

# VANCOUVER RECITAL SOCIETY

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Vancouver Recital Society presents world renowned cellist and fifteen-time Grammy winner Yo-Yo Ma

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**(Vancouver, BC)** – Internationally acclaimed cellist **Yo-Yo Ma** will perform a one-night-only recital at the **Chan Centre for the Performing Arts on Tuesday, May 12, 2009 at 8.00pm**. The sold out concert is presented by the Vancouver Recital Society (VRS) and the programme comprises selected *Bach Cello Suites: No. 1 in G major (BWV 1007), No. 5 in C minor (BWV 1011) and No. 3 in C major (BWV 1009)*.

The Boston Herald declared: "Yo-Yo Ma is the greatest cellist today. Everything he touches he turns to gold." 2009 has been a particularly 'golden' year thus far for Ma. He was named Musical America's 'Musician of the Year' for 2009 and was a featured musician at the inauguration ceremony of US President Barack Obama in January.

The VRS first presented Ma in a duo recital with pianist Emanuel Ax back in 1986. In 2004 both artists returned to Vancouver to perform together again, this time as established musicians with stellar careers. Today, Ma has become one of the world's most recognizable and beloved classical musicians and is known for his genial and gracious persona and for the refined and powerful sound he coaxes from his cello.

An insatiable musical curiosity has propelled Ma to explore different genres beyond the standard western classical repertoire and his career is testament to his continual search for new ways to communicate with audiences and to his personal desire for artistic growth. Ma established the Silk Road Project to promote the study of the cultural, artistic and intellectual traditions along the ancient trade route that stretched from the Mediterranean Sea to the Pacific Ocean. The Silk Road Project is now in its tenth year.

Ma maintains a balance between his engagements as a soloist with orchestras throughout the world and his recital and chamber music activities. He draws inspiration from a wide circle of collaborators, creating programs with such artists as Emanuel Ax, Daniel Barenboim, Christoph Eschenbach, Kayhan Kalhor, Ton Koopman, Bobby McFerrin, Edgar Meyer, Mark Morris, Mark O'Connor, Kathryn Stott, Wu Man, Wu Tong, and David Zinman

Ma was born in 1955 to Chinese parents living in Paris. He began to study the cello with his father at age 4 and shortly afterwards he and his family moved to New York. His principal teacher was Leonard Rose at the Juilliard School and he graduated 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).

He was appointed a CultureConnect Ambassador by the United States Department of State in 2002, and has met with, trained, and mentored thousands of students worldwide in countries

including Lithuania, Korea, Lebanon, Azerbaijan and China. He has performed with and conducted master classes for members of the Iraqi National Symphony Orchestra. In 2006, Secretary General Kofi Annan named him a U.N. Messenger of Peace; in 2007, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon extended his appointment. Ma remains one of the best-selling recording artists in the classical field. All of his recent albums have quickly entered the Billboard chart of classical best sellers, remaining in the Top 15 for extended periods, often with as many as four titles simultaneously on the list. His albums have won fifteen Grammy Awards.

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