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**THE SILK ROAD PROJECT LAUNCHES LANDMARK SERIES OF
FESTIVALS IN ASIA, EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA FEATURING YO-YO
MA AND THE SILK ROAD ENSEMBLE**

**New Cross-Cultural Commissions and Traditional Works from Silk Road Countries
will Premier at Germany's Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival in August 2001**

July 9, 2001, New York—The Silk Road Project will launch a landmark series of festivals this summer in Asia, Europe and North America, that will celebrate the historic cross-cultural exchange between the lands of the Silk Road and the West. Led by Artistic Director Yo-Yo Ma and a distinguished international team of musicians, artists and scholars, the Project is designed to illuminate the historical contributions of the Silk Road, support innovative collaborations among artists from Asia, Europe and North America, and explore classical music within a broader global context. The first of over a dozen festivals will open on August 19, 2001 at the Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival in Germany. The festivals will feature Yo-Yo Ma with the Silk Road Ensemble performing specially commissioned pieces, traditional works from Silk Road countries, and Western music influenced by Eastern traditions.

"I am eagerly anticipating the start of our Partner City Festival Tour and the opportunity to begin sharing with audiences the music that has evolved from the collaboration of a diverse group of people and ideas. Our partner organizations have each developed a unique festival that will celebrate the history and the contemporary culture of the Silk Road," commented Ma.

The Silk Road Project has received generous support. The Aga Khan Trust for Culture is the lead funder and a key creative partner of the Project. Ford Motor Company and Siemens are the Global Corporate Partners of the Silk Road Project. Major funding has been provided by The Starr Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. Henry R. Kravis, Richard Li and William Rondina. Sony Classical is the founding supporter.