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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**THE SILK ROAD PROJECT ANNOUNCES NEW LEADERSHIP
LAURA FREID NAMED EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AUG. 1**

NEW YORK, July 28, 2004 - The Silk Road Project chairman of the board, Dr. Merton Flemings, and the artistic director, Yo-Yo Ma, announced today that Laura Freid will be named executive director and chief executive officer on August 1, 2004.

The Silk Road Project is a non-profit arts organization that serves as a common resource for a number of artistic, cultural, and educational programs reflecting the cultural heritage symbolized by the Silk Road.

"We are delighted that Laura Freid will be joining us at a very exciting time for the Silk Road Project," said Yo-Yo Ma, artistic director. "We are seeking to deepen and broaden the ways in which we illuminate the Silk Road's historical and contemporary contribution to art and culture. While continuing our musical programming with the Silk Road Ensemble, we are undertaking initiatives with museums and educational groups that will showcase the cultural legacy and contemporary collaborations for which the Silk Road has become a symbol. Laura Freid brings the level of strategic leadership and institutional development expertise that the Silk Road Project needs at this point in our history."

Ms. Freid has more than two decades of leadership experience in top-tier institutions of higher education and as a consultant to not-for-profit, public affairs, and media organizations. Most recently she served as executive vice president for public affairs and university relations at Brown University where she acted as the university's chief spokesperson, communications strategy advisor, and external relations operations officer. While acting as senior cabinet member and chief advisor to the President, she managed several communications offices with a staff of 45 people, and led the University's federal, state, and city relations efforts as well as its flagship outreach initiatives. Before her tenure at Brown University, Ms. Freid held senior communications positions at Harvard University and served as publisher of Harvard Magazine and the first executive director of the Ivy League Magazine Network. Previously she was publisher and editor of Bostonia Magazine and head of Boston University's international alumni travel and arts programs. A graduate of Washington University in St. Louis, Ms. Freid holds an MBA from Boston University and is currently completing her doctorate at University of Pennsylvania.

Highlights of the Silk Road Project, Inc. in 2004 are the Silk Road Ensemble performances at Tanglewood Music Center, Lenox, Mass; BBC Proms, London, UK;

Carnegie Hall, NY; and the British Library in coordination with the library's major exhibition "The Silk Road: Trade, Travel, War and Faith."

Additional program highlights include the Innovators in Tradition Program, an exchange program that mentors musicians in Azerbaijan, China, India, Iran, and the United States, and the Museums Initiative, a series of performance, exhibition, and educational events co-produced by museums in Asia, Europe, and North America that was launched in January 2004 at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts.

Laura Freid said, "With his dynamic and innovative Silk Road Project, Yo-Yo Ma reawakened insights and interest in global cultural exchange and collaboration through pioneering musical performances, recordings, and trans-cultural exchanges. I am very honored to be chosen to work with Mr. Ma, with the project's committed board members and supporters, with the extraordinary artists from China, Iran, Mongolia, India, Japan, Korea, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Armenia, the Kyrgyz Republic, Turkey, Canada, and the United States and with the dedicated staff members of the Silk Road Project as it moves into the next phase of music, arts, and education programs. Given the contemporary global, political, and commercial environment, the motivating concept of multicultural learning, artistic exchange, and international creative collaborations behind the Silk Road Project is even more compelling and important than it was at the project's initiation several years ago."

The Silk Road Project, Inc. chairman of the board, Dr. Merton Flemings, said, "We are an evolving collaboration of artists, scholars, business people, and others who are passionate about how cultural exchange enriches our lives and our societies, and how it can bring peoples together in these difficult times. Such an organization needs a distinctive kind of leadership that is innovative and open to new ideas, joint ventures, and initiatives. We are convinced that Laura Freid will be the dynamic and creative leader that the Silk Road Project demands."

About the Silk Road Project, Inc.

Founded in 1998 by Yo-Yo Ma, the Silk Road Project strives to bring new ideas, talent, and energy into the world of classical music, while nurturing artistic creativity that draws on the diverse and distinguished sources of cultural heritage around the world. Since its founding in 1998, the Silk Road Project has produced two CD's, published one book, commissioned 20 new chamber works, created an education kit titled "Silk Road Encounters," co-produced a major cultural festival with the Smithsonian Institution, and presented concerts worldwide. The Silk Road Project promotes collaboration and a sense of community among musicians, audiences, and institutions who share a fascination with the trans-cultural artistic imagination symbolized by the legendary Silk Road.