FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 9, 2013

MUSICAL AMBASSADORS THE SILK ROAD ENSEMBLE RETURN TO ZELLERBACH HALL ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27 AT 7:00 P.M.

A pre-performance talk will be held on Sunday, October 27 at 4:00 p.m. in Zellerbach Hall, led by founding member Nicholas Cords.

BERKELEY, October 9, 2013—All musical roads lead to Berkeley when the Silk Road Ensemble comes to Cal Performances on Sunday, October 27 at 7:00 p.m. in Zellerbach Hall for an evening of genre-blending world music. The Silk Road Ensemble unites distinguished performers and composers from throughout Asia, Europe, and the Americas, and has been the leading voice for cross-cultural music since it was founded by Yo-Yo-Ma in 2000. The program at Cal Performances begins with visionary Chinese-American composer Angel Lam and her Empty Mountain, Spirit Rain, an instrumental soundscape that explores the mysteries of life and death. Much of the ensemble’s program highlights music written by the performers on stage, including Caronte by Cristina Pato, a spare, haunting tune that highlights the sweeping sound of the gaita against a rumbling piano; Saidi Swing by Shane Shanahan, a rollicking composition for tabla and other percussion; Atashgah by Colin Jacobsen, a piece for strings that evokes ancient temples in Iran; Invention for Gaita and Cello, created by Pato and cellist Mike Block; and “Tabla and Kamancheh Improvisation” by tabla player Sandeep Das and kamancheh player Kayhan Kalhor. The evening will conclude with the Suite from “Book of Angels” by prolific American composer and saxophonist John Zorn as arranged by the Silk Road Ensemble. The group is touring in support of its new CD/DVD release, A Playlist Without Borders. “The essence [of the Silk Road Ensemble] is sharing, and this is something these musicians do exceptionally well,” cheers the Los Angeles Times.

A pre-performance talk will be held on Sunday, October 27 at 4:00 p.m. in Zellerbach Hall. Founding member Nicholas Cords will lead a discussion, including the role of improvisation in Persian and Indiana music and a broader perspective of improvisation across Eastern and Western traditions.
The Silk Road Ensemble is designed to be flexible, adding or subtracting players and instruments as the music requires and the performers’ busy schedules permit. For their Cal Performances appearance, the ensemble will feature a number of artists familiar to Berkeley audiences. American bassist Jeffrey Beecher is principal bass player with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and music faculty member at the University of Toronto. Mike Block is an American cellist, teacher, and clinician who released Brick by Brick, an album of original songs, late in 2012. American viola player Nicholas Cords is artist-in residence at Stony Brook University, has performed as a soloist and ensemble player around the world, and is a member of the genre-defying string quartet Brooklyn Rider. Indian tabla virtuoso Sandeep Das is creative director of HUM Ensemble, a collaborative group of global musicians dedicated to healing the world through music. American percussionist Joseph Gramley is professor of music at the University of Michigan and a frequent commissioner of percussion works from emerging composers. American violinist Colin Jacobsen, who with Cords plays in Brooklyn Rider, was recently named one of NPR’s top composers under 40.

Kamancheh player Kayhan Kalhor was born in Tehran, Iran, and has traveled extensively throughout his native country to study its various musical traditions. Spanish gaita player and pianist Cristina Pato plays Galician popular and classical music around the world and has released four albums of gaita music including 2013’s Migrations. American percussionist Shane Shanahan is part of the Silk Road Ensemble’s leadership council, and will premiere a commissioned work by composer Dan Visconti in Cleveland in early 2014. Shakuhachi player and composer Kojiro Umezaki teaches at UC Irvine, was born in Tokyo of Japanese and Danish parents, and believes his multinational background contributes to his repertoire choices.

**TICKET INFORMATION**

Tickets for The Silk Road Ensemble on Sunday, October 27 at 7:00 p.m. in Zellerbach Hall start at $18.00 but are subject to change. Half-price tickets are available for UC Berkeley students. Tickets are available through the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988; at http://www.calperformances.org; and at the door. For more information about discounts, visit http://calperformances.org/buy/discounts.php.

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Cal Performances thanks Wells Fargo and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for their major support of the Season.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Sunday, October 27 at 4:00 p.m.  Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus
Pre-performance talk  Bancroft Way at Dana St., Berkeley

Program: A pre-performance talk will be led by founding member Nicholas Cords, which includes the role of improvisation in Persian and Indiana music and a broader perspective of improvisation across Eastern and Western traditions.

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Sunday, October 27, at 7:00 p.m.  Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way at Dana St., Berkeley

World Stage
The Silk Road Ensemble
Jeffrey Beecher, bass
Mike Block, cello
Nicholas Cords, viola
Sandep Das, tabla
Joseph Gramley, percussion
Colin Jacobsen, violin
Kayhan Kalhor, kamancheh
Cristina Pato, gaita
Shane Shanahan, percussion
Kojiro Umezaki, shakuhachi

Program:
Pato/Caronte
Shanahan/Saidi Swing
Abou-Khalil, arr. Ljova/Arabian Waltz
Jacobsen/Atashgah
Block and Pato/Invention for Gaita and Cello
Lam/Empty Mountain, Spirit Rain
Das and Kalhor/Table and Kamancheh Improvisation
Zorn, arr. Silk Road Ensemble/Suite from “Book of Angels”

Tickets start at $18.00, subject to change; they are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988; at calperformances.org; and at the door.

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