

# THE SILK ROAD ENSEMBLE WITH YO-YO MA

FRI, FEB 27, 2015 • 8PM

CPAIO ARTIST



“A KIND OF ROVING MUSICAL  
LABORATORY WITHOUT WALLS.”

– *The Boston Globe*

photo credit: Jennifer Taylor

## PERFORMANCE BENEFACTOR

Classical music performances are made possible by The William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust. We thank the Trustees for their visionary generosity.

**FRI, FEB 27 • 8PM**

**The Silk Road Ensemble**  
**Yo-Yo Ma, artistic director**

**Kinan Azmeh, clarinet**  
**Mike Block, cello**  
**Shawn Conley, bass**  
**Nicholas Cords, viola**

**Sandeep Das, tabla**  
**Johnny Gandelsman, violin**  
**Joseph Gramley, percussion**  
**Colin Jacobsen, violin**  
**Kayhan Kalhor, kamancheh**  
**Yo-Yo Ma, cello**  
**Cristina Pato, gaita/piano**

**Shane Shanahan, percussion**  
**Mark Suter, percussion**  
**Kojiro Umezaki, shakuhachi**  
**Wu Tong, sheng**  
**Yang Wei, pipa**

## PROGRAM

<i>Side In Side Out</i> (2012) <sup>1</sup> .....	Kojiro Umezaki (b. 1968)
<i>Taranta Project</i> (2008) <sup>1</sup> .....	Giovanni Sollima (b. 1962)
<i>The Latina 6/8 Suite</i> (2015) <sup>2</sup> .....	Edward Perez (b. 1978)
<i>Tarantella-Muiñeira</i>	
<i>Tanguillo: The High Seas</i>	
<i>Joropo-Festejo</i>	
<i>Fandango: Prueba de Fuego</i>	

## INTERMISSION

<i>Paramita</i> (2014) <sup>3</sup> .....	Zhao Lin (b. 1973)
<i>Jugalbandi</i> .....	Sandeep Das (b. 1971) Kayhan Kalhor (b. 1963)
<i>Wedding</i> (2007, arr. 2014) .....	Kinan Azmeh (b. 1976)

<sup>1</sup> Commissioned by Silkroad

<sup>2</sup> Arrangement commissioned by Silkroad based on an idea by Cristina Pato for her LATINA project

<sup>3</sup> Commissioned by Silkroad with support from the Cambridge Buddhist Association

## SILK ROAD ENSEMBLE

Since 2000, the Silk Road Ensemble has been redefining classical music for 21st-century audiences. The group has been called “vibrant and virtuosic” by *The Wall Street Journal*, “one of the 21st century’s great ensembles” by the *The Vancouver Sun*, and a “roving musical laboratory without walls” by *The Boston Globe*.

Representing a global array of cultures, Silk Road Ensemble members co-create art, performances and ideas. Cellist Yo-Yo Ma established the nonprofit organization Silkroad and the Ensemble to explore the role of the arts in fostering cross-cultural understanding, deepening learning and promoting innovation.

Silk Road Ensemble performers and composers hail from more than 20 countries. Passionate about learning from one another’s traditions, these rooted explorers perform on instruments ranging from world percussion to Western strings to the Chinese *pipa* (lute) and *sheng* (mouth organ), the Japanese *shakuhachi* (bamboo flute), the Galician *gaita* (bagpipe), Indian *tabla* (paired drums) and Persian *kamancheh* (spike fiddle), among others.

Under the artistic direction of Mr. Ma, these storytelling musicians celebrate the multiplicity of approaches to music from around the world. They also develop new repertoire that responds to the new realities of our global society.

In engaging, high-energy performances, the Silk Road Ensemble draws on a rich tapestry of traditions that make up our shared cultural heritage, creating a new musical language – a uniquely engaging and accessible encounter between the foreign and the familiar that reflects our many-layered contemporary identities.

As the *Los Angeles Times* has said, “The Silk Road Ensemble vision of international cooperation is not what we read in our daily news reports. Theirs is the better world available if we, like these extraordinary musicians, agree to make it one.”

Throughout Asia, Europe and North America, the Silk Road Ensemble has performed in more than 100 cities in over 30 countries, in some of the world’s most lauded venues, including Carnegie Hall, Suntory Hall, the Concertgebouw and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Ensemble performances have also highlighted the Nobel Prize celebrations in Stockholm, the Sir Bani Yas Forum in the United Arab Emirates, the Special Olympics in Shanghai, the Lucerne Festival in Switzerland and London’s BBC Proms.

The Ensemble has recorded five albums, including the most recent CD, *A Playlist Without Borders*, and *Live From Tanglewood DVD*. *The Sound of Silk*, a documentary about the ensemble by the Academy Award-winning filmmaker Morgan Neville, is in production and is expected to premiere in 2015.

## YO-YO MA, CELLO

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 soloist with orchestras worldwide and his recital and chamber music activities. His discography includes over 90 albums, including more than 17 Grammy Award winners.

Mr. Ma serves as the artistic director of Silkroad, an organization he founded to promote cross-cultural performance and collaborations at the



edge where education, business and the arts come together to transform the world. More than 80 works have been commissioned specifically for the Silk Road Ensemble, which tours annually. Mr. Ma also serves as the Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s Negaunee Music Institute. His 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.

Mr. 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, Mr. Ma was recognized as a Kennedy Center Honoree. Mr. Ma has a very strong interest in the importance of culture in society and the ways in which it can produce positive social change. He is currently serving as a UN Messenger of Peace and as a member of the President’s Committee on the Arts & the Humanities. Most recently, Mr. Ma has joined the Aspen Institute Board of Trustees. He has performed for eight American presidents, most recently at the invitation of President Obama on the occasion of the 56th Inaugural Ceremony.

[www.yo-yoma.com](http://www.yo-yoma.com) | [www.silkroadproject.org](http://www.silkroadproject.org) | [www.opus3artists.com](http://www.opus3artists.com)

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JERRY ZINN on THE SILK ROAD ENSEMBLE



In describing the motivating force behind The Silk Road Project, the ensemble articulates, "The question for us as artists is not whether to innovate but how to create innovative music that is authentically rooted in tradition." The ensemble's members, many of whom have been collaborating since the group's inception in 2000, have achieved this rare balance of innovation, authenticity, and tradition. Their mission is a unique one, taking fibers from a

vast array of musical backgrounds and weaving them together into a multicultural "silk."

I was fortunate to have met several members of the Silk Road Ensemble in 2012 while taking the Music and Culture course taught by Emil Kang and Chancellor James Moeser. Our discussion with the artists focused on the origins and sounds of their respective instruments and how they are able to combine them into a unique auditory experience. But one can only discern so much about the ensemble by reading, discussing, and listening. In order to truly understand them, one must experience their performances in person.

A performance by The Silk Road Ensemble takes the audience on a journey. But each individual listener is transported in different ways to

different places based on their own personal experiences. For me, this feeling was strongest as I focused on the sounds of Sandeep Das's tablas. I traveled to India eight years ago on one of the most fulfilling and eye-opening trips of my life. While in India, I heard many performances that carried this characteristic sound; a sound Das embodies not only the quality of, but more significantly, the emotion behind.

The story of India is just one of the many stories told by the Silk Road Ensemble. Focusing on one musician at a time, you can imagine scenes of one country and one culture. But as you widen your attention, you can see these cultures interacting with each other until ultimately you hear the living, breathing sound of the globe. In essence, that is what the Silk Road Ensemble has managed to accomplish, taking its privileged listeners on a journey through the world, spanning not only political boundaries, but also those of culture and religion. The best way to appreciate a performance by the Silk Road Ensemble is to let the sounds wash over you allowing the music to guide you to places both familiar and unexplored.

*Jerry Zinn is a junior at UNC-Chapel Hill.* ○