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Maestros of Movement Brought Together by 2012 Vilcek Prizes

*Dance Legend Mikhail Baryshnikov and Renowned Biophysicist
Carlos Bustamante receive \$100,000 Vilcek Prizes*

*Choreographer Michel Kouakou and Biomedical Scientist Alice Ting receive
\$25,000 Vilcek Prizes for Creative Promise*

New York, NY, February 13, 2012 — The Vilcek Foundation is pleased to name the 2012 winners of the Vilcek Prizes, honoring foreign-born scientists and artists in the United States. The Vilcek Prize for the Arts, this year awarded in Dance, is presented to Mikhail Baryshnikov, born in Latvia to Russian parents, for his body of distinguished work and his legacy of advancing the field of dance. The Vilcek Prize for Biomedical Science is awarded to Peruvian-born Dr. Carlos Bustamante, a professor at the University of California, Berkeley, for his discoveries in the fields of molecular biology and biophysics; most notably, for inventing tools to study life-sustaining cellular processes at the level of single molecules.

Choreographer and dancer Michel Kouakou, originally of Ivory Coast, is being recognized for his body of work that fluidly combines diverse dance influences from around the world. Dr. Alice Ting, a Taiwanese-born molecular biologist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is being honored for her development of new technologies for imaging protein trafficking, protein-protein interactions, and enzymatic activity inside cells.

The Vilcek Prizes embody the Vilcek Foundation's mission to celebrate the accomplishments of foreign-born artists and scientists. "These prizes not only honor four outstanding individuals, they help to document the importance of immigrant contributions to science and the arts in the United States," said Dr. Jan Vilcek, President of the Foundation.

What sets the Vilcek Prize apart from the numerous honors Mr. Baryshnikov and Dr. Bustamante have earned thus far? They illuminate their contributions in the context of their immigrant backgrounds. At the age of 26, Mr. Baryshnikov defected from Soviet Russia in pursuit of artistic and personal freedom. Since then, he has made the most of those freedoms, taking the fields of both classical and modern dance by storm. Trained by the formidable Russian ballet masters, Mr. Baryshnikov has danced with major ballet companies around the world, including New York City Ballet. As Artistic Director of American Ballet Theatre (1980-1989), and Director of White Oak Dance Project (1989-2002), which he co-founded with Mark Morris, Mr. Baryshnikov gained a reputation as a prominent producer of large-scale, experimental works, nurturing a new generation of dancers and choreographers. In 2005, he opened the Baryshnikov Arts Center, a creative home for artists to develop and present work; he currently serves as its Artistic Director.

Dr. Bustamante's research has broken boundaries in our understanding of basic cellular functions – right through to the molecular level. Dr. Bustamante's major contributions include studies that make possible the visualization and manipulation of single molecules that play central functions inside cells. By unraveling the dynamics of molecular interactions, Dr. Bustamante has laid the groundwork for tackling human diseases such as hepatitis C and muscular dystrophy. Aside from these medical gains, Dr. Bustamante's work has galvanized the field of biophysics, marshaling ever-finer tools to observe molecular

interactions inside cells. He is a Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigator, and Professor of Molecular & Cell Biology, Physics, and Chemistry at the University of California, Berkeley. For his many important discoveries he was elected a member of the National Academy of Science, has received the Alexander Hollaender award from the National Academy of Science, the Max Delbruck prize, an Alfred P. Sloan Foundation fellowship, a Searle scholarship, and a *Time* magazine nomination as one of “America’s Best”.

The Vilcek Prizes for Creative Promise are awarded annually to a younger generation of immigrants in the same fields as the Vilcek Prizes. Accompanied by a \$25,000 cash prize, the prizes are intended to honor scholars and artists who have distinguished themselves earlier in their careers. Mr. Kouakou was selected in acknowledgment of the breadth of his creative influences and performing career, and for his efforts to expand dance instruction and appreciation, by bringing instructors to his home country. Dr. Ting was chosen in recognition of her innovative techniques for tagging and illuminating individual proteins within a cell, thereby improving the accuracy of results for biomedical researchers.

In addition to Mr. Kouakou and Dr. Ting, four Creative Promise finalists in each category were selected, and will receive \$5000 each.

All winners and finalists were selected by juries made up of experts from the dance and biomedical science fields. They will accept their prizes at an awards presentation gala on April 2, 2012 in New York City. Dr. John Sexton, President of New York University, will give the keynote speech at the event. For more information about the prizewinners and the Vilcek Prizes, please visit www.vilcek.org.

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