



Brave New World Comics presents
New Work in Paper by Isaac Brynjegard-Bialik



April 27 – May 25, 2013



Smallville **SOLD**

18" x 24"

Mixed media

2013

This cut explores the immigrant experience in America — the Statue of Liberty being the entrypoint for many a new American, while Smallville is Kal-El's Statue of Liberty. It's where he learns to be a part of our civilization... but of course he also has his special place to be alone, his Fortress of Solitude — where he can truly be himself, amongst Kryptonian architecture and artifacts. This papercut is an exploration of the dichotomy between staying true to one's origins and assimilating into the larger culture, and is backed with cut-up Superman comics.



The Golem **SOLD**

18" x 24"

Mixed media

2012

The golem protected those who could not protect themselves. Given life with the inscription of the Hebrew word "emet" ("truth") across its forehead, when its task was complete the aleph was erased, leaving "met" ("death"). Tony Stark created the Iron Man armor to protect those who can not protect themselves, hence the form of the golem's head in this papercut, backed with cut-up comics featuring clay and mud as well as watercolor work to imbue the piece with a handmade element to mirror the creation of the golem. At the top are the three Hebrew letters which make the word "emet," obscured through overlapping to maintain the secret of the golem's power; the letters are backed with cut-up Iron Man comics.



Higher and Higher

18" x 24"

Mixed media

2011

This cut is inspired by the words of Genesis 7:11: "In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day the fountains of the deep burst apart, and the floodgates of the sky broke open." It takes its name from one of the snippets of text in the background, which comes from a 1946 book of biblical commentary titled *Pathways Through the Bible*. The background is made of grayscale and limited-palette comics and a photograph from National Geographic magazine.



And All the People Saw the Voices

18" x 24"

Mixed media

2011

"All the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the blare of the horn and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they fell back and stood at a distance" (Exodus 20:15). The Hebrew word for "thunder" is the same as "voice," and so God's voice is connected with the sound of thunder. Designed to mimic the shape of the lightning bolt worn by Captain Marvel, it is backed with comic elements featuring lightning and fire.



Inundación SOLD

18" x 24"

Mixed media

2013

The story of the flood pervades many cultures across the globe. This representation draws from biblical narrative and Mesoamerican iconography, backed almost entirely by cut-up pieces from the 2008 trade edition of Jack Kirby's mid-70s series *The Eternals*. The one exception is a snippet of text from *LIFE Nature Library: The Sea* published by Time-Life Books in 1972.



Seven to Seventy

24" x 18"

Mixed media

2012

As the children of Israel stood at the foot of Mt. Sinai, God spoke the words of Torah for all to hear. The rabbis teach us that God's voice (the sound of thunder) was split into seven voices, and then to seventy, so that all would hear and understand. This piece shows that progression, as lightning brings down all of the words of Torah.



Nisan Tree **SOLD**

18" x 24"

Mixed media

2011

This papercut celebrates the Jewish month of Nisan, and was inspired by words from the Babylonian Talmud: "Rabbi Judah said, When a man goes out to the country in the month of Nisan [that is, in springtime] and see trees bring forth blossoms, he is to say, 'Blessed be God, whose world lacks nothing, having created in it comely creatures and beautiful trees, so that human beings may enjoy them.'"

The papercut is backed with cut-up comics that reflect the joy and exuberance of springtime, with characters including Green Lantern and She-Hulk, and comic book artists including Alex Ross and Joe Kubert.



Oppenheimer

16" x 20"

Mixed media

2013

Upon seeing the first test of the atom bomb, which he helped create, Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer said these words from the Hindu scriptural epic, *Bhagavad Gita*. The power of the atom has given us good and bad, and we see a dichotomy of intention and result in the character of the Hulk, whose comics are cut up to make this background of this papercut. There's one snippet that's not the Hulk: the Watchmen's Dr. Manhattan makes an appearance as well.



The King

16" x 20"

Mixed media

2012

A double portrait of King David and Elvis Presley. The structure is based on a King of Spades playing card, which traditionally represents King David. The piece is backed with parts of Psalm 33 from the 1954 *Authorised Daily Prayer Book*: "Sing joyfully to the Lord... make music to God with the harp of ten strings... play skillfully with sounds of joy." The background is otherwise entirely composed of cut-up pieces of the 1995 *LIFE* magazine special, "Elvis: A Celebration."



El Na R'fa Na La **SOLD**

16" x 20"

Mixed media

2012

Miriam falls ill in the desert in the Book of Numbers in the Torah, and her brother Moses prays to God with one of the most touching — and succinct prayers in history (just five Hebrew words) — which translates into English as "O God, please, heal her please." Backed with watercolor and maps.



Re'uven

8" x 20"

Mixed media

2011

In Genesis 30 we read that Re'uven, the first son of Jacob and Leah, brings his mother mandrakes from the field, a sign of fertility, so that she might conceive again with her husband Jacob. Her sister Rachel takes the mandrakes in exchange for a night with their husband, and so — in this roundabout way — Leah does conceive again.



Honi the Circle-Maker **SOLD**

18" x 18"

Mixed media

2013

On one occasion when God did not send rain at its appropriate time, Honi drew a circle in the dust, stood inside it, and informed God that he would not move until it rained. When it began to drizzle, Honi told God that he was not satisfied and expected more rain; it then began to pour. He explained that he wanted a calm rain, at which point the rain calmed to a normal rain. In addition to the comics cut up for the background, there is a piece of the 1961 Folger Library edition of William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*.



My Canary Cry **SOLD**

14" x 30"

Mixed media

2013

The structure of this papercut is a shofar — the ram's horn used by Jews for various ritual purposes. The papercut is a personal reflection on the role of women in ritual worship and community leadership, inspired primarily by my wife but also the other female voices that have led me in prayer over the years. It's backed with female superheroes who use their voices as power, as a way to work for good: Black Canary and Syren in particular. It's an exploration of the role of women as leaders of our community, using their voices to call us to our responsibilities, to bring us together, and work for good.



Save the Giraffes **SOLD**

18" x 24"

Mixed media

2013

This piece explores the biblical flood account as judgment and punishment from God — judgment of man, but punishment to so many living things. These giraffes are among the lucky animals that were saved from the deluge, their long necks stretched out in hopes of seeing dry land again. The papercut is backed cut-up Spectre comics, as he is a character who stands for divine judgment and justice.



Herzl

16" x 20"

Mixed media

2010

Theodor Herzl wrote that "If you will it, it is no dream" — and so this portrait, based on a photograph of him in Geneva at the First Zionist Congress, is backed entirely with cut-up Green Lantern comics. The Green Lantern's ring is, of course, powered by will.



Pillar of Cloud **SOLD**

11" x 14"

Mixed media

2013

Wandering in the desert for forty years, by day the Israelites were guided by a Pillar of Cloud. Much of this papercut is backed with pieces of The Watcher, a character who observes humanity from the moon; he is sworn to noninterference, and yet always gets involved.



Pillar of Fire **SOLD**

11" x 14"

Mixed media

2013

Wandering in the desert for forty years, by day the Israelites were guarded by a Pillar of Fire. Much of this papercut is backed with pieces of The Watcher, a character who observes humanity from the moon; he is sworn to noninterference, and yet always gets involved.



Live Long and Prosper

20" x 16"

2012

*Signed giclée print –
limited availability*

Leonard Nimoy originated the Vulcan salute on Star Trek as a gesture of greeting, with the accompanying words "live long and prosper." The gesture is based on the blessing performed by the Jewish priestly class in the days of the Temple in Jerusalem. The papercut is backed with cut-up Star Trek comics, as well as part of the priestly blessing from a book destined for ritual burial.



MaAriv Aravim

16" x 20"

Framed, signed giclée print

2011

This prayer praises God for bringing on the evening, for ordering the stars and the planets, for the cycle of the seasons and the immutable processes of the universe; this papercut reveals the heavenly bodies spinning in their orbits. The predominant character in the background is Cloak, who harnesses the power of darkness to fight evil.

"...exquisite paper cuts from recycled comic books."

— David Pescovitz, Boing Boing

"...art that is both insanely complex and gorgeously simple."

— David Templeton, Pacific Sun

"...intricate pieces whose inspirations span centuries, blurring the lines between graphic storytelling and decorative arts, pop culture and worship."

— Emma Silvers, J Weekly

"One of the most innovative Jewish artists working in traditionally papercut technique today."

— Elke Sudin, Jewish Art Now