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***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

**THE SILK ROAD PROJECT FOCUSES ON PASSION-DRIVEN EDUCATION  
DURING RESIDENCY AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY**

**Three-day series of events includes Silk Road Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma concert  
and award ceremony, music workshop, presentations and roundtable discussions  
from October 20 to 22, 2009**

**October 19, 2009, Providence, R.I.** — This week the Harvard Graduate School of Education, with support from the Office for the Arts at Harvard, will present a Silk Road Project residency with acclaimed cellist Yo-Yo Ma and Silk Road Ensemble musicians. The series of workshops, panels and discussions will culminate in a performance open to the Harvard community and the general public, and the presentation of the inaugural Harvard Graduate School of Education Thelma E. Goldberg Arts in Education Award to Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Project, a nonprofit artistic, cultural and educational organization founded in 1998 by Mr. Ma to promote innovation and learning through the arts. *[A complete schedule of public events follows on page 3.]*

“I am honored that our work is being celebrated with this award, which recognizes the arts as essential to mainstream education,” commented Yo-Yo Ma, artistic director of the Silk Road Project. “One of our principal goals at the Project is to promote learning that is driven by passion as opposed to learning simply to meet requirements. Our colleagues at Harvard have been voices of inspiration and valued counsels for our educational work, and I am looking forward to engaging with them deeply this week about innovative ways to bring about and support this kind of integrated learning.”

Several events during the residency are open to the Harvard community and the general public, with limited seating. On Tuesday, October 20, Yo-Yo Ma will lead a discussion about the Silk Road Project’s multi-year, multidisciplinary educational initiative Silk Road Connect, which inspires passion-driven learning in middle school classrooms, using music, the arts and the dye indigo as models of connected study. That evening, Mr. Ma and a member of the Silk Road Ensemble will conduct a Creating a Life with Music Workshop with Harvard undergraduates. On Thursday, October 22, members of the Silk Road Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma will perform a concert with student musicians at an award ceremony in Memorial Church.

“I am thrilled to welcome Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble back to the Harvard campus,” said Harvard President Drew Faust. “With its mission to promote learning through the arts, the Silk Road Ensemble embodies an approach to cultural exchange and interdisciplinary engagement that we hope to see more of on our campus.”

Throughout the three-day residency, Harvard faculty, students, educators and Silk Road Project leaders will address the topic of “Inspiring Passion-Driven Learning” from a variety of perspectives. Presenters include Ron Berger, longtime public school teacher and author; Harvard professors Homi Bhabha, director of the Humanities Center; Shigehisa Kuriyama from the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations; Jal Mehta from the Harvard Graduate School of Education; Parimal Patil from the Department of Sanskrit and Indian Studies; David Perkins, a founding member of Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education; Steven Seidel, director of Project Zero and the Arts in Education Program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education; and Diana Soresen, Dean of Arts and Humanities; Harvard Teaching Fellow Christine Barrett; and Silk Road Ensemble teaching artists. These roundtable discussions are open to arts education faculty and students by invitation.

The October 2009 residency builds on a series of discussions held in February 2009 with Project Zero and Harvard University faculty, including Steven Seidel, Howard Gardner, Dudley Herschbach, Veronica Boix-Mansilla and Meira Levinson. At that time, Yo-Yo Ma presented a concept for making interdisciplinary connections, which resulted in the program Silk Road Connect, currently being piloted by the Silk Road Project in five New York City middle schools.

“Our explorations at Harvard last winter proved indispensable as we introduced Silk Road Connect to schools in New York this fall,” said Laura Freid, chief executive officer and executive director of the Silk Road Project. “And now that we’re working with students and teachers directly on this initiative, we are eager to continue the conversation with our partners at Project Zero and the Harvard Graduate School of Education. At the same time, we’re pleased to use this opportunity to share a music workshop and performance with the Harvard community.”

The October 2009 residency is part of a multi-year affiliation initiated in 2005 between the Silk Road Project and Harvard University’s Faculty of Arts and Sciences. Since then, annual residencies have resulted in intensive artistic and intellectual collaborations. Silk Road Ensemble members have performed, interacted with students, conducted workshops, shared works in progress and composed new works. The Silk Road Project has worked with Harvard faculty to facilitate multicultural engagement in the arts, literature, history and music of the Silk Road region, giving rise to cross-disciplinary undergraduate coursework.

**(A schedule of public events begins on the next page.)**

## **RESIDENCY EVENTS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

*The following events are open to the Harvard community and the general public; however, seating is limited.*

### **Inspiring Passion-Driven Learning: Silk Road Connect**

*Conversation led by Yo-Yo Ma*

*Tuesday, October 20, 2009 2-4 PM in Askwith Hall (Doors open at 1:45 PM)*

This interactive session will present the Silk Road Project's educational initiative Silk Road Connect and review its early stages of implementation in New York City public schools. Yo-Yo Ma will lead a discussion about passion-driven education and program's vision.

### **Inspiring Passion-Driven Learning: Creating a Life with Music Workshop**

*Performance workshop led by Yo-Yo Ma*

*Tuesday, October 20, 2009 7:30-9:30 PM in Askwith Hall (Doors open at 7 PM)*

With members of the Silk Road Ensemble, Yo-Yo Ma will lead a performance workshop for Harvard student musicians, exploring musical intersections and addressing what it means to be a musician in today's global culture.

### **Inspiring Passion-Driven Learning: The Silk Road Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma**

*Concert and award presentation*

*Thursday, October 22, 2009 6-7:30 PM in Memorial Church (Doors open at 5:30 PM)*

The residency's culminating event will feature a concert by the Silk Road Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma and selected Harvard student musicians. The **Thelma E. Goldberg Arts in Education Award** will be presented to Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Project for their contributions to education and the arts.

### **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. Founded by cellist Yo-Yo Ma in 1998 as a catalyst to promote innovation and learning through the arts, the Silk Road Project takes inspiration from the historic 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. Developing new music is a central mission of the Silk Road Project, which 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. In January 2009, at the invitation of President-Elect Barack Obama, Mr. Ma played in the quartet performance of John Williams' *Air and Simple Gifts* at the 56<sup>th</sup> Inaugural Ceremony.

### **About the Silk Road Ensemble**

The Silk Road Ensemble is a collective of internationally renowned performers and composers 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 spring from Eastern and Western traditions and contemporary musical crossroads. The Silk Road Ensemble has recorded five albums and performed to critical acclaim throughout Asia, Europe and North America.

### **About Silk Road Connect**

Silk Road Connect is a multi-year, multidisciplinary educational program to inspire passion-driven learning by empowering middle school students and teachers to follow their interest from the familiar to the foreign and make connections across all courses of study and in their own lives. Approximately 500 students are currently involved in a pilot program in sixth-grade classes in five schools in Manhattan, the Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens. Among many partners are local cultural institutions such as the American Museum of Natural History, the Manhattan School of Music, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and national organizations such as National Geographic's Genographic Project. The Silk Road Project is piloting Silk Road Connect by invitation from the New York City Department of Education as part of its Campaign for Middle School Success, which has a goal of reducing the achievement gap in the middle grades and improving student achievement so that all students are prepared to succeed in high school, graduate on time, and thrive in college and careers.

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