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***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

**THE SILK ROAD PROJECT LAUNCHES CULTURAL EXCHANGE  
INITIATIVES IN NORTH AMERICA**

**Concerts, Performances, Workshops and Lectures Inspired  
by the Legendary Silk Road to Begin in 2002**

**Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble Join with Mark Morris and Other Artists to  
Perform New and Traditional Works in Music, Dance, and Art**

April 3, 2002, New York—This month, after a successful Western European festival tour, the Silk Road Project will present a series of events including concerts, workshops, lectures, educational initiatives, and exhibitions in North America. The Silk Road Project explores the cross-pollination of ideas, cultures, music, and art that occurred along the ancient Silk Road—a vast network of trade routes that were active from the first millennium B.C. to the middle of the second millennium A.D. At its height, the Silk Road extended eastward from China and Japan and westward through the oasis cities of Central Asia—Kashgar, Samarkand and Bukhara—to Persia, Turkey, Greece, and Italy, serving as a crucible for cultural innovation and the transmission of ideas.

The 2002 North American Partner City Festival Tour begins in April in Berkeley, then travels to New York City, and Seattle in May. The tour features Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble—a collective of musicians whose careers encompass classical, folk, and pop music—performing specially commissioned pieces by composers from Silk Road countries including China, Mongolia, South Korea, Uzbekistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Iran, and Turkey. The concert repertoire will also include traditional works and classical music by composers such as Ravel and Debussy who were profoundly influenced by Eastern traditions. In June and July the Silk Road Project partners with the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage to produce the 36th annual Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington, D.C., *The Silk Road: Connecting Cultures, Creating Trust*. During the Festival Tour, the Silk Road Ensemble will make special performance appearances in Palo Alto, California, Chicago and College Park, Maryland.

The Silk Road Project, created in 1998, 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. Sony Classical is the founding supporter. Major funding has been provided by The Starr Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. Henry R. Kravis, Richard Li and William Rondina.

**Cal Performances Berkeley**

The 10-day festival at the University of California at Berkeley campus will begin on April 19 at Cal Performances with the world premiere of Kolam, a new Indian-inspired work by acclaimed choreographer Mark Morris with Yo-Yo Ma and the Mark Morris Dance Group. With music commissioned by the Silk Road Project, Kolam was co-composed by acclaimed tabla performer Zakir Hussain and pianist Ethan Iverson. Other Berkeley festival highlights include:

- 2 performances by Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble
- 1 performance by the Silk Road Ensemble
- Sightlines pre-concert lectures with Silk Road Project Curatorial Director Ted Levin and Silk Road Ensemble musicians
- Sound Travels: A Musical Journey Along the Silk Road, a two-day academic conference with lecturers from around the world, focusing on the economic, political and cultural significance of the Silk Road, with an emphasis on the transmission of music along these trade routes
- A one-hour musical narrative for Bay-area school children, based on the stories of ancient Silk Road cultures, with Yo-Yo Ma, the Silk Road Ensemble and storyteller Ben Haggarty
- Composition and ethnomusicology colloquium featuring the Silk Road Project composer and musician Kayhan Kalhor, instrumentalists Siamak Aghaei (santur) and Siamak Jahangiry (ney)
- The Silk Road Ensemble: Portraits and Places, an exhibition of formal and personal photographs
- Carnegie Hall

The Silk Road Project arrives at New York City's Carnegie Hall on May 3 for a seven-day festival that includes concerts, lectures and educational programming. Festival highlights include:

- 3 Performances by Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble
- Pre-concert lectures by Carnegie Hall Artistic Advisor Ara Guzelimian
- Carnegie Talks, an in-depth conversation between Carnegie Hall Artistic Advisor Ara Guzelimian and Silk Road Project Artistic Director Yo-Yo Ma
- A Saturday afternoon Family Series storytelling concert, made possible by Ford Motor Company, with Yo-Yo Ma; the Silk Road Ensemble; and storytellers Ben Haggarty and Charlotte Blake Alston
- Sounds Along the Silk Road, an educational concert with Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble that is part of Carnegie Hall's Global Encounters new world-music program for high school students
- Music and Culture Along the Silk Road, a professional development workshop for educators, led by Dr. Theodore Levin, Associate Professor of Music at Dartmouth College and Curatorial Director of the Silk Road Project

## **Seattle Symphony**

Beginning Monday, May 12, the Seattle Symphony will present the Silk Road Project as part of a week long festival that supports the Symphony's diverse and contemporary music initiatives. Festival highlights include:

- 4 Performances by Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble
- Seattle Symphony concert with Yo-Yo Ma, under the direction of special guest conductor Jahja Ling
- Pre-concert lectures with Silk Road Project Curatorial Director Ted Levin, Silk Road Ensemble musicians and guest lecturers
- Post-concert panel discussions with Silk Road Project Curatorial Director Ted Levin, members of the Silk Road Ensemble, and guests from the University of Washington

### **Smithsonian Folklife Festival**

Beginning on June 26, the Silk Road Project partners with the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage to present this year's 36th annual Smithsonian Folklife Festival, *The Silk Road: Connecting Cultures, Creating Trust*. The Festival will feature the Silk Road as its only program this summer – the first time the Festival has produced a single-themed event in its 35-year history.

The 2002 Festival, *The Silk Road: Connecting Cultures, Creating Trust*, will be held outdoors on the National Mall from June 26 – June 30 and July 3 – July 7. The Festival will be an international exhibition of Silk Road traditions with more than 375 musicians, artisans, cooks and storytellers from more than 20 other countries exploring the complex history of the Silk Road. Smithsonian Folklife Festival highlights will include:

A series of workshop concerts led by the Silk Road Ensemble that explore the relation of tradition and innovation in music through recent Silk Road Project commissions  
Performances of Gigakuan ancient form of mask theater and dance by world renowned Japanese artist Mannojo Nomura and an international 20-person troupe  
Demonstrations of martial arts, silk making, textile weaving, pottery painting, glass blowing, kite flying, calligraphy, puppetry and more  
Concessions featuring foods from the countries of the Silk Road, including cuisines from Japan, China, Central Asia and Italy  
Special passports [[download passport PDF](#)] for children to be stamped as they experience the Smithsonian Folklife Festival and “travel” along the Silk Road, with a reward provided at the end of the journey