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6 robotics pioneers win 2022 Engelberger Awards

By Brianna Wessling | April 25, 2022

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The recipients of the 2022 Engelberger Award (left to right, starting top left): Michael Jacobs, Oussama Khatib, Marc Raibert, Bertil Thorvaldsson, Bruno Siciliano and Melonee Wise. Source: A3

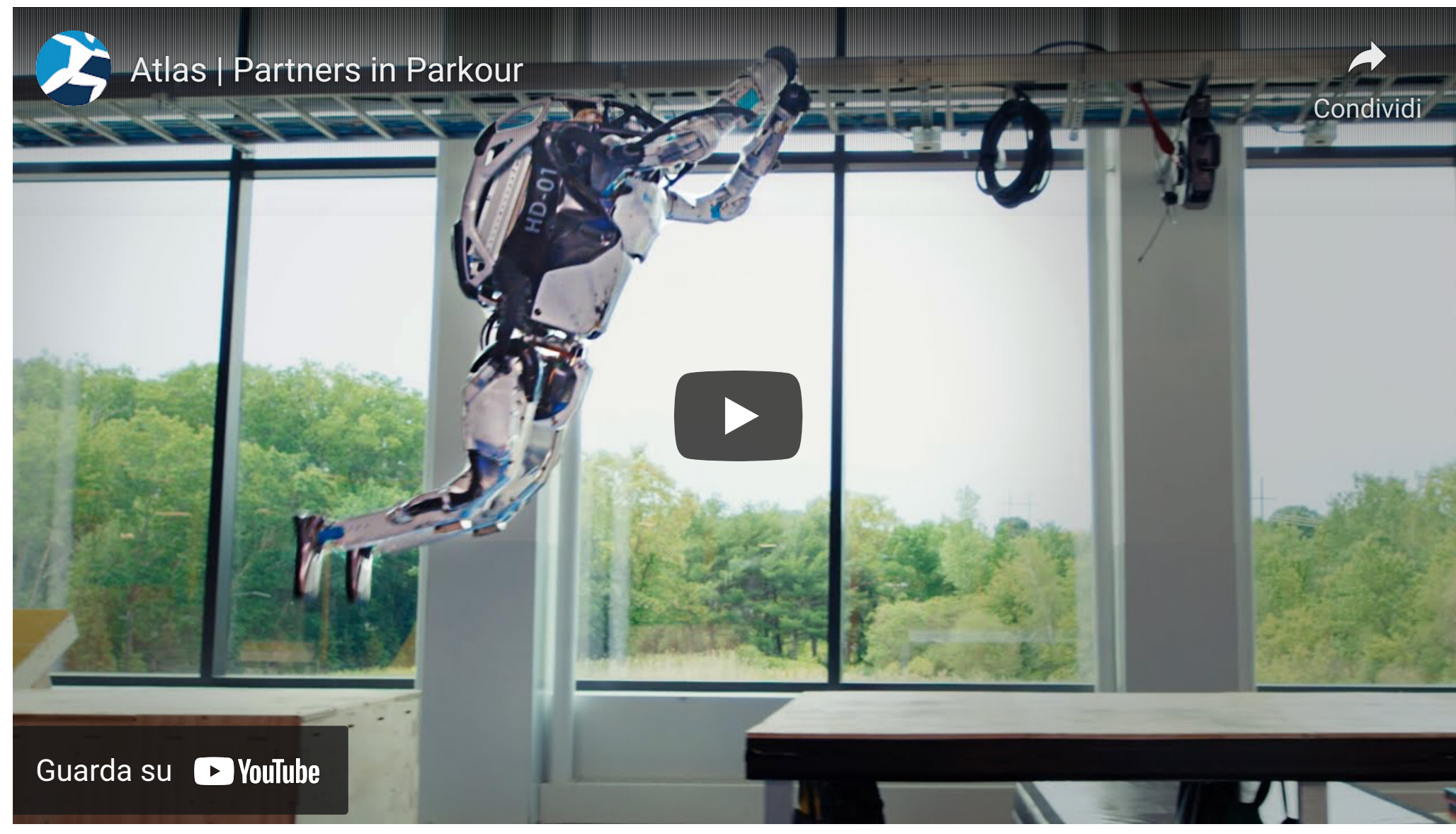
Editor's Note: Melonee Wise, General Manager of Robotics Automation at Zebra Technologies, will be keynoting our **Robotics Summit & Expo**, which takes place May 10-11 in Boston. Her talk, "Why the Cloud is a Force Multiplier for Robotics," will give attendees innovative use cases and examples of how cloud technology and applications have changed and will continue to change in the face of mobile robots. The keynote will take place on May 11 from 9:00 AM to 9:45 AM.

The Association for Advancing Automation (A3) announced its six recipients of the 2022 Engelberger Robotics Awards: Michael P. Jacobs of **Applied Manufacturing Technologies (AMT)**, Oussama Khatib of **Stanford University**, Marc Raibert of **Boston Dynamics**, Bertil Thorvaldsson of **ABB**, Bruno Siciliano of the **University of Naples Federico II** and Melonee Wise of **Zebra Technologies**.

A3 will present three of the awards to Jacobs, Khatib and Raibert at the **Automate 2022 Show and Conference** in Detroit. The awards for Thorvaldsson, Siciliano and Wise will be presented at Automatica in Munich.

The Engelberger awards recognize leaders in robotics for excellence in technology development, application, education and leadership. Since they began in 1977, 134 roboticists from 17 different countries have been recognized.

"As the robotics industry grows, so does our list of extremely talented nominees deserving of this coveted Engelberger Award," Jeff Burnstein, president of A3, said. "In their unique ways, each of these six remarkable individuals have played prominent roles in shaping the robotics industry we're a part of today, from educating future roboticists to advancing the role of mobile, industrial and collaborative robotics in manufacturing facilities and warehouses alike. We expect more great things from this year's winners and look forward to celebrating them at Automate and Automatica."



A look at the winners

The honorees were chosen by the past chairs of the A3 Technology Strategy Board. Two of this year's winners are being honored for their leadership, two for education and two for technology.

Jacobs, the founder and CEO of AMT, is being honored for his leadership. Before founding AMT, he pioneered the product development and market introduction of robot simulation and offline programming systems at GMF Robotics, now FANUC.

Thorvaldsson, the general product manager at ABB, will also be honored for his leadership. Thorvaldsson joined the company in 1976.

Khatib, a roboticist and professor of computer science at Stanford, and Siciliano, a professor of automatic control at the University of Naples Federico II, were both awarded for education. Khatib is credited with seminal work in several areas, including robot motion planning and control, human-friendly robot design, haptic interaction and human motion synthesis.

Siciliano is an Italian engineer and scientific poplizer. At the University of Naples Federico II, Siciliano is the director of the ICAROS Center and coordinator of the PRISMA Lab at the Department of Electrical Engineering and Information Technology.

The last two recipients, Raibert and Wise, were awarded for technology. Raibert is the founder, former CEO and currently chairman of Boston Dynamics. Wise was the CEO of Fetch Robotics. In 2021, Fetch was **acquired** by Zebra Technologies, where Wise now serves as General Manager of Robotics Automation.

"I'm truly honored to receive the Joseph Engelberger award for Technology," Wise said. "Just as Engelberger forged the path of industrial robots in manufacturing automation, the Fetch Robotics team has followed in his footsteps to bring AMRs to the forefront of manufacturing and logistics automation. I am deeply inspired by Engelberger's work, and with Zebra, I hope to continue to push the boundaries of robotics technology to enable the adoption of robotics in new industries and applications."

The Engelberger Award is named after Joseph F. Engelberger, the founding force behind industrial robotics. Each winner receives a \$5,000 honorarium and commemorative medallion.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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