



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

***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

**SILK ROAD CHICAGO CULMINATES WITH FREE PERFORMANCE OF THE  
STONE HORSE AT MILLENNIUM PARK ON TUESDAY, JUNE 5, 2007**

**Classic Chinese fable comes to life in a concert featuring cellist Yo-Yo Ma and the  
Silk Road Ensemble, members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Civic  
Orchestra of Chicago and more than 500 children from Chicago Public Schools**

May 1, 2007, Chicago, IL – The yearlong Silk Road Chicago celebration will reach a climax when world-renowned cellist Yo-Yo Ma, members of the Silk Road Ensemble, members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Civic Orchestra of Chicago and more than 500 students from Chicago Public Schools come together to present a free, one-time-only performance of *The Stone Horse: A Silk Road Journey* at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion in Millennium Park on Tuesday, June 5, 2007 at 6:30 p.m. Silk Road Ensemble master storyteller Ben Haggarty will lead more than 600 musicians in retelling the ancient Silk Road fable using spoken word and music. This performance is the official culminating event of the citywide celebration of the art and culture of the historic Silk Road trade route, which was produced through an unprecedented partnership among the Silk Road Project, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Art Institute of Chicago and the City of Chicago.

A folktale of Chinese origin, "The Stone Horse" tells the story of a young man who sets off on a quest to reclaim his mother's beautiful silk embroidery aided by a mythical stone horse. The musicians—cellist Yo-Yo Ma, members of the Silk Road Ensemble and members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Civic Orchestra of Chicago—will be joined by students in grades four through six from Chicago Public Schools. The students will provide the environmental soundtrack for the fable, using various percussion instruments to represent story elements like water, volcanoes and ice. The program will also include masterworks of the symphonic repertoire.

"Silk Road Chicago began with a concert in Millennium Park, and it is fitting that we return to this beautiful public space for the grand finale," said Ma. "I am especially excited about this performance, because preparing for it has been such a collaborative endeavor with the education department, teaching artists and members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and most importantly with students and teachers and principals at the five Chicago Public Schools. I can't wait to return in June for what I know will be an extraordinary conclusion to a truly transformational year."

The students participating in *The Stone Horse* are drawn from five Chicago public schools: William F. Finkl Elementary School, Harold Washington Elementary School, Irma C. Ruiz Elementary School, Talcott Fine Arts and Museum Academy and Mark

Twain Elementary School. Silk Road Ensemble percussionists and CSO teaching artists visited the schools in April to introduce the children to the story of The Stone Horse and to the percussion instruments they will play during the performance. Workshops in the schools are continuing in May with musicians from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Each participating school receives a workshop for teachers at the Art Institute of Chicago, an Institute Day at the museum to explore the Silk Road galleries and Silk Road curriculum guides and poster kits for ongoing classroom use. For the performance, the children will wear colored t-shirts that they have decorated themselves.

The Stone Horse is sponsored by the Alphawood Foundation, Target, the Negaunee Foundation and Ford Motor Company. Additional support is provided by the Lloyd A. Fry Foundation and the Albert Pick, Jr. Fund.

### **About Silk Road Chicago**

Silk Road Chicago was launched in the spring of 2006 as a unique collaborative effort among the Silk Road Project, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and the Chicago Office of Tourism. During the ensuing year, Chicago was transformed through a yearlong series of performances, exhibitions, demonstrations and special events that explored cross-cultural discovery and celebrated the artistic legacy of the Silk Road. Silk Road Chicago was initiated by cellist Yo-Yo Ma, who dreamed of bringing the historic Silk Road, the ancient network of trading routes that connected the people and traditions of Asia with those of Europe, and the ideas it represents to life in one of the most diverse cities in the world. Inspired by this transmission of ideas and its modern-day manifestations, hundreds of cultural organizations across Chicago teamed up as never before to offer a wide array of special concerts, exhibitions and other artistic programming as part of Silk Road Chicago.