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THE SILK ROAD PROJECT MARKS 10 YEARS OF CONNECTING THE WORLD'S NEIGHBORHOODS WITH A CONCERT AT THE UNITED NATIONS

**Anniversary Events Include Silk Road Project Programs Across Three Continents,
a Major Educational Initiative in New York, and the Premiere of a
Multimedia Performance of the Classic Love Story *Layla and Majnun*
by the Silk Road Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma**

OCTOBER 24, 2008, Providence, R.I. — Founded by renowned cellist Yo-Yo Ma in 1998 to act as a catalyst promoting innovation and learning through the arts, the Silk Road Project today announced a season of celebratory performances, premieres of new works, and innovative educational programs to commemorate its 10th anniversary.

Underscoring its vision of connecting the world's neighborhoods by bringing together artists and audiences from around the globe, the Silk Road Project will launch its 10th-anniversary season in the General Assembly Hall of the United Nations at a special United Nations Day Concert on October 24, 2008. Artistic Director Yo-Yo Ma (who is a United Nations Messenger of Peace) will lead the virtuoso musicians of the Silk Road Ensemble, from 11 different countries, in the performance.

Other concert highlights of the anniversary season will include a North American tour, festival concerts in Europe and the first performance by the Silk Road Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma at New York's Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. Among the specially commissioned works and newly developed pieces to be unveiled during the season will be the world premiere of *Layla and Majnun*, the Silk Road Ensemble's multimedia chamber arrangement of a beloved Central Asian opera, itself based on a seventh-century Arabian tale of ill-fated love.

Educational programs will include the launch of a major Silk Road Project curricular initiative with the New York City Department of Education, a two-year program of teacher training, musical instruction and multidisciplinary lessons from the *Along the Silk Road* curriculum. Developed by the Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education (SPICE) in partnership with the Silk Road Project, the curriculum

integrates history, geography, science, music and the visual arts to study the historical Silk Road. The Silk Road Project's educational initiative in New York will help engage sixth- and seventh-grade students, teachers and communities in Northern Manhattan and southern Bronx public schools, to bridge the foreign and the familiar and allow them to place themselves in the context of a larger world. The program is being undertaken as part of the *Campaign for Middle School Success*, a multi-year strategic plan announced by the New York City Department of Education in August 2008 to develop a culture of middle-school success across the city and improve the academic performance of middle-school students.

The Silk Road Project will also mark a decade of connecting traditions and celebrating innovation with the launch of a new website at www.silkroadproject.org.

"The Silk Road Project was formed in 1998 to explore the cultural links among peoples from the Mediterranean to the Pacific," Yo-Yo Ma stated. "These links from ancient times to the present form pieces of a puzzle that combine to reveal a coherent picture of our world today and help us understand who we are, our place in the world, and why we do what we do. As we celebrate our 10th anniversary, I am tremendously grateful for the opportunity to undertake this work, and I look forward to continuing to serve a public that is seeking a broader empathetic understanding of the peoples and cultures of our globalized world."

Commenting on the United Nations Day concert performance by the Silk Road Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma, Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary-General stated: "I cannot think of a better way to express the rich tapestry of our United Nations than to draw on the heritages of the Silk Road countries, from Mediterranean to the Pacific. I salute Yo-Yo Ma for this magnificent initiative."

According to Laura Freid, Silk Road Project Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director, "During our 10th-anniversary season, the Silk Road Project will focus on performances and related educational programs around the world. Starting with the United Nations concert, which reaffirms the Silk Road Ensemble's ambassadorial role, our goal is to encourage creative, cross-cultural exchanges as we teach, perform, and collaborate throughout North America, Europe and Asia."

A North American concert tour by the Silk Road Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma in March 2009 will include performances in Providence, Boston, North Bethesda, Ann Arbor, Minneapolis and Toronto. Pieces to be performed include Silk Road Project commissioned works: *Ritmos Anchinis* by U.S. composer Gabriela Lena Frank; *Sulvasutra* by U.S. composer Evan Ziporyn; *Empty Mountain, Spirit Rain* by Hong Kong composer Angel Lam; and *Paths of Parables* by Uzbek composer Dmitri Yanov-Yanovsky.

Also scheduled are two concerts by the Silk Road Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma in June 2009 at Lincoln Center for the Performing Art's Alice Tully Hall and a free outdoor

concert in Damrosch Park, which will be broadcast on *Live From Lincoln Center*. The Ensemble's European tour with Mr. Ma will include festival concerts in England, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland and Romania.

The Silk Road Project's 10th-anniversary activities are funded in part by the Pershing Square Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, among other supporters. The Silk Road Ensemble's arrangement of *Layla and Majnun* is made possible in part by the generous support of the Académie Musicale de Villecroze and the Qatar Museums Authority. The United Nations Day Concert by the Silk Road Project with Yo-Yo Ma is generously supported by the Pershing Square Foundation and the Permanent Mission of China to the United Nations.

About the Silk Road Project

The Silk Road Project is a not-for-profit artistic, cultural and educational organization with a vision of connecting the world's neighborhoods by bringing together artists and audiences around the globe. Cellist Yo-Yo Ma founded the Project in 1998 as a catalyst to promote innovation and learning through the arts. The Silk Road Project takes inspiration from the historical Silk Road trading route as a modern metaphor for multicultural and interdisciplinary exchange. Under the artistic direction of Mr. Ma and the leadership of CEO and Executive Director Laura Freid, the Silk Road Project presents performances by the Silk Road Ensemble, engages in cross-cultural exchanges and residencies, leads workshops for students, and partners with leading cultural institutions to create educational materials and programs. The Silk Road Project is affiliated with Harvard University and Rhode Island School of Design, where the Silk Road Ensemble holds regular residencies to promote cross-cultural and interdisciplinary interaction with students and faculty. Developing new music is a central mission of the Silk Road Project: the Project has been involved in commissioning and performing more than 60 new musical and multimedia works from composers and arrangers from around the world.

About Yo-Yo Ma

The many-faceted career of cellist Yo-Yo Ma is testament to his continual search for new ways to communicate with audiences and to his personal desire for artistic growth and renewal. Mr. Ma maintains a balance between his engagements as a soloist with orchestras worldwide and his recital and chamber music activities. His discography encompasses more than 75 albums, including 16 Grammy award winners. One of Mr. Ma's goals is the investigation of music as a means of communication and a vehicle for the migration of ideas; in 1998 he established the Silk Road Project to promote the study of cultural, artistic and intellectual traditions along the ancient Silk Road trade routes. Mr. Ma was born in Paris to Chinese parents who later moved the family to New York. He began to study the cello at the age of four, attended the Juilliard School, and in 1976 graduated from Harvard University. He has received numerous awards, including the 1978 Avery Fisher Prize, the 1999 Glenn Gould Prize, the 2001 National Medal of Arts, the 2006 Sonning Prize, the 2006 Dan David Prize, and the 2008 World Economic Forum's Crystal Award. In 2006, he was designated a United Nations Messenger of

Peace by then Secretary-General Kofi Annan. In 2007, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon extended his appointment.

About the Silk Road Ensemble

The Silk Road Ensemble is a collective of internationally renowned musicians, composers, arrangers, visual artists and storytellers from more than 20 countries. Each Ensemble member's career illustrates a unique response to what is one of the artistic challenges of our times: nourishing global connections while maintaining the integrity of art rooted in authentic tradition. Many of the musicians first came together under the artistic direction of Yo-Yo Ma at a workshop at Tanglewood Music Center in Massachusetts in 2000. Since then, in various configurations, Ensemble artists have collaborated on a diverse range of musical and multimedia projects, presenting innovative performances that explore the relationship between tradition and innovation in music from the East and West. The Silk Road Ensemble has recorded four albums and performed to critical acclaim throughout Asia, Europe and North America.

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(Anniversary schedule begins on the next page)

Silk Road Project 10th Anniversary Program Schedule for 2008/2009

Friday, October 24, 2008

United Nations Day Concert

United Nations General Assembly Hall, New York, NY
The Silk Road Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma

The United Nations Day Concert is a private event held annually to commemorate the founding of the United Nations in 1945. This year, the concert program by the Silk Road Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma is hosted by the People's Republic of China and will feature musicians from Iran, Korea, China, Japan, India, Spain, Switzerland, Israel, Lebanon, Azerbaijan and the United States.

March 6-20, 2009

Concert Tour: North America

The Silk Road Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma

Friday, March 6, 2009: Providence Performing Arts Center, Providence, RI

Sunday, March 8, 2009: Symphony Hall, Boston, MA

Monday, March 9, 2009: Symphony Hall, Boston, MA

Wednesday, March 11, 2009: Strathmore Hall, North Bethesda, MD

Friday, March 13, 2009: Hill Auditorium, Ann Arbor, MI

Saturday, March 14, 2009: Hill Auditorium, Ann Arbor, MI

Monday, March 16, 2009: Orchestra Hall, Minneapolis, MN

Tuesday, March 17, 2009: Orchestra Hall, Minneapolis, MN

Thursday, March 19, 2009: Roy Thomson Hall, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Friday, March 20, 2009: Roy Thomson Hall, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

June 5-8, 2009

Lincoln Center Performances, New York, NY

The Silk Road Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma

Friday, June 5, 2009: Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center

Saturday, June 6, 2009: Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center

Monday, June 8, 2009: Guggenheim Bandshell, Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center

September 9-21, 2009

Festival Concerts: Europe

The Silk Road Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma

Friday, September 11, 2009: United Kingdom

Sunday, September 13, 2009: Belgium

Tuesday, September 15, 2009: Germany

Thursday, September 17, 2009: Switzerland

Sunday, September 20, 2009: Romania