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The Silk Road Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma to Play U.S. Music Festivals in August

Tour will bring the celebrated international ensemble to Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Michigan, North Carolina, Wisconsin and Illinois

June 23, 2010, Providence, R.I. — The critically acclaimed Silk Road Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma will perform at music festivals throughout the eastern United States from August 8 through 22, 2010. Performances are scheduled at Tanglewood Music Center in the Massachusetts Berkshires, New Bedford's Zeiterion Theatre, Philadelphia's Mann Center, Rochester's CMAC Performing Arts Center, Cleveland's Blossom Festival, Detroit's Orchestra Hall, Chapel Hill's Memorial Auditorium, Milwaukee's Pabst Theater, the Chicago area's Ravinia Festival, and Madison's Overture Center for the Arts. *[A complete tour schedule follows on page 2.]*

"The Silk Road Ensemble and I are really excited about this tour, starting out in Tanglewood, where many of us first met," said Yo-Yo Ma, founder and artistic director of the Silk Road Project, a nonprofit arts and educational organization that is home to the Ensemble. "The program includes works by Osvaldo Golijov and Giovanni Sollima and several traditional pieces inspired by remarkable stories, from *Ascending Bird*, a Persian tale similar to the myth of Icarus, to *Ambush from Ten Sides*, a piece that recounts a battle between feuding dynasties in ancient China. I'm so glad to join my friends in the Ensemble in sharing this music with audiences this summer."

Because of the Silk Road Ensemble's distinctive range of instruments—these concerts feature the Chinese pipa (lute) and sheng (mouth organ), the Japanese shakuhachi (bamboo flute), Indian tabla (drums), Galician bagpipe, Western strings and world percussion—the pieces on this program were written or arranged specifically for the group. The Silk Road Project commissioned the feverishly inventive work *The Taranta Project* from Sicilian composer Giovanni Sollima in 2008. Tabla player Sandeep Das composed *Shristi*, a percussion piece that enacts the creation of the universe by Shiva and his drum, following a university residency with fellow Silk Road Ensemble members.

Argentinean composer Osvaldo Golijov's *Air to Air* is a highlight of the program. This expansive piece is infused by music as diverse as 18th-century Sardinian songs, indigenous voices from Mexico and the Christian Arab Easter service. As *American Record Guide* described *Air to Air* in its review of the Silk Road Ensemble's recent CD, *Off the Map* (released in November 2009), "soulful, melancholy lines, spirituals, dances, and protest songs are beautifully crafted into a cohesive whole, made even more impressive with the use of unusual instruments."

“Sharing traditions from near and far is at the core of our work,” said Laura Freid, chief executive officer and executive director of the Silk Road Project. “Silk Road Ensemble members are constantly learning and collaborating to create new music with each other. These traditional and contemporary pieces composed by Latin American, Persian, Indian, Italian, Galician and Chinese musicians truly embrace the Silk Road as a metaphor for the remarkable discoveries to be made at the intersections of cultures and artistic traditions.”

The Silk Road Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma will next tour in the United States in April 2011, in Texas and California, and in Vancouver, British Columbia. For more information on scheduled performances visit www.silkroadproject.org/schedule.

Concert Program

August 8 – 22, 2010

U.S. Music Festivals Tour

The Silk Road Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma

Sunday, August 8, at 8:30 PM: Lenox, MA – Tanglewood Music Center

Monday, August 9, at 8 PM: New Bedford, Ma – Zeiterion Theater

Wednesday, August 11, at 8 PM: Philadelphia, PA – Mann Center for the Performing Arts

Thursday, August 12, at 7:30 PM: Rochester, NY – Constellation Brands-Marvin Sands Performing Arts Center

Saturday, August 14, at 8 PM: Cleveland, OH – Blossom Music Center

Sunday, August 15, at 7 PM: Detroit, MI – Orchestra Hall

Tuesday, August 17, at 7:30 PM: Chapel Hill, NC – Memorial Auditorium, UNC Chapel Hill

Thursday, August 19, at 7 PM: Milwaukee, WI – Pabst Theater

Friday, August 20, at 8 PM: Highland Park, IL – Ravinia Festival, Ravinia Pavilion

Sunday, August 22, at 2:30 PM: Madison, WI – Overture Center for the Arts

Program

Cristina Pato	<i>Caronte</i>
Persian Traditional; Arr. Siamak Aghaei, Colin Jacobsen	<i>Ascending Bird</i>
Ruan Ji; Arr. Wu Tong and Liu Lin	<i>Wine Madness</i>
Oswaldo Golijov	<i>Air to Air*</i>
Giovanni Sollima	<i>The Taranta Project**</i>
Sandeep Das	<i>Shristi</i>
Traditional; Arr. Li Cang Sang and Wu Tong	<i>Ambush from Ten Sides</i>

* Commissioned by Carnegie Hall through the Weill Music Institute in partnership with the Silk Road Project, Inc. The world premiere was given at Carnegie Hall in September 2006.

** Commissioned by the Silk Road Project, Inc. (2008)

The Silk Road Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma

Jeffrey Beecher, contrabass

Mike Block, cello

Nicholas Cords, viola

Sandeep Das, tabla

Haruka Fujii, percussion

Jonathan Gandelman, violin

Joseph Gramley, percussion

Colin Jacobsen, violin

Yo-Yo Ma, cello

Jon Mendle, guitar

Cristina Pato, gaita (Galician bagpipe)

Mark Suter, percussion

Kojiro Umezaki, shakuhachi

Yang Wei, pipa

Wu Tong, sheng and bawu

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: to maintain the integrity of art rooted in authentic traditions while nourishing global connections. 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 performed to critical acclaim throughout Asia, Europe and North America and has recorded five albums. The Ensemble's most recent recording, *Off the Map*, explores uncharted territory with globe-spanning music commissioned from Osvaldo Golijov, Gabriela Lena Frank, Evan Ziporyn and Angel Lam.

About the Silk Road Project

The Silk Road Project is a nonprofit arts 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, the Silk Road Project presents performances by the acclaimed 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 undertaking of the Silk Road Project, which has been involved in commissioning and performing more than 60 new works from composers and arrangers around the world. Hyosung Corp. was the Lead Sponsor of the Silk Road Project in Seoul; American Express was the Lead Sponsor of the Silk Road Project in Taipei and Singapore.

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 more than 15 Grammy award winners. One of Mr. Ma's goals is the investigation of music as a means of communication and as 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.

Yo-Yo Ma was born in 1955 to Chinese parents living in Paris. He began to study the cello with his father at age four and soon came with his family to New York, where he spent most of his formative years. Later, his principal teacher was Leonard Rose at the Juilliard School. He sought out a traditional liberal arts education to expand upon his conservatory training, graduating from Harvard University in 1976. He has received numerous awards, including the Avery Fisher Prize (1978), the Glenn Gould Prize (1999), the National Medal of the Arts (2001), the Dan David Prize (2006), the Sonning Prize (2006), and the World Economic Forum's Crystal Award (2008). In 2006, then Secretary General Kofi Annan named him a United Nations Messenger of Peace; in 2007, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon extended his appointment. In January 2009, at President Obama's invitation, Mr. Ma played in the quartet performance of John Williams' *Air and Simple Gifts* at the 56th Inaugural Ceremony. More recently, Mr. Ma was appointed to the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities.

Mr. Ma and his wife have two children. Mr. Ma plays two instruments, a 1733 Montagnana cello from Venice and the 1712 Davidoff Stradivarius.

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