

VILCEK FOUNDATION

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Guatemalan-born architect Teddy Cruz wins prize honoring immigrant artists

\$100,000 Vilcek Prize given in recognition of significant immigrant contributions to United States

New York, NY, February 1, 2018 — The Vilcek Foundation is pleased to announce architect and urban researcher Teddy Cruz as the winner of the 2018 Vilcek Prize in the Arts and Humanities, this year recognizing the field of architecture. Awarded annually, the Vilcek Prizes call attention to the breadth of immigrant contributions to American society. Mr. Cruz is originally from Guatemala.

“The work of Teddy Cruz and his partner, Fonna Forman, is as necessary as it is timely,” says Rick Kinsel, president of the Vilcek Foundation. “It highlights the harmony and connection that still exists, even in these divisive times.”

The Vilcek Prize in Architecture, which comes with a \$100,000 cash prize, is awarded to **Teddy Cruz**, professor at University of California, San Diego, and director of design at Estudio Teddy Cruz + Fonna Forman. Born in Guatemala, his work is deeply informed by his childhood there and his subsequent immigration to America. Arriving in California at the age of 20, he was struck by the many ways that the cities and communities of San Diego and Tijuana were both united and divided. This sparked a lifelong interest in using the tools and framework of architecture and urban planning to redefine the concepts of borders, citizenship, and community. Most recently, this has taken the form of designing, with his partner Fonna Forman, cross-border community spaces that host a variety of arts and educational programming. Created in tandem with local governments, universities, activists, and nonprofit groups, the spaces emphasize the shared values, peoples, and ecology on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. Cruz’s writing has been published widely, including features in the *New York Times*, *The Guardian*, and *Harvard Design Magazine*. He has received the prestigious Rome Prize in Architecture, and the work of Estudio Teddy Cruz + Fonna Forman will be included in the American Pavilion at the 2018 Venice Architecture Biennale.

The foundation also announces the winners of the Vilcek Prizes for Creative Promise, given to younger immigrants who have demonstrated exceptional promise early in their careers. Each prize includes a \$50,000 cash award. The winners in architecture are Iranian-born Mona Ghandi, assistant professor of architecture at Washington State University; Chinese-born James Leng, principal at Office James Leng; and Chinese-born Jing Liu, principal at SO-IL.

The Vilcek Prize in the Arts is awarded in rotating disciplines. Previous disciplines include music, film, culinary arts, literature, dance, contemporary music, design, fashion, theatre, and fine arts. The Vilcek Foundation also awards corresponding prizes in the field of biomedical science each year. The prizewinners were selected by panels of experts in each field; they will be

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honored at an awards gala in New York City in April 2018. For more information about the Vilcek Prizes, prizewinners, and jurors, please visit vilcek.org.

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 immigrants to the United States and to foster appreciation of the arts and sciences, was inspired by the couple's respective careers in biomedical science and art history, as well as their personal experiences and appreciation of the opportunities they received as newcomers to this country. The foundation awards annual prizes to prominent immigrant biomedical scientists and artists, and manages the Vilcek Foundation Art Collections.

To learn more about the Vilcek Foundation, please visit vilcek.org.