The mission of the Foundation, to honor the contributions of foreign-born scholars and artists living in the United States, 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 this country. The Foundation hosts events to promote the work of immigrants, awards annual prizes to prominent immigrant biomedical scientists and artists, and sponsors cultural programs such as the Hawaii International Film Festival. To learn more, please visit [Vilcek.org](http://Vilcek.org)