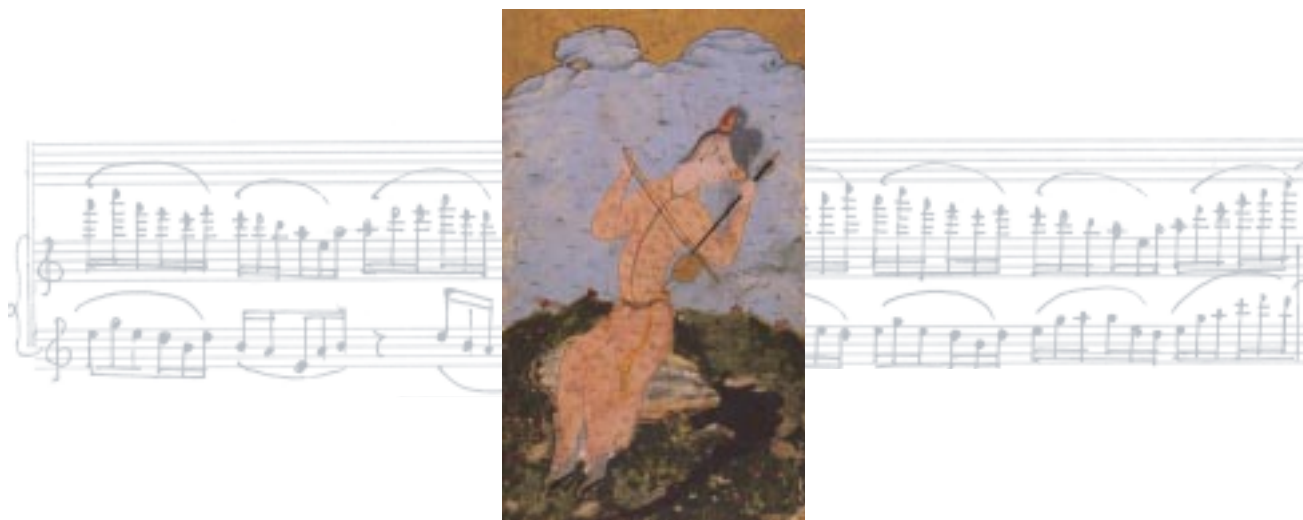




THE AGA KHAN TRUST FOR CULTURE

Music Initiative in Central Asia



PRESERVING AND PROMOTING TRADITIONAL MUSIC OF THE SILK ROAD

The Aga Khan Trust for Culture has launched the Music Initiative in Central Asia, a multi-year programme designed to preserve and promote traditional music at the heart of the Silk Road: in Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and other parts of the region. The Music Initiative provides financial resources and technical assistance for the restoration and performance of classical masterpieces of Central Asian music, and supports recordings, research, conferences, publications and concerts of traditional music.

As part of the Music Initiative, Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble will perform in a series of concerts and conduct master classes, featuring the performance of specially written pieces by outstanding composers from the Silk Road region.

“For many years, I have felt that traditional music played such a critical role in the cultures of Central Asia that it deserved attention and assistance,” His Highness the Aga Khan has remarked. “The need became all the more apparent after the countries of the region achieved independence and began the process of redefining themselves. When Jim Wolfensohn [*president of the World Bank*] introduced me to Yo-Yo Ma, I realised that here was someone whose work the Aga Khan Trust for Culture could support, and also use as a springboard for its own Music Initiative in the region.”

The Trust has already laid the groundwork for regular festivals for arts and music in Central Asia. The series is organised in partnership with the Silk Road Project, Inc., and will draw on the momentum of the Silk Road Project to reinforce local cultural institutions. The long-term goal is for the local festivals to become artistically and financially self-sustaining through the development of a viable cultural infrastructure. Local arts administrators will gain the tools and expertise required to direct artistic institutions and to sustain them in the future, well beyond the time-frame of the Music Initiative and the support of the Trust.



His Highness the Aga Khan and Yo-Yo Ma

From the beginning of his involvement in the Silk Road Project, the Aga Khan has insisted that resources — in the form of cultural exchanges, educational activities and scholar exchanges — directly serve the communities in the Silk Road countries. The purpose of this approach is to ensure that resources and expertise contribute to the creation of autonomous institutions maintained and sustained by the local communities.

As with all activities that the Trust for Culture and the other agencies of the Aga Khan Development Network undertake, the Music Initiative is characterised by a long-term, grass-roots approach. The intention is to support and sustain cultural activity during this period of transition while simultaneously helping to build lasting institutions.

The Aga Khan Trust for Culture, a member of the Aga Khan Development Network, implements cultural initiatives aimed at revitalising the heritage of Islamic communities and contributing to their social and economic development. Trust programmes include the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, the Historic Cities Support Programme, the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at the Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, ArchNet, the Music Initiative in Central Asia and the Aga Khan Humanities Project.

The Aga Khan Development Network

In addition to the Trust for Culture, the Aga Khan Development Network includes seven other non-denominational development agencies founded by His Highness the Aga Khan: the Aga Khan Foundation, which develops solutions for the long-term problems of poverty, hunger, illiteracy and ill health with a special emphasis on the needs of rural communities in mountainous and other resource-poor areas; the University of Central Asia, which is the world's first university dedicated to education and research on mountain regions and societies; the Aga Khan Health Services which, with 325 health centres, dispensaries, hospitals, diagnostic centres and community health outlets, is one of the largest private, non-profit health networks in the world; the Aga Khan Education Services, which operates more than 300 schools and advanced educational programmes at the pre-school, primary, secondary and higher secondary levels in Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Tajikistan; the Aga Khan Planning and Building Services, which provides material, technical assistance and construction management services; the Aga Khan University, Pakistan's first private, autonomous university, headquartered in Karachi; and the Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development, which works to strengthen the role of the private sector in developing countries by promoting entrepreneurial activity and supporting private sector initiatives. For more information, please visit the website: <http://www.akdn.org>.