

## WHEN GIVING IS GOLDEN



At this time of year it's easy to become swamped by entreaties to spend in the name of pure commerce. Thankfully there are people committed year round to giving, teaching and helping. Among the countless stellar groups in the world that spend all year working toward bettering local and global communities, we highlight three inspiring organizations with important missions that combine collaboration with craft. Be sure to click on their names to learn more about them.

### THE ALPHA WORKSHOPS

Dedicated to creating beauty and changing lives, The Alpha Workshops is the nation's only nonprofit organization providing decorative arts education and employment to at-risk youths and adults with disabilities or other vulnerabilities. Founded in 1995, the multi-faceted organization encompasses The Alpha Workshops Studio School (AWSS), a vocational school licensed by the New York State Department of Education, and The Alpha Workshops Studios, an award-winning professional design and decorative arts atelier staffed exclusively by AWSS graduates.

The Alpha Workshops proudly serves the LGBTQ, HIV+/AIDS, and and the community of people with disabilities or other vulnerabilities. In accordance with its original mission "to provide a new model of economic development for people living with HIV+/AIDS or other disabilities," The Alpha Workshops is part of a growing movement to establish unique ways of working, teaching, and doing business with benefits for all: a do-no-harm approach to education and enterprise.

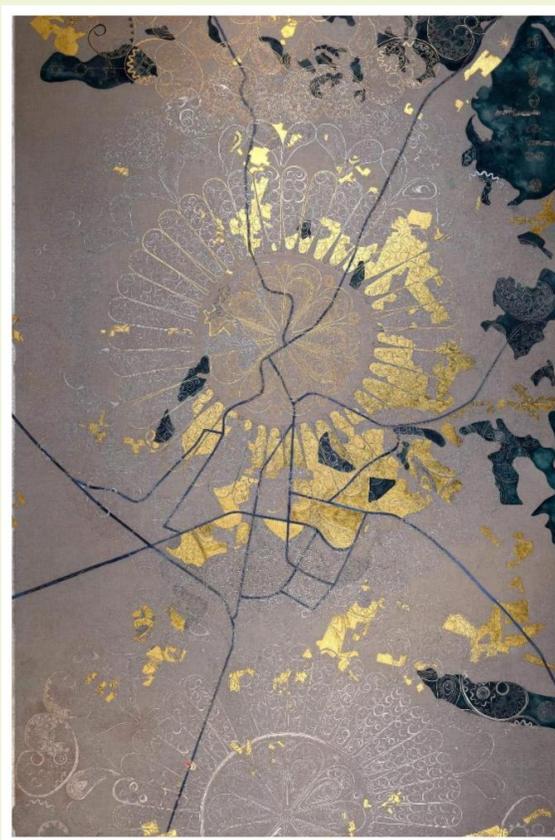


Custom 40" x 18" light combines epoxy putty, paper pulp and 23k gold applied as a "scumble" over the finished paper. The "cloud" is suspended under an opaque verre eglomisé disc with lights above. The face of the glass, which is towards the ceiling, is also gilded to reflect a golden glow upward.



Custom cabinet with gilding on the doors and base plus a verre eglomise top. The leaf on the top is a Japanese tinted silver leaf. The plinth base is 23k gold.  
photos top and above left and right, Emma Hollister Colby, The Alpha Workshops

**CITIES OF PEACE®**  
**ELLEN FRANK ILLUMINATION ARTS FOUNDATION**



*Pristina: The Flowering* - 104" x 69" Florin Gold, Champagne Gold, Red Gold, Palladium leaf, egg tempera, acrylic and aquarelle on unbleached Belgian linen.

Cities of Peace is the flagship initiative of the Ellen Frank Illumination Arts Foundation Inc., a public benefit charity founded in 2004 dedicated to building a culture of understanding and peace through the transformative power of collaborative art-making with artists, students, marginalized youth, scholars, and institutions from more than 25 countries.

A collection of monumental gold-illuminated paintings honors the history and culture of cities that have experienced major conflict and trauma: Baghdad, Beijing, Hiroshima, Jerusalem, Kabul, Lhasa, Monrovia, New York, Pristina, Sarajevo and Yerevan. Neither violent nor polemic, the works celebrate the best of the human spirit.

The Cities of Peace Collection emphasizes understanding as a prerequisite to peace.

The foundation's work fosters cultural diplomacy, peacebuilding and leadership training: Students, artists, educators and the public celebrate civil society through multi-disciplinary and inter-art curriculum and inquiry: history, religion, governance, archeology, science and literature. The initiative cultivates an active sense of global leadership and responsibility, conflict resolution, and community-building.

The recent work in Pristina, Kosovo commemorated the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of independence, with nearly 300 participants of multiple ethnicities from 38 municipalities, and merited a Fulbright Specialist in Peacebuilding and Reconciliation Award, the US Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and 2018 World Learning Award for Excellence. Cities of Peace gratefully acknowledges material gifts from Giusto Manetti Goldbeaters, Golden Artists Colors, Inc. and Blick Art Materials.

The Cities of Peace collection promotes a belief in the critical role of cities in sustaining what is creative and hopeful in civilization. It inspires those who create and who view these works of art to act to protect, develop and improve urban centers throughout the world. Art and Culture Matter: they engage in the essential dialogue about cultural heritage, preventing the destruction of civilization, protecting cities, and rekindling the human spirit.



At work in Pristina, Museum of Kosovo: Kosovo Albanians, Serbs, Roma, Ashkali Egyptians, Armenian artists, with French Moroccan and American participants.



Young Kosovo Roma woman teaching the head of the United Nations Development Program. Photos top and above left and right courtesy EFIAF

## ARTWORKS FOR FREEDOM

The Golden Doors to Freedom is a participatory arts project that turns abandoned doors into dramatic vehicles for communal focus on human trafficking. The target audience includes trafficking survivors and allies among the public (students, professional associations, artists, educators, civic and faith-based organizations, media and others).

Conceived by master gilder William Adair and photographer Kay Chernush, trafficking survivors and allies convert discarded wooden doors into freedom portals. After applying 23k gold leaf, participants write, stencil, draw, scratch, burnish and embellish the doors with their own thoughts and feelings about human trafficking.



Students find joy in gilding the Golden Doors.

For survivors, transforming a “piece of junk” into a compelling work of art helps them see new possibilities for their own lives. For allies, the Doors open opportunities for reflection, engagement and action. The group process crystallizes individual survivor stories within the community and the finished Doors provide a powerful public and visual representation of the commitment to eradicate human trafficking. By creating freedom portals, survivors and allies together become a force for social change.

The Golden Doors will be displayed in local venues and airports as part of larger awareness campaigns. They will eventually be auctioned to raise funds for participating survivor groups and to expand the reach of the project.



Bill Adair does some fancy gold flipping for a good cause at the 2016 Mid-America Trucking Show in Louisville, KY.



Golden Doors share the message of hope. photos above courtesy artworksforfreedom.org

Wishing you joy and peace this season.

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