Written by Irma McClaurin
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After you've been greeted by Yo-Yo Ma with a hug instead of a handshake, you gain some appreciation for how he has, as the Artistic Director, managed to convince an ever-changing group of almost 60 artists (performers and composers) from different cultures and countries, who speak multiple languages, to become collaborators in the visionary Silk Road Project, Inc., founded in 1998. Yo-Yo Ma exudes gentleness and warmth. He looks at you directly and smiles, and on stage he is not the center piece, but part of the ensemble—just one of the crew, though his genius and vision are evident everywhere. On March 16, 2009, an audience at the Minneapolis Orchestra Hall experienced what Yo-Yo Ma calls "passion driven education" when 16 of this eclectic large Silk Road Project Ensemble of musicians took to the stage.

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