

Baghdad Beijing Hiroshima Jerusalem Kabul
Lhasa Monrovia New York Sarajevo Yerevan
Baghdad Beijing Hiroshima Jerusalem Kabul

Dedicated to the transformative power of art to build a culture of understanding.

Lhasa Monrovia New York Sarajevo Yerevan
Baghdad Beijing Hiroshima Jerusalem Kabul
Lhasa Monrovia New York Sarajevo Yerevan
Baghdad Beijing Hiroshima Jerusalem Kabul
Lhasa Monrovia New York Sarajevo Yerevan

CITIES OF PEACE encourages us to acknowledge the grandeur of humankind's creative powers, and the triumph of hope over the forces of darkness and entropy.

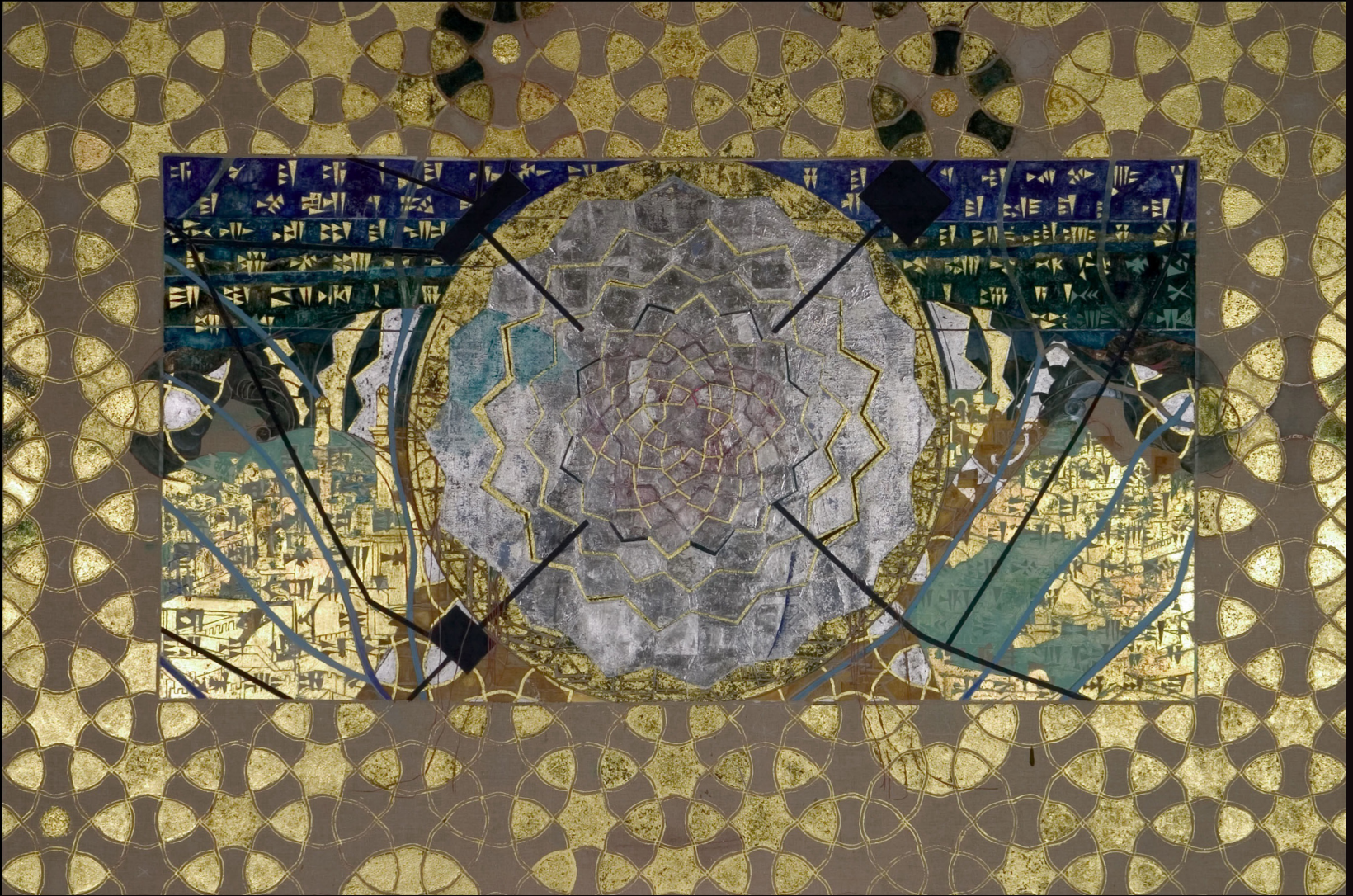
Cities are the fount of civilization, the source of most of what is best in our world. Every effort must be made to encourage people to focus on that fundamental fact about cities, and to strive to preserve them and the values they embody. CITIES OF PEACE helps serve that high purpose.

Jeff Spurr, Fogg Museum
Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture
Harvard University

CITIES OF PEACE honors the history and culture of world cities that have experienced major conflict and trauma, including Baghdad, Beijing, Hiroshima, Jerusalem, Lhasa, Monrovia, New York, Sarajevo, and Yerevan. Transforming anguish into beauty, the gold leaf painting series emphasizes understanding as prerequisite to peace. The work is neither violent nor polemic; rather, CITIES OF PEACE encourages our action through hopeful energy by celebrating the best of the human spirit.

The paintings draw upon artistic traditions unique to each city honored, traditions as diverse as illuminated manuscripts, icons, tapestries, embroidery, architectural mosaics, woodcarvings and metalwork. Crimson leaf, the color of our blood, is tucked into each painting to honor the dead. Memorials to particular eras and locations, CITIES OF PEACE pays homage to artistic, historic and literary traditions to combine art and social justice, and thereby seeks to promote global peace and understanding.

We invite you to experience the monumental paintings of the collection.



Baghdad:

CITY OF PEACE, TRULY

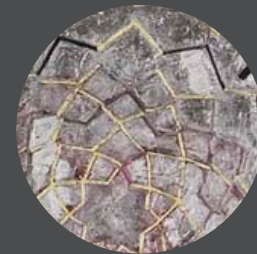
THE LAYERS OF BAGHDAD: CITY OF PEACE, TRULY CHASE MORE than 5,000 years of splendid, then destroyed grandeur. From the cuneiform creation myth found in Iraq on a clay tablet dating to 3000 B.C. to the aerial photograph of Baghdad (1925), the painting honors Baghdad as emerging from the Cradle of Civilization, Baghdad the Round City (762 AD), and Baghdad the site of Islamic architectural achievement. With a border pattern from the Al Kadhimain Mosque (1515), the painting celebrates a great city and a great culture.

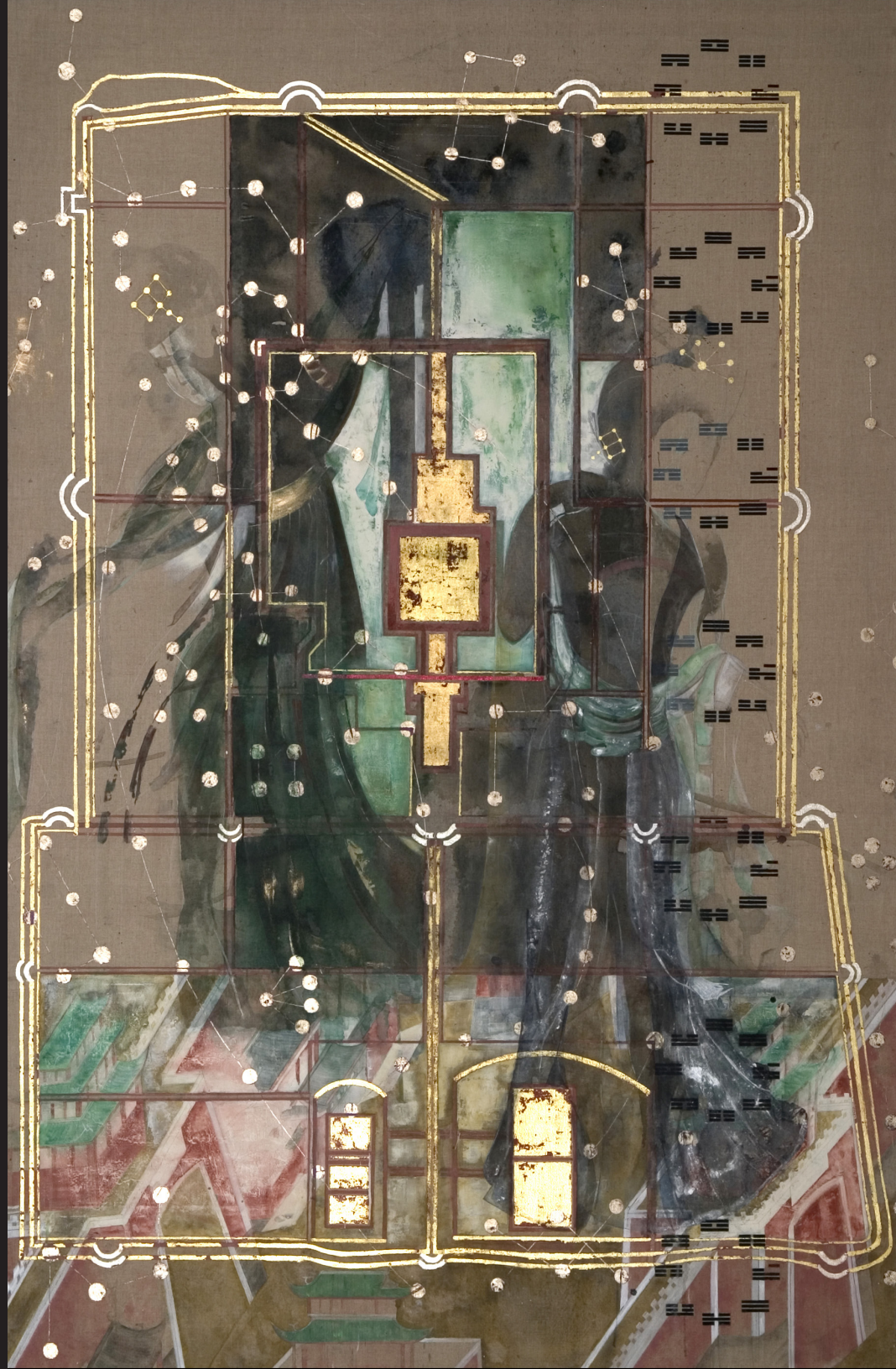
The cuneiform text in the painting reads:

When heaven above was not yet named, nor earth below pronounced by name, Apsu, the first one, their begetter and maker Tiamat, who bore them all, had mixed their waters together, but had not formed pastures, nor discovered reed-beds. When yet no gods were manifest, nor names pronounced, nor destinies decreed, then gods were born within them.

(Translator: Stephanie Dalley)

22 karat gold leaf, palladium leaf, & 23 1/2 karat moon gold





Beijing:

HEAVENLY PEACE, ON EARTH!

THIS PAINTING CELEBRATES BEIJING (CHINA) AS A SACRED CITY, marking the proportions of its city plan (the map of old Beijing), star pattern (the Purple Protected Enclosure), and geographic site (the Luoshu and Hetu diagrams). Through the large-scale figures, the work honors Beijing in dance (referencing the tomb painting The Dancing Girl in Red), in costume (inspired by the handscroll Court Ladies Wearing Flowered Head Dresses), and in cityscape (based on the scroll The Splendor of an Imperial Capital). With a north-south axis, setting the Forbidden City in the painting's center, the work proclaims that this complex, magnificent place – both ancient and modern – is where the heavens touch the earth, conferring majesty and light. In fact, the name Tiananmen, forever linked with Beijing, means “heavenly peace.”

22 karat gold leaf, palladium leaf, & 231/2 karat moon gold





Hiroshima:

WINTER BLOOM

IN THIS WORK, THE SYMBOLIC WINTER-BLOOMING PLUM blossom cascades across the once secret “Pre-Attack Mosaic” photograph of Hiroshima (Japan) taken by U.S. military aerial reconnaissance in April 1945, a few months before the atomic bomb was dropped on the city. The five emperors of historical Hiroshima, once an island castle town built on a shallow bay, are represented either in portrait or by a distinctive flag. Large-scale human figures, tucked into the white gold and moon gold leaf, face us, stand sideways, and even dance. Grace and hope ride the wind as it sweeps the plum blossom across our collective memory.

22 karat white and moon gold





Jerusalem:

A PAINTING TOWARDS PEACE

INSPIRED BY THE SCENIC APPROACH TO JERUSALEM (ISRAEL)– the ctav rounding a corner, the first glimpse of the old city wall, and the city itself hovering behind King David's Gate – the painting celebrates the Golden City. Drawn from early photographs that capture the shape of the hill upon which Jerusalem sits, the work records the wall, the Golden Gate, the Dome of the Rock, and the city in its entirety – abstracted, interpreted, felt, and loved.

The border pattern symbolizes peace by uniting a historical Islamic floral motif with the Star of David. The hundreds of tiny figures within the painting are all of us, those who dwell in Jerusalem and those in other cities, hoping for peace in that troubled part of the world. They represent the conviction that all people aspire to transformation, joy, freedom of worship, and freedom to live meaningful and safe lives.

22 karat gold leaf





Sing

Sing

the garden, lanterns and statues

the city of Kabul

the beautiful city of Kabul

the beautiful city of Kabul

But I love her
for knowledge and love
both come from
her dust

I sing bright praises to her
colorful tulips
The beauty of
her trees

makes me blush

Now sparkling
the water flows

the beautiful city of Kabul
the beautiful city of Kabul
the beautiful city of Kabul

But I love her

the dust of Kabul's blowing soil
hazily to
eyes

lightly

lightly

lightly

lightly

lightly

lightly

lightly

lightly

lightly

lightly

lightly

lightly

lightly

lightly

lightly

lightly

lightly

lightly

lightly

lightly

Kabul:

I LOVE HER (for knowledge and love both come from her dust)

IN THIS WORK, GOLD LEAF MICROGRAPHY (TEXT SHAPED into images) from a seventeenth century poem illuminates the city, inspired by a panoramic photograph taken between 1870 and 1882. Celebrating Kabul (Afghanistan), the verses walk a main city road, not as an invading army but as a march of words of love. So, too, the poem delineates two dancing figures, with words of song upon one figure's heart. Symbols of what was cherished by Afghans, then banned – dance, music, books, kites – are woven into the painting as if a pattern from a tribal carpet, an art form that helped to make Afghanistan renowned worldwide. Figures and mountains tower over the city as we pray for healing joy for the people, women and men alike, of Kabul.

Oh, the beautiful city of Kabul wears a rugged mountain skirt,
And The Rose is jealous of its lash-like thorns.
The dust of Kabul's blowing soil smarts lightly in my eyes,
But I love her, for knowledge and love both come from her dust.
–Mirza Muhammad Ali-Sa'ib (Translator unknown)

22 karat gold leaf & 23 1/2 karat moon gold





Lhasa:

10 DIRECTIONS

FRAMED BY TWO GOLD-LEAF PILLARS INSPIRED BY COLUMNS at the Jokhang monastery, one of the oldest monasteries in Tibet, the painting uses motifs from mudras (sacred hand positions and forms of gestured communication thought to be more powerful than the spoken word) as a border pattern. The ancient circumambulation path for visitors and pilgrims alike – the Lingkor – surrounds the entire city of Lhasa, with all its holy sites, much as it navigates the painting itself. The words of a sixth-century anonymous poet cascade to the Lhasa skyline, just as the Bon myth describes the first Tibetans climbing down rainbow stairs from the sky to mountaintops:

This center of heaven,
This core of the earth,
This heart of the world
Fenced round with snow.
(Translator: Ngapo Ngawng Jigmei)



Inspired by the Dalai Lama's description of the two thousand illuminated volumes of scriptures stored in the Potala monastery that were written in "powdered gold, silver, iron, copper, conch shell, turquoise, and coral, each line a different color," so the rainbow of the painting itself honors a people and a tradition, their wisdom, compassion, generosity, and equanimity.

22 karat gold leaf



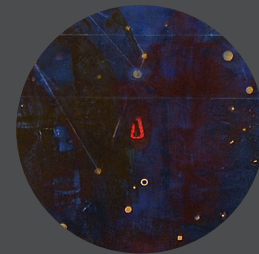
Monrovia:

IN CONSTELLATION

Beneath a blanketing night sky, dream, language, and ritual – as if inspired by night itself – seem to awaken for the people of Monrovia. Monrovia: In Constellation affirms the initial values and hopes of the great cultural experiment that was Liberia's creation. Aligning diverse ethnicities and cultural practices as star patterns within the organized mystery of night, Monrovia: In Constellation celebrates the achievements that characterize the uniqueness of Monrovia.

We celebrate the inspiring resilience of the Liberian people, hoping that Monrovia: In Constellation will herald a renewed harmony within the Liberian capital. A map (circa 1849) grounds the night's stars, exactly as they shone on Liberian Independence Day, July 26, 1847 at 10:00 P.M.

Palladium leaf & 231/2 karat moon gold





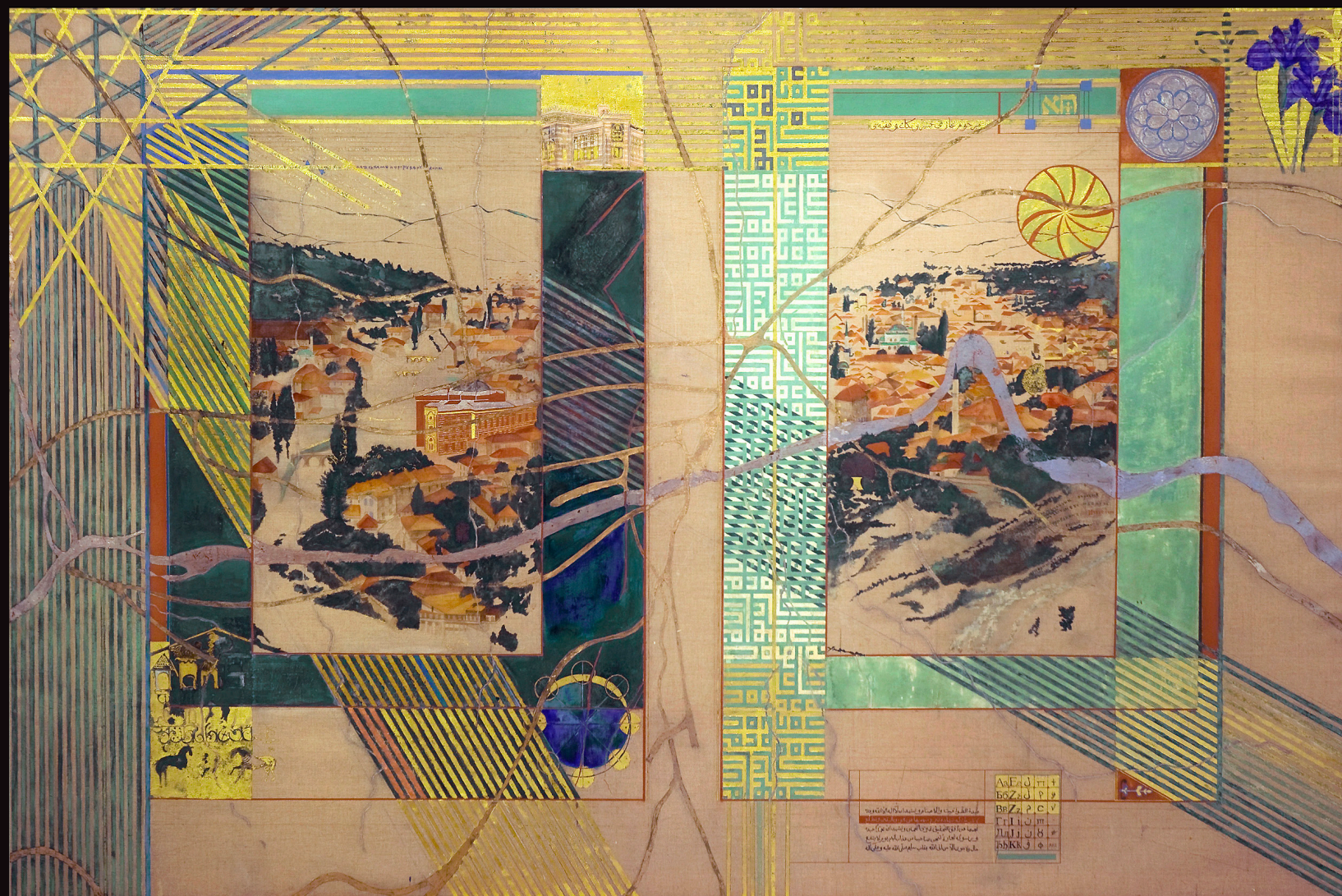
New York:

THIS IS MY CITY!

BRIDGES TO THE ISLAND CITY OF NEW YORK CARRY DREAMS and dreamers. With bottoms of buildings bordering the painting's top, tops bordering the bottom, the skyline of New York turns us around and around. Like the left page of a monumental illuminated manuscript that opens a magnificent book New York, the painting is bordered on three sides. The view looks east at Midtown, imaging more than forty-five buildings from Thirty-fourth to Fifty-ninth Street that are all taller than six hundred feet! Celebrating the city as a beacon of liberty, New York: This is My City! honors its residents in concept and content. In how many languages can we say, "New York is my City"?

22 karat gold leaf & palladium leaf





Sarajevo:

HERE

The greatness of Sarajevo rests upon one of the highest precepts of civilization, benefaction, the act of conferring a gift, aid, doing a good deed such that individual concern for personal welfare in Sarajevo was nearly indistinguishable from civic altruism. In the dimensional world, benefaction manifested as intentional sharing of space: churches – both Catholic and Orthodox – mosques and synagogues were often built side by side. Such generosity of spirit, documented in books, illuminated manuscripts and works of art, “affirmed that people of different ethnic and religious traditions shared a common heritage and common space in Bosnia.” (Riedlmayer, Harvard)

Sarajevo: Here celebrates the great cultural heritage of Sarajevo 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. Is the act of remembrance restorative? In the wake of the shattering culturacide in Sarajevo – the single largest intentional book burning and the longest military siege in modern history – Sarajevo: Here cherishes the people of Sarajevo, their spirit convivencia!, and their art, in its own small act of benefaction.

22 karat gold leaf, palladium leaf, & 231/2 karat moon gold





Yerevan:

TO KNOW WISDOM

THE PAINTING CELEBRATES ARMENIAN ANCIENT HISTORY, ITS multilayered culture, unique symbolism and, most of all, the Armenian alphabet with the first sentence ever written in it: To know wisdom and guidance; to perceive the words of insight (Solomon, Proverbs 1:2). Sacred themselves, letters were also numbers and musical notes. Contributing to the nation's identity, the alphabet helped protect the Armenians from ethnocide.

From the former capitals of Armenia to the Tree of Life, including the 1865 map of Yerevan that inspired the architect Tamanian's design for the city as we now know it, the hidden letter "E" for "Being" to the ornament with gilded texts in English from Sasna Tsrer, Komitas and Parajanov – *Yerevan: To Know Wisdom* tells its own story. The thriving diaspora highlighted in shades of gold announces to the world the presence of Armenians among us all.

22 karat, red, champagne, green, and Caplain gold leaf





EF



ELLEN FRANK
ILLUMINATION ARTS
FOUNDATION, Inc.

Participating artist-interns include: Adrian Perez, Andrea Gray, April Yang, Aurora Nessly, Breton Langendorfer, Catalina Zuniga, Carlos Mauricio Espitia, Debbie Duru, Elaine Juzwick, Helis Podnek, Holli Michener, Illana Hester, Katriona Black, Madeline Reidy, Margaret Szeto, Mollie Cashwell, Penelope Mesen, Raphael Stoklosa, Satsuki Uno, Susan Park, Valeria Koutmina, Yerina Cha, Mariam Aleksanyan, Anna Avagyan, Lilit Bachachyan, Inessa Gharibyan, Gayane Ghazaryan, Arevik Grigoryan, Merine Hayrapetyan, Siranush Hovsepian, Iness Karoyan, Ruben Malayan, Ani Manana Matevossian, Lilit Mirzoyan, Artur Muradyan, Lilit Sargsyan, Anna Sargsyan, Gayane Saroyan, Magi Shahbazyan, Alexandra Shahmuradyan, Ani Tarjumanyan, Nehama Grenimann-Bauch, Masa Zmitek, and Adja Mladenovic.

ELLEN FRANK, Ph.D.

Artist, scholar, and writer, Ellen Frank's many awards in painting, book design, and scholarship include a Fulbright Fellowship, National Endowment for the Arts, Ford Foundation Fellowship, Pollock-Krasner Award in Painting, New York State Council on the Arts, and a New York Foundation for the Arts grant.

Dr. Frank studied art history and connoisseurship at Yale University, the Courtauld and Warburg Institutes, and holds an interdisciplinary doctorate in English Literature and the Visual Arts from Stanford University.

Dr. Frank was Assistant Professor of English Literature at UC Berkeley where she co-designed and created the first interdisciplinary major "Literature and the Visual Arts"; she was guest Associate Professor at Barnard College and Rutgers University, visiting professor at School of Visual Arts and Tyler School of Art. Her first book, *Literary Architecture: Essays Toward a Tradition* (University of California Press), was awarded the New York Institute for Graphic Arts 50 Best Books, Ronce & Coffin Club Design Award, and "Best Book in 50 Years" by University of California Press.

ABOUT EFIAF

In 2005, Dr. Frank founded Ellen Frank Illumination Arts Foundation, Inc., (EFIAF), a 501(c) (3) non-profit global initiative dedicated to the transformative power of art to build a culture of understanding. As artistic director, Dr. Frank has trained artist-interns from more than 25 countries, uniting scholars and experts to work on its joint creations.