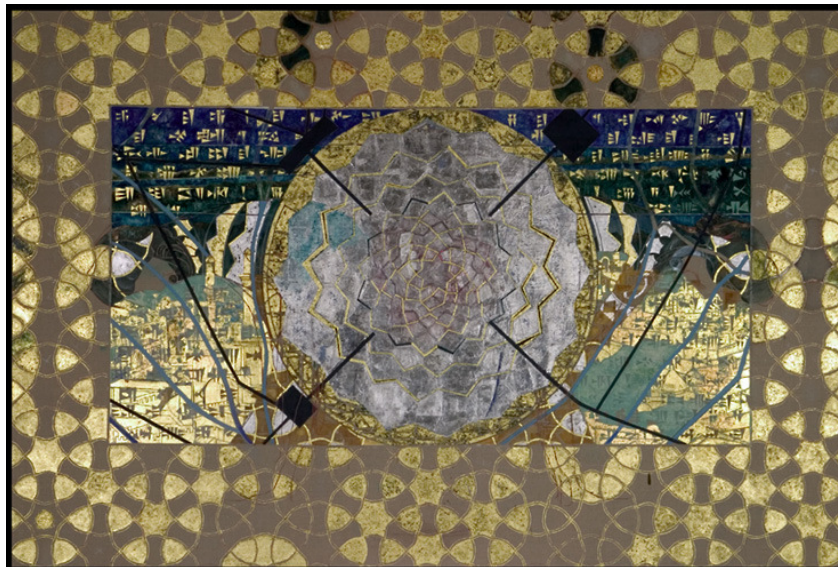


**For Immediate Release**  
[info@triagallerynyc.com](mailto:info@triagallerynyc.com)

**CITIES OF PEACE™: Transforming Anguish into Beauty**  
Ellen Frank Illumination Foundation, Inc.  
September 11 – October 10, 2008



*Baghdad: City of Peace, Truly! 22k gold & palladium leaf, egg tempera, on Belgian linen (69 x 104")*  
*Baghdad, the greatest city on earth from 800-1200 CE, was once called Dar es Salam, meaning "City of Peace"*

**September 11, 2008** – On the anniversary of the 9/11 attacks on New York City and Washington DC, Tria Gallery presents **CITIES OF PEACE: Transforming Anguish Into Beauty**. There will be an opening reception on Thursday evening, September 11, from 6:00-8:00, with comments by the artist, Dr. Ellen Frank. On display will be powerful and poignant illuminated paintings from **CITIES OF PEACE** created by Ellen Frank and the Ellen Frank Illumination Arts Foundation (EFIAF). **CITIES OF PEACE** is a series of monumental gold-illuminated paintings that honor the people, history and cultures of world cities that have experienced major conflict and trauma. The paintings emphasize understanding as a prerequisite to peace and celebrate the best of the human spirit, transforming anguish into beauty. They include New York, Beijing, Baghdad, Kabul, Hiroshima, Jerusalem, Sarajevo, Monrovia, and Lhasa. The majority of these paintings will be on display at Tria, with the others available for viewing by appointment. Smaller illuminated works inspired by **CITIES OF PEACE** will also be on display.

In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, *New York: This is My City!* will be exhibited. Celebrating New York City as a beacon of liberty, the painting honors its residents in concept and content. In how many languages can we say "New York: this is my city"? In light of the current war in Iraq, we will present *Baghdad: City of*

*Peace, Truly!* a painting that stands in moving contrast to media representation, instead gracing us with historic and visual elements of what was the greatest city on earth from 800-1200 CE. The painting's title issues from the city's name itself: Baghdad was once called Dar es Salam, meaning "City of Peace." With the world focus on China during the Olympics, paintings honoring Beijing and Lhasa will also be shown. *Beijing: Heavenly Peace on Earth* honors Beijing in dance, costume, and cityscape. The painting proclaims that this complex and magnificent ancient and modern city is the place where the heavens touch the earth, conferring majesty and light. *Lhasa: 10 Directions* is inspired by the words of a sixth-century anonymous poet which cascade to the Lhasa skyline, just as the Bon myth describes the first Tibetans climbing down rainbow stairs from the sky to the mountaintops: *This center of heaven, This core of the earth, This heart of the world, Fenced round with snow...* In *Hiroshima: Winter Bloom*, the symbolic winter-blooming plum blossom flows across the once secret "pre-attack mosaic" photo of Hiroshima taken in April 1945. The five emperors of the historic castle town of Hiroshima are represented either in portrait or by a distinctive flag. Grace and hope ride the wind as it sweeps the plum blossom across our memories. *Kabul: I Love Her (for knowledge and love both come from her dust)* celebrates text from a 17<sup>th</sup> century poem which illuminates the city, with symbols of what was cherished by Afghans, then banned – dance, music, books, kites – woven into the painting as if a pattern from a tribal carpet, an art form that helped to make Afghanistan renowned worldwide. *Sarajevo: Here* celebrates the great cultural heritage of that city as pages of imagined illuminated manuscripts: within the painting's gold-illuminated borders is tucked the red-tile-roofed city itself, with its mosques and minarets, its spires, symbols, and languages. *Monrovia: In Constellation* affirms the initial values and hopes of the great cultural experiment that was Liberia's creation. An old map of the evening sky grounds the night's stars, exactly as they shone on Liberian Independence Day on July 26, 1847 at 10:00 pm. Finally, *Jerusalem: A Painting Toward Peace* shows, between the interconnecting flowers of an historic Islamic motif, the traditional six-sided star common to Islamic art, a symbol that from the Middle Ages on has come to be known as the Star of David. The explicit integration of these two motifs into one functions as a perfect symbol of peace.

With these monumental works **EFIAF** honors the histories, cultures and religions of these magnificent cities, and announces from New York its concern for the well-being of the world and its commitment to world peace.

\*\*\*\*\*

The **CITIES OF PEACE** paintings were produced at **The Illumination Atelier** in East Hampton, New York by international interns under the artistic direction of **Ellen Frank**. More will be created in the months and years to come, all honoring cities that have been besieged, and all celebrating hope, human resilience and the best of the human spirit.

The **EFIAF**, a not-for-profit organization founded in June of 2004, was formed to revitalize, create and exhibit illuminated art, using historic and literary traditions to combine art and social justice, thereby promoting global peace and understanding. It is dedicated to the transformative power of art to build a culture of understanding. **Ellen Frank**, who conceived **EFIAF** and its major works as well as the **Illumination Atelier**, studied Art History and Connoisseurship at Yale, the Courtauld and Warburg Institutes, and has an interdisciplinary Ph.D. in English Literature and a Visual Arts from Stanford University. Her many awards in painting, book design and scholarship include a Fulbright Fellowship, National Endowment for the Arts grant, Ford Foundation fellowship, Pollack-Krasner Award in Painting, and a New York Foundation for the Arts grant.

**EFIAF's** Peace Education Program, **The Illumination Atelier**, unites youths, artists and scholars to research and create illuminations that bridge ethnic and religious diversity and national identity. The **CITIES OF PEACE** paintings will tour the world, and will be on display for the grand reopening of St. John the Divine in January 2009.

**Tria Gallery** is also dedicated to using the power of art to bring about social awareness and justice and is honored to present **CITIES OF PEACE**. For more information on **CITIES OF PEACE** or the **EFIAF**, please contact Tria Gallery at (212) 695-0021 or at [info@triagallerynyc.com](mailto:info@triagallerynyc.com). Pricing and availability upon request.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Tria Gallery** specializes in contemporary painting and mixed media by established and emerging artists. In addition to artwork on exhibit, the gallery maintains an inventory of select works by its featured artists. Tria's three directors, Carol Suchman, Paige Bart, and Latifa Metheny, are committed to presenting artists with compelling bodies of work, and ones whose stories, should, in their opinion, be told.

Tria is located in the heart of Chelsea, at 547 West 27<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 504, and is open to the public. Hours are Wednesday – Saturday, 11:00-6:00. **CITIES OF PEACE: Transforming Anguish into Beauty** will run from September 11 through October 10, 2008. For more information, please visit [www.triagallerynyc.com](http://www.triagallerynyc.com).