



Press Contact: Amy Wentz, Ruder Finn
Phone: (212) 715-1551; wentza@ruderfinn.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FORD MOTOR COMPANY COMMISSIONS SILK ROAD ENCOUNTERS

Comprehensive Education Initiative Extends Experience of the Silk Road Project to Worldwide Audiences Beyond the Concert Hall

November 7, 2001, New York—The Silk Road Project today announced the launch of Silk Road Encounters, a comprehensive, global education initiative exploring the cross-cultural influences of the historic Silk Road. Silk Road Encounters was commissioned by Ford Motor Company and redefines the traditional boundaries of arts education by creating a global network to share the art and history of the trade routes which shaped the modern world. Silk Road Encounters is a major component of the Silk Road Project, an initiative comprising concerts and workshops led by Artistic Director Yo-Yo Ma which is designed to illuminate the historical contributions and celebrate the cross-cultural dimensions of the Silk Road.

Silk Road Encounters is made possible by Ford Motor Company as part of its long standing tradition of arts education support. Ford is also a global corporate partner of the Silk Road Project.

"When Ford approached us with the idea for Silk Road Encounters an instant connection was made," said Yo-Yo Ma, artistic director, Silk Road Project. "We had been looking to develop an education initiative which would share the historic Silk Road with a wider audience. Ford's leadership and support has made this possible for audiences around the globe."

Silk Road Encounters was created to extend the reach of the Silk Road Project beyond the concert hall and into homes and schools. The initiative will supply schools, families and students across the globe with tools to explore the history, geography, culture, social history and cross-cultural exchange that accompanied travelers along the Silk Road. With materials ranging from source books and learning exercises to a musically and visually rich web site, Silk Road Encounters will provide insight into the evolution of cultures and the impact of the Silk Road on modern-day society. The program also encompasses live learning at family concerts around the world where story tellers will illuminate concert repertoire in the local language to share the experience of the Silk Road with international audiences. Silk Road Encounters moves the creativity and innovation of Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble for audiences from the traditional performing arts venues and into communities where a broader audience can be exposed to the remarkable traditions and history of the Silk Road.

"Education is a top priority for Ford. Through Silk Road Encounters, we are proud to help educate and inspire audiences and students around the globe by making the cultural and historic treasures of the Silk Road accessible to children and their families and communities," said Sandra E. Ulsh, President, Ford Motor Company Fund.