



**DATE: March 23, 2016
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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J. PAUL GETTY TRUST ANNOUNCES J. PAUL GETTY MEDAL TO GO TO YO-YO MA AND ELLSWORTH KELLY

Awards to be presented at a celebratory dinner at the Getty Center on October 17, 2016



Left: Yo-Yo Ma. Image courtesy Jason Bell. Right: Ellsworth Kelly. Image courtesy Jack Shear

LOS ANGELES – The J. Paul Getty Trust announced today it will award its highest honor, the annual J. Paul Getty Medal, to musician Yo-Yo Ma and, posthumously, to artist Ellsworth Kelly.

The J. Paul Getty Medal was established in 2013 by the trustees of the J. Paul Getty Trust to honor extraordinary contributions to the practice, understanding and support of the arts.

“With this Medal we honor two of our nation’s greatest artists: Yo-Yo Ma for his distinguished contributions to the conservation and understanding of the world’s many and diverse cultures, and Ellsworth Kelly for his mastery in paintings and sculptures of the highest quality and originality,” said Maria Hummer-Tuttle, chair, J. Paul Getty Board of Trustees.

In addition to his accomplished career as a master cellist, Ma founded the Silk Road Ensemble and the nonprofit Silkroad to promote the creation of new music, cross-cultural partnerships, education programs, and cross-disciplinary collaborations to create meaningful change at the intersection of the arts, education, and business.

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"The Getty shares Yo-Yo's commitment to artistic excellence and cross-cultural understanding," said James Cuno, president and CEO of the J. Paul Getty Trust. "Our work around the world is inspired by the same values as those of Silkroad, that the best prospects of the future rest on a greater understanding of the interrelationship of the world's many cultures."

"It is a great honor to receive the J. Paul Getty Medal, and to have this very special recognition of the importance of cross-cultural engagement," said Ma. "Culture and communication are the keys to our work at Silkroad, and in celebrating both tradition and innovation, as the Getty has so successfully done, we are building bridges and creating trust."

Ellsworth Kelly was also inspired by the vitality and variety of the world's diverse natural and artistic forms, from plants and shadows to medieval architecture and ancient Chinese bi discs. "My paintings don't represent objects," he once said. "They are objects themselves and fragmented perceptions of things." And the things that attracted Kelly's artistic attention knew no political boundaries.

"Ellsworth saw beauty in everything. He was more visually alive than anyone I know. Every new work was a new adventure for him, a new way of working and making things of extraordinary visual delight," said Cuno. "Maria Hummer-Tuttle and I were set to meet with him just days before he died. He knew of the Getty's honor and expressed pleasure and pride in receiving it."

"Ellsworth strongly believed in the importance of preserving our natural and cultural heritage. For nearly twenty-five years, the Ellsworth Kelly Foundation has supported the conservation of historical and contemporary art at museums and heritage sites in the U.S. and around the world, as well as the preservation of natural environment. The Foundation also gives generously to arts and education projects in our local community," said Jack Shear, president of the Ellsworth Kelly Foundation.

"Ellsworth continued to make new work right up until the end of his life; that was always the most important thing to him," said Shear. "And, while he preferred the studio to the spotlight, he was truly honored to be chosen as the recipient for the J. Paul Getty Medal."

Past recipients of the J. Paul Getty Medal have included Harold Williams and Nancy Englander, Lord Jacob Rothschild, and Frank Gehry. This year's awards will be presented at a dinner on October 17, 2016, at the Getty Center.

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The J. Paul Getty Trust is an international cultural and philanthropic institution devoted to the visual arts that includes the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Getty Research Institute, the Getty Conservation Institute, and the Getty Foundation. The J. Paul Getty Trust and Getty programs serve a varied audience from two locations: the Getty Center in Los Angeles and the Getty Villa in Pacific Palisades.

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