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**YO-YO MA AND SILK ROAD ENSEMBLE RETURN TO CHICAGO
APRIL 9-21, 2007**

**Record Audiences Respond to Silk Road Chicago, Enjoying
Cultural Journey of Discovery**

May 22, 2007, Chicago, IL – *Silk Road Chicago*, an unprecedented collaboration among the Silk Road Project, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Art Institute of Chicago and the City of Chicago, welcomes Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble back to Chicago in April to continue the city's yearlong celebration of the interchange of culture, ideas and innovations along the historic Silk Road trade route. Taking place from Monday, April 9 to Sunday, April 21, 2007, the Silk Road Project's most comprehensive residency in Chicago will include performances, workshops and lectures at the Art Institute of Chicago and with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Since its launch in June 2006, *Silk Road Chicago* has been a resounding success, reaching hundreds of thousands of people. Offering a rare opportunity for more than 100 Chicago cultural organizations to collectively celebrate the arts of a specific region, Silk Road Chicago, during the course of the year, has featured more than 300 performances, exhibitions and special events citywide to encourage cross-cultural discovery and exploration of the rich artistic legacy of the Silk Road. Programs have attracted record attendance at the Art Institute, sold-out performances at the Chicago Symphony, and one of the largest concerts held to date at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion in Millennium Park.

“The collaboration and creativity that arise when strangers meet have given birth to some of the most extraordinary cultural evolutions,” said Yo-Yo Ma, founder and artistic director of the Silk Road Project. “Chicago has a long history of innovation and diversity; its residents take great pride in the city's world-class institutions, its neighborhoods, and its wealth of activities. Chicago was a natural choice to host a Silk Road journey that has featured stories, rhythms, tastes and colors from around the world. *Silk Road Chicago* is a celebration of the world's multiple perspectives, stirring the imagination and getting people to dream. I'm thrilled to be sharing the Silk Road experience with Chicago.”

“The Silk Road Project will leave a lasting legacy in Chicago, not only among the many cultural institutions that have been touched by its inspiration, but in the hearts of our people,” said Commissioner Lois Weisberg of the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs. “We are indebted to the brilliant and passionate Yo-Yo Ma for giving us so many opportunities throughout the past year to experience the joy and sense of kinship that come from cross-cultural collaborations.”

“Our yearlong Silk Road Chicago celebration has been a wonderful example of the creative and collaborative spirit for which Chicago is known,” said Deborah R. Card, president of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association. “The variety of performances, family programs, neighborhood concerts and educational activities presented by Silk Road Chicago throughout the city have afforded countless Chicagoans an opportunity to explore the cross-cultural influences found along both the ancient Silk Road and in our communities today. We are thrilled that our dear friend Yo-Yo Ma and his Silk Road Ensemble will return to Chicago in April to present a series of concerts at Symphony Center, exploring the musical traditions of the Far East and helping us to connect even more closely with our cultural partners, our community, and our audience.”

“We have had a wonderful year here at the Art Institute hosting artists, musicians, scholars, poets, dancers, and performers, all in the service of demonstrating the interconnectedness of cultures and people across the globe,” stated James Cuno, president and Eloise W. Martin director of the Art Institute of Chicago. “We are also thrilled to be hosting the Silk Road Ensemble for nearly two weeks in April as the culmination of this collaboration, and I am looking forward to the galleries of the museum being filled with the music and unique energy of the Ensemble.”

The forthcoming Silk Road Chicago residency in April will include a series of gallery performances by the Silk Road Ensemble at the Art Institute of Chicago, and performances at Symphony Center, including concerts with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and a Silk Road Ensemble family concert. Also, a private event in the "Creating a Life with Music" workshop series for music students aged 11-17 will be led by Yo-Yo Ma and members of the Silk Road Ensemble. Entitled *The 'I' of the Storm: Finding your Musical Voice*, the workshop will focus on students' discovery of their personal style and engage participants in an investigation of what it means to be a musician in today's global culture.

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

Silk Road Ensemble Gallery Performances

Monday, April 9, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 10 – Friday, April 13, 10:45 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Saturday, April 14, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Monday, April 16 – Wednesday, April 18, 10:45 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Thursday, April 19, 10:45 a.m. – 3 pm and 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

The Art Institute of Chicago, 111 S. Michigan Ave.

312.443.3600

Performances are free with Museum admission

Silk Road Ensemble members will perform throughout the galleries at the Art Institute of Chicago, linking visual works and sound in a unique and captivating multi-sensory interaction.

CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Chicago Symphony Orchestra Subscription Concerts

Thursday, April 12, 8 p.m.

Friday, April 13, 8 p.m.

Tuesday, April 17, 7:30 p.m.

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Miguel Harth-Bedoya, conductor

Yo-Yo Ma, cello

Silk Road Ensemble

Symphony Center, 220 S. Michigan Ave.

312.294.3000 or 800.223.7114

Tickets \$25-\$52

The Silk Road Ensemble will join the Chicago Symphony Orchestra on an adventurous musical journey featuring Lou Harrison's concerto for Chinese lute (pipa) and orchestra performed by soloist Wu Man, Yo-Yo Ma performing the beloved Hebrew melodies of Ernst Bloch's Schelomo and the Silk Road Ensemble performing Wu Tong's *Ambush from Ten Sides*. These concerts will feature the world premiere of CSO Mead Composer-in Residence Osvalod Golijov's *Rose of the Winds* that will combine the forces of Yo-Yo Ma, the Silk Road Ensemble and the Orchestra.

LaSalle Bank Chamber Music Series

Sunday, April 15, 3 p.m.

Silk Road Ensemble

Yo-Yo Ma, cello

Symphony Center, 220 S. Michigan Ave.

312.294.3000 or 800.223.7114

Tickets \$49-\$89

This Silk Road Ensemble performance features works influenced by the rich sounds of the Silk Road region, including traditional Chinese music performed by local Ensemble members, Sapo Perapaskero's *Turceasca*, and new works: Evan Ziporyn's *Sulvasutra*, Rabih Abou-Khalil's *Arabian Waltz*, Sandeep Das' *Shristi*, and Kayhan Kalhor's *The Silent City*.

Symphony Center Presents

Friday, April 20, 8 p.m.

Silk Road Ensemble

Yo-Yo Ma, cello

Symphony Center, 220 S. Michigan Ave.

312.294.3000 or 800.223.7114

Tickets \$35-\$99

The dynamic program for this Silk Road Ensemble concert includes Christopher Adler's *Music for a Royal Palace*, Zhao Lin's arrangement of the Chinese traditional *Swallow Song*, Angel Lam's *Empty Mountain*, *Spirit Rain*, Dong-Won Kim's *Once We Were...*, Dmitri Yanov-Yanovsky's *Paths of Parables* and Golijov's *Night of the Flying Horses* and Lua Descolorida.

Symphony Center Presents

Saturday, April 21, 11 a.m.

Silk Road Ensemble

Yo-Yo Ma, cello

Symphony Center, 220 S. Michigan Ave.

312.294.3000 or 800.223.7114

Tickets \$11-\$44

In this special family concert, Yo-Yo Ma, the Silk Road Ensemble and storyteller Ben Haggarty take the audience on a lively journey through music and storytelling. Recommended for ages 5 and up.

OTHER SILK ROAD CHICAGO OFFERINGS

Symphony Center Presents

Saturday, April 14, 8 p.m.

Ravi Shankar, *sitar*

Anoushka Shankar, *sitar*

Symphony Center, 220 S. Michigan Ave.

312.294.3000 or 800.223.7114

Tickets \$20-\$55

Legendary sitar master returns to Symphony Center for a special performance with his daughter Anoushka Shankar.

The Art Institute of Chicago

Friday, April 20 and Saturday, April 21, 11 a.m.

Betti Xiang, *erhu*

The Art Institute of Chicago, 111 S. Michigan Ave.

312.443.3600

Performance is free with Museum admission

A special appearance by Silk Road Ensemble musician and internationally celebrated erhu virtuoso Betty Xiang. The erhu, often referred to in the West as the "Chinese Violin," is a unique two-stringed instrument played with a bow.

About the Silk Road Project

The Silk Road Project is a not-for-profit arts organization founded in 1998 by cellist Yo-Yo Ma, who serves as its artistic director, and led by Laura Freid, executive director and CEO. The Project has a vision of connecting the world's neighborhoods by bringing together artists and audiences around the globe. Inspired by the cultural traditions of the historic Silk Road, the Silk Road Project is a catalyst promoting innovation and learning through the arts.

Ford Motor Company is Global Corporate Partner to the Silk Road Project as part of its longstanding tradition of arts education support.

The Silk Road Project is grateful to Mikimoto for sponsorship of its International Museum Residency Program. Silk Road Project Cultural Exchange Initiative activities are assisted financially by the U.S. Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The Silk Road Project is affiliated with Harvard University and Rhode Island School of Design, where the Ensemble collaborates with students and faculty as artists in residence.

About Yo-Yo Ma

Cellist Yo-Yo Ma is the founder and artistic director of the Silk Road Project. His many-faceted career is a testament to his continual search for new ways to communicate with audiences. One of his goals is to explore music as a means of communication and as a vehicle for the migration of ideas across cultures. Mr. Ma is an exclusive Sony Classical artist, and his discography of over 75 albums (including more than 15 Grammy winners) reflects his wide-ranging interests. Yo-Yo Ma was born to Chinese parents living in Paris. He began to study the cello with his father at age four and soon after came with his family to New York, where he enrolled in the Juilliard School. He graduated from Harvard University in 1976.

About the Silk Road Ensemble

The Silk Road Ensemble is a collective of musicians interested in exploring the relationship between tradition and innovation in music from the East and West. Each musician's career illustrates a unique response to one of the great challenges of our times: how to nourish global connections while maintaining the integrity of local traditions. Most of the Ensemble musicians first came together at a Silk Road Project workshop at the Tanglewood Music Center in Massachusetts in 2000, under the artistic direction of Yo-Yo Ma. Since then, various combinations of these artists, whose diverse careers encompass and often intermingle Western and non-Western classical, folk and popular music, have performed a variety of programs in Europe, Asia and North America. Formed to bring new ideas, talent and energy into the world of music as well as to nurture musical and artistic creativity, the Silk Road Ensemble, made up of musicians from around the world, has traveled the globe with as many as 50 members, bringing Eastern and Western music together with inspiring results.