

## **A Statement from the Artistic Director**

Throughout my travels and performances around the world, I have been intrigued by the complex interconnections among arts, cultures and ideas that have been influential for centuries. How did an 8th-century Japanese biwa, a pear-shaped stringed instrument, come to be decorated with Persian and Central Asian designs? How did ancient Roman glass influence objects made in China, Korea and Japan?

In 1998, we formed the Silk Road Project to explore connections from ancient times to the present. These links form pieces of a puzzle that combine to reveal a coherent picture of who we are, what our place is in the world, and why we do what we do.

The Project's work consists of careful investigations, joining beloved traditions with new knowledge and innovation. Live performance, constant learning, trust and inventive collaboration lie at the core of our work together. Our educational partnerships have served to broaden and strengthen our commitment to passion-driven learning. We are guided by the belief that all of us are equipped with different intelligences and that we best receive and share knowledge in multidisciplinary, multi-sensate ways.

During the past ten years, the Silk Road Ensemble's experiences have led us to new discoveries and new ways of thinking as we share in a culture of collaboration. The creation of trust is a key ingredient, a safety net in an environment where risk-taking and innovation are encouraged.

As we celebrate our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, I am tremendously grateful for the opportunity to undertake this work, for the abiding friendships and far-reaching partnerships that have developed, and for the warm reception we have received from people all over the globe. In our world of increasing awareness and interdependence, music can act as a magnet to draw people together. I look forward to the Silk Road Project's second decade, in which by knowing subjects deeply and sharing ideas broadly we will continue to strive to serve a community that seeks a broader, empathetic understanding of the peoples and cultures of our globalized world.

– Yo-Yo Ma, Artistic Director