

For immediate release:

CITIES OF PEACE EXHIBITION OPENS AT Bloomingdale's Soho, November 21 - January 4

CITIES OF PEACE®, a suite of monumental gold-illuminated paintings from the Ellen Frank Illumination Arts Foundation, Inc., will be on display at Bloomingdale's Soho in both the windows and on the first floor. The exhibition is dedicated to the transformative power of art to build a world culture of peace and hope. The exhibit will be on view from November 17 through January 4, 2012 in Bloomingdale's Soho located at 504 Broadway, between Broome and Spring Streets. Hours are 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

The exhibition features eight 6 x 8 foot gold-illuminated works on linen that are a visual tribute to people and locations around the world. *Cities of Peace* encourages us to acknowledge the grandeur of humankind's creative powers and the triumph of hope. Emphasizing understanding as prerequisite to peace, *Cities of Peace* includes Baghdad, Beijing, Hiroshima, Kabul, Lhasa, Monrovia, New York and Sarajevo. *Kabul: "I Love Her (for knowledge and love both come from her dust)," Beijing: Heavenly Peace, On Earth!* and *New York: This is My City!* adorn the windows with manikins in clothing that evoke place and culture.

CITIES OF PEACE is a commemorative body of work conceived by New York artist Ellen Frank and produced at her Illumination Atelier, with trained interns and scholars from China, Colombia, Estonia, Canada and elsewhere. "Through understanding the history and beauty of these great cities that have suffered strife, we can participate in the beauty of recovery and peace," said Ellen Frank.

Jan Oberg, executive director of the Transnational Foundation for Peace in Sweden, praises the exhibit: "*Cities of Peace* superbly promotes ethics, dialogue and inner calm--so overlooked in our world as tools, as language, for peace and peaceful co-existence. *Cities of Peace* should not only be exhibited in New York or Geneva but in war zones, in schools and art halls where they would give hope and inspiration."

CITIES OF PEACE marries word and image in the great tradition of illuminated art, evoking artistic traditions as diverse as illuminated manuscripts, religious icons, tapestries, embroidery, architectural mosaics, woodcarvings, and metalwork. Crimson leaf, the color of blood, is placed in each painting to honor the fallen. While serving as memorials, the paintings are also intended as border crossings that enable visions of greater compassion and heightened consciousness among peoples.

The works were produced with participation by international interns at the Illumination Atelier of the Ellen Frank Illumination Arts Foundation in East Hampton, New York. The purpose of the not-for-profit organization is to enhance understanding of the art and history of illumination among artists and the public and to enable the creation of new work in this historic genre to build a culture of peace.

Frank studied art history and connoisseurship at Yale University and holds an interdisciplinary doctorate in English literature and the visual arts from Stanford University. She is a recipient of a Fulbright Fellowship, a Ford Foundation fellowship, and grants from the National Endowments for the Arts, the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, the New York State Council on the Arts, and the New York Foundation for the Arts. Frank founded the nonprofit Ellen Frank Illumination Arts Foundation, Inc.