

Thursday, August 18, 2016, 8pm
 Hearst Greek Theatre

The Silk Road Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma

Kinan Azmeh, <i>clarinet</i>	Kayhan Kalhor, <i>kamancheh</i>
Jeffrey Beecher, <i>bass</i>	Yo-Yo Ma, <i>cello</i>
Mike Block, <i>cello</i>	Cristina Pato, <i>Galician bagpipes, piano</i>
Nicholas Cords, <i>viola</i>	Shane Shanahan, <i>percussion</i>
Sandeep Das, <i>tabla</i>	Mark Suter, <i>percussion</i>
Haruka Fujii, <i>percussion</i>	Kojiro Umezaki, <i>shakuhachi</i>
Johnny Gandelsman, <i>violin</i>	Wu Man, <i>pipa</i>
Joseph Gramley, <i>percussion</i>	Wu Tong, <i>sheng, suona</i>
Colin Jacobsen, <i>violin</i>	
Cristina Pato, Wu Tong	Fanfare for Gaita and Suona
Traditional Malian, arr. Shane Shanahan	Ichichila
Traditional Irish, arr. Colin Jacobsen	O'Neill's Cavalry March
Wu Man, arr. Ljova	Green (Vincent's Tune)
Kinan Azmeh, Jeffrey Beecher	Syrian Improvisation
Michio Mamiya	Miero vuotti uutta kuuta, from <i>Five Finnish Folksongs</i>
Wu Man, Wu Tong	Duo
Colin Jacobsen	Atashgah*
Sandeep Das, Kojiro Umezaki	If you shall return...†
Antonín Dvořák, arr. Jeremy Kittel	Going Home
Billy Strayhorn, arr. Shane Shanahan	Take the "A" Train**

INTERMISSION

David Bruce	Cut the Rug *** Drag the goat – Bury the hatchet – Move the earth – Wake the dead
Paco de Lucía, arr. Colin Jacobsen	Zyryab
Kinan Azmeh	Wedding

* Commissioned by the Laguna Beach Music Festival for Kayhan Kalhor and Brooklyn Rider and premiered in 2011.

** Arrangement commissioned by Reservoir Media for The Silk Road Ensemble in 2015.

*** Commissioned by Silkroad in 2012.

† Commissioned by Silkroad and dedicated to Anna and Peter Davol, with deep affection and thanks.

This performance is made possible, in part, by Patron Sponsors Nadine Tang and Bruce Smith.

There are many different kinds of home—physical, childhood, those that we build in our memories, and many others. Silkroad is a creative home for me and for members of The Silk Road Ensemble, a place where we return to explore new artistic languages, to encounter friends and strangers, and to find joy in unexpected connections. One of the ways we have deepened our relationships over the years is by bringing each other home. Over the course of this evening, we invite you to join us as we share what home sounds like for many of us.

As you listen, I think you will hear how different our homes are. For us, this is one of the great pleasures of Silkroad: we celebrate difference; we cultivate curiosity in our exploration and generosity in our sharing. In our home, something completely unfamiliar presents a precious opportunity to build something new.

Many of the selections tonight represent music that ensemble members have written or arranged for the group over the years. I am particularly excited to share this aspect of what we do; I believe that by writing or arranging music, a musician goes beyond knowing and expressing a tradition and becomes an agent of its evolution, creating something new.

Welcome to our home.

—Yo-Yo Ma

(adapted from liner notes from
*The Silk Road Ensemble's latest recording,
Sing Me Home, Sony Masterworks, 2016*)

The **Fanfare for Gaita and Suona** was developed by ensemble members Cristina Pato and Wu Tong to explore the idea of connecting two sides of the world—Europe and Asia—through a musical dialog between two instruments that have in common a powerful sonority and a profound relationship with their respective traditions. This open call between the *gaita* (Galician bagpipes) and *suona* (Chinese horn) launches this evening's program with a conversation between traditional wind instruments as they attempt to understand, connect with, and respect each other's cultural roots.

—Isabelle Hunter

In 2007, Yo-Yo suggested that we use the art and tradition of indigo dyeing to connect disciplines and cultures in our work with elementary school students. During the course of that exploration, Harvard musicologist Ingrid Monson shared this song with me. **Ichichila** is a tune traditionally sung by the Tuareg people while dyeing textiles in indigo pits, and its groove comes from the rhythm of textiles being plunged in and out of the dye with long sticks. I was drawn to this rhythmic foundation, to the song's relaxed vibe, and to the way the music was used to ease the burden of difficult work.

—Shane Shanahan

The great Irish fiddler Martin Hayes introduced us to O'Neill's **Cavalry March**—a tune I understand to be so iconic in the Irish tradition that it is almost a cliché. The bones of this old tune, which dates back to the early 1800s, are so strong that it has weathered various treatments over the years. When I first heard Martin play it, I was captured by its solitary, stoic character, and yet immediately felt that there was a way to add layers of instruments and subtle hints of harmony. Featured in the instrumentation are the sounds of Kayhan Kalhor's *kamancheh*, as well as Kojiro Umezaki's *shakuhachi*, Wu Man's *pipa*, and a complement of Western strings.

—Colin Jacobsen

I wrote **Green (Vincent's Tune)** as part of the suite *Blue-Red-Green* for The Silk Road Ensemble. When my son Vincent was four years old, he would often run around singing this tune. One day I asked him where he had heard it, and he said, "I don't know, Mommy. I made it up." I was so struck by his melody that I turned it into a composition as a way to capture his youth and the wonderful times we spent together.

The piece is named after my favorite color. Green represents spring, when everything grows and has renewed energy and enthusiasm—much like a four-year-old child.

—Wu Man



Michio Mamiya's compositions were greatly influenced by his insatiable curiosity about the traditional music of his native Japan, along with that of Scandinavia and Africa. His long and distinguished career as one of Japan's leading musical figures serves as an inspiration to The Silk Road Ensemble. Early on in his life as a composer, Mamiya became fascinated with the Sami people of Finland (also known as the Lapps), the indigenous people of sub-Arctic Scandinavia who represent a somewhat surprising musical and linguistic connection to the East. Inspired to explore deeper, Mamiya traveled to Finland to study its indigenous music, following his studies in Western classical composition at the Tokyo Academy. Tonight's selection, *Miero vuotti uutta kuuta* (a song of the new moon) is a brief but loving snapshot of these encounters and is excerpted from Mamiya's larger 1977 collection for cello and piano, *Five Finnish Folksongs*.

—Nicholas Cords

When ensemble members Nicholas Cords and Colin Jacobsen visited Kayhan Kalhor in Iran in the summer of 2004 on a Silkroad-sponsored cultural exchange, one of many sights that im-

pressed them was an ancient fire temple, or *atashgah*, outside the city of Esfahan. Originally built as a holy site for the Zoroastrian religion in the Sassanid period of Iran's history (third to sixth centuries CE), it felt to these travelers like a place of significant power—a place that makes one aware of the layers of history. For Jacobsen, the experience of listening to Kalhor play music can be “like watching a fire in a fireplace; it is mesmerizing, hypnotic, and yet constantly changing. His music comes from a deep inner creative fire.” Jacobsen caught a spark of that creative fire, and on returning from Iran that summer, was inspired by his experience to do something with what he had heard and encountered. He has been writing and arranging music ever since, and *Atashgah*, composed for *kamancheh* and Western strings, is one result of that inspiration.

—Isabelle Hunter

The story of *If You Shall Return...* started when *tabla* player Sandeep Das whispered a repeating musical theme characteristic of Bhatiali boat songs from the Bengali-speaking regions of the Brahmaputra River. As in a game of musical telephone, the whispered theme quickly

transformed in the ears and instruments of other ensemble members, changing in musical mode and rhythmic emphasis, and evolving with the addition of a new melody inspired by Jiangnan Sizhu (silk and bamboo music of the lower reaches of the Yangtze River).

Emerging from those core elements is a form that is steps away from an archetype common to jazz charts, a foundation that welcomes many different musical voices.

Once out of sight of the shores of the river, once beyond the threshold, once transformed, what will have changed if you—the boatman, the lover—shall return?

—Kojiro Umezaki

Silkroad is a connector and a bridge builder; its music is vitally reflective of our shared humanity and our global trajectories, and plays a natural role in the need for greater cross-cultural exchange. It seems that Dvořák would have been a kindred spirit in these matters. The Largo from his *New World* Symphony was a cross-cultural masterwork from the beginning, so shaped was his compositional voice by the range of American cultures and music that he loved. The lyrics of *Going Home*, originally set to Dvořák's music by William Arms Fisher, are beautifully translated into Chinese and sung by the marvelous and multifaceted Wu Tong. It was such a pleasure to work with the Silkroad family, and to write music for Yo-Yo, one of my heroes, was a particular joy. There's much talk of music's bridge-building capabilities, but it's only through a great deal of intention that these possibilities are made real. Hats off to Silkroad for making such a continued effort, and how inspiring it is to be a part of it!

—Jeremy Kittel

Before I moved to New York City, I had no idea that *Take the "A" Train*—the classic 1939 Billy Strayhorn tune made famous by Duke Ellington and his orchestra—referred to an actual train! Now, after having lived there for 16 years, and having ridden the A train many times, it has taken on a whole new meaning. Needless to say, the subway system is not the most beloved institution in New York. It is consis-

tently plagued by malfunctioning PA systems, clattering breakdowns, and stalls, some of which I have tried to portray in this arrangement. I was very excited by the opportunity to create a Silkroad version of this very familiar tune. Our unusual instrumentation presented some intriguing possibilities and I hoped to make a piece that would be a unique addition to the already plentiful catalog of "A" Train arrangements.

—Shane Shanahan

When composer David Bruce developed *Cut the Rug* for The Silk Road Ensemble in 2012, he was inspired not only by the concept of the Silk Road but by filmmaker Tony Gatlif's documentary *Latcho Drom*, which explores the broad, multicultural embrace of Roma, or gypsy, music. "The idea of all these diverse but equally vibrant musics being part of one large family has always appealed to me," David says, "as has the ease and naturalness with which new styles have been integrated into a developing musical language as the Roma have moved from one area to another. In my piece, I think there is a similarly wide spread of cultural influences, which I hope integrate to create something new—there are a few drops of Kyrgyzstan; definite hints of Turkey; a pinch of flamenco; perhaps even a dash of American Cajun music; and many influences besides." The title is a play on the rugs the Central Asian region so famously produces, but it also teases the jazz age lingo "cut the rug"—the deft skill of a dancer who can wow a crowd.

—Isabelle Hunter

When celebrated virtuoso flamenco guitarist Paco de Lucía released his famous 1990 album *Zyryab*, he reconvened the Paco de Lucía Sextet (including his brothers Ramón and Pepe) along with jazz pianist Chick Corea and fellow guitarist Manolo Sanlúcar. The album's title track was inspired by a different branch of Spanish musical heritage—Arabic instrumental music. It is named after the 9th-century Kurdish musician, poet, and cultural trendsetter Ziryab, who worked at the court of the Umayyad Caliphate in Córdoba and is believed to have



introduced the Persian lute to Spain—thus becoming the godfather of the Spanish guitar and flamenco.

—adapted from a note by Zoe Kemmerling

Wedding, the third and final movement of my *Suite for Improviser and Orchestra*, was originally written in 2007 for my trio, Hewan (clarinet, *oud*, and voice). The suite tries to blur the lines between the composed and the improvised, based on my belief that the best written music sounds spontaneous and improvised, and that the best improvisation sounds structured and composed. This movement is based on that same principle—giving room for the soloists to play freely within the larger structure of the work. The piece captures the general mood of a wedding party in a Syrian village, usually held in the public square so that everyone can attend. These parties are always exciting and never predictable. I dedicate this piece to all the Syrians who have managed to fall in love in the past five years.

—Kinan Azmeh

Many of the selections on this evening's program are available on Sing Me Home, The Silk Road Ensemble and Yo-Yo Ma's most recent recording (Sony Masterworks—2016).

About Silkroad

Inspired by the exchange of ideas and traditions along the historical Silk Road, cellist Yo-Yo Ma established Silkroad in 1998 to explore how the arts can advance global understanding. Silkroad works to connect the world through the arts, focusing its efforts in three areas: musical performance, learning programs, and cultural entrepreneurship. Silkroad gratefully acknowledges the support of individuals, foundations, and corporations, including the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and its corporate sponsor, Hyosung Corp.

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. Ma

maintains a balance between his engagements as a soloist with orchestras worldwide and his recital and chamber music activities. His discography of over 100 albums includes 18 Grammy award winners.

Ma serves as the artistic director of Silkroad, an organization he founded to promote cross-cultural performance and collaboration. He also serves as the Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's Negaunee Music Institute. Ma's work focuses on the transformative power music can have in individuals' lives, and on increasing the number and variety of opportunities audiences have to experience music in their communities.

Ma was born in Paris to Chinese parents who later moved the family to New York. He began to study cello at the age of four, attended the Juilliard School, and in 1976 graduated from Harvard University. He has received numerous awards, among them the Avery Fisher Prize (1978), the National Medal of Arts (2001), and the Presidential Medal of Freedom (2010). In 2011, Ma was recognized as a Kennedy Center Honoree. Most recently, he has joined the board of trustees of the Aspen Institute. Ma has performed for eight American presidents, most recently at the invitation of President Obama on the occasion of the 56th Inaugural Ceremony.

For additional information, please visit www.yo-yoma.com, www.silkroadproject.org, and www.opus3artists.com.

About The Silk Road Ensemble

Since 2000, The Silk Road Ensemble has been at the core of Silkroad's work in the arts, learning, and cultural entrepreneurship. Under the artistic direction of Yo-Yo Ma and representing a global array of cultures, the ensemble models new forms of cultural exchange through performances, workshops, and residencies. The artists of the ensemble draw on the rich tapestry of traditions from around the world that make up our many-layered contemporary identities, weaving together the foreign and familiar to create a new musical language.

The ensemble performs throughout the world, and has recorded six albums. Its new album, *Sing Me Home*, was developed and recorded alongside the new documentary feature *The Music of Strangers: Yo-Yo Ma and The Silk Road Ensemble* from Oscar-winning director Morgan Neville—in theaters now.

Curiosity. Creativity. Generosity. Passion. The same qualities that make a performance great can change our world for the better. Learn more about Silkroad's work in classrooms and communities around the world at silkroadproject.org/culturematters.

Exclusive Management

Opus 3 Artists

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Tour Management

Mary Pat Buerkle, *senior vice president,*

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Silkroad Staff

Yo-Yo Ma, *artistic director and founder*

Laura Freid, *chief executive officer and executive director*

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Joseph Gramley, *associate artistic director*

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Lori Taylor, *education specialist*

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Aaron Copp, *production manager and lighting designer*

Jody Elff, *sound engineer*

Tim Grassel, *company manager*

Lisa Porter, *stage manager*

Elijah Walker, *monitor engineer*

Wherever we perform—from a public square in Istanbul to storied stages in cities across the United States—our goal is the same: to weave the foreign and familiar together into a new musical language, one that embraces our differences and celebrates the joy we find in one another. The generosity and virtuosity that you see from the ensemble on stage reflects our inspiration, the open exchange of ideas and traditions that took place along the historical Silk Road, the trade network that enabled the migration of people and their cultures for centuries.

Although we begin with music, our work in communities and classrooms around the world is inspired by the belief that art is a vehicle for exchange. Art in all its forms opens windows on the world and offers new ways to connect in the face of fragmentation and friction.

We have seen how art can express ideas that have enormous importance for society, but at the scale of individuals. This summer marks the completion of a new Silkroad album and a documentary film, both of which explore a few of these universal themes through personal stories. On *Sing Me Home*, our newest recording, Silkroad musicians reflect on the meaning of home, interpreting original and traditional folk songs with a range of guest artists. *Sing Me Home* is the companion album to *The Music of Strangers*, a documentary from Oscar winner Morgan Neville that captures five of the many individual journeys behind Silkroad—it's in theaters now.

As we mark 18 years of Silkroad, we feel tremendous gratitude to our partners across the globe—friends who share the conviction that, today more than ever, culture matters.

Join us at silkroadproject.org to learn more about our programs for educators, artists, and cultural entrepreneurs. We believe that if you want to change the world, you have to make a little noise.



Yo-Yo Ma
Founder and artistic director



Laura Freid
CEO and executive director

