



**For Immediate Release**

**January 11, 2022**

**Silkroad to Receive Project Grant  
from the National Endowment for the Arts  
to Support *The American Railroad***

Boston, MA — The National Endowment for the Arts announced today that it has approved Silkroad for a \$45,000 award to support the development of music for *The American Railroad*. Silkroad's newest artistic initiative will uncover the history and cultures of the Transcontinental Railroad and shed light on the impact of the communities who helped to build it. *The American Railroad* is among 1,248 projects across America, totaling \$28,840,000, that were selected to receive this first round of fiscal year 2022 funding in the Grants for Arts Projects category.

"Silkroad is grateful to the National Endowment for the Arts for this support, which will propel our efforts to create *The American Railroad*, as conceived by Rhiannon Giddens," stated Executive Director Kathy Fletcher. "Through this artistic initiative, Silkroad will create incredible new music that illuminates the untold stories of the African American, Chinese, Latinx, Irish, and Indigenous communities that built or were adversely impacted by the railroads. By exposing and reckoning with the historical injustices of our country—which have profound reverberations for today—we will unify and connect communities across America in compelling and new ways."

*The American Railroad* is a multi-year concert, educational, and commissioning series that will dive deeply into the untold history, cultures, and music of the Transcontinental Railroad and the silenced communities who helped to build it. Led by Artistic Director Rhiannon Giddens, the initiative will create new music that explores the crossroads of innovation and tradition. This work, which aims to promote cross-cultural dialogue and critical exchange, will be developed through a series of workshops. The issues to be explored, including the formation of American identity, are relevant and timely given our country's acute social divisions and fragmentation.

For more information about *The American Railroad*, contact [hello@silkroad.org](mailto:hello@silkroad.org).

**About Silkroad**

Yo-Yo Ma conceived Silkroad in 1998, recognizing the historical Silk Road as a model for radical cultural collaboration—for the exchange of ideas, tradition, and innovation across borders. In an innovative experiment, he brought together musicians from the lands of the Silk Road to co-create a musical language founded in difference, thus creating the foundation of

Silkroad: both a touring ensemble comprised of world-class musicians from all over the globe and a social-impact organization working to make a positive impact across borders through the arts.

Today, under the leadership of Artistic Director Rhiannon Giddens, Silkroad leads social impact initiatives and educational programming alongside the creation of new music by the Grammy Award-winning Silkroad Ensemble.

To learn more, visit [silkroad.org](http://silkroad.org) and @silkroadproject on social media.

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