




PAPER GOLEMS

Dortort Center
for Creativity
in the Arts
at UCLA Hillel

January 27 —
March 21, 2022



AREN'T
YOU TIRED
OF BEING
AFRAID?

ISAAC
**BRYNJEGARD-
BIALIK**



Number 1

“Ben”

FOR PROTECTION AND SAFETY

Featuring Jewish super hero Ben Grimm, aka The Thing from the Fantastic Four, with his slogan, “It’s Clobberin’ Time!”

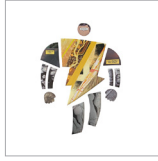


Number 2

“Reverse”

FOR DEFENSE

Featuring comic book speech bubbles expressing sentiments of fear, anxiety, and death.



Number 3

“Captain Marvel”

FOR PROTECTION

Featuring Captain Marvel, transformed from a boy into a grown-up hero when he speaks the magic acronym “SHAZAM!”



Number 4

“Green Lantern”

FOR FIGHTING EVIL

Featuring John Stewart, one of Earth’s Green Lanterns: a cosmic policeman with a power ring he controls with the strength of his will.



Number 5

“Clayface”

FOR POTENTIAL TO CHANGE

Featuring Clayface, a comic book villain who finds redemption as a Gotham City super hero.

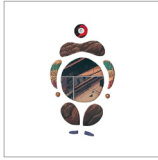


Number 6

“Truth and Justice”

FOR SEEKING TRUTH

Featuring Superman / Clark Kent / Kal-El, created by two Jews from Cleveland, and a champion of truth and justice.

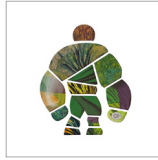


Number 7

“Jessica”

FOR LOCKDOWN

Featuring Spider-Woman (Jessica Drew) comics, showcasing empty streets and “fighting words” onomatopoeia.

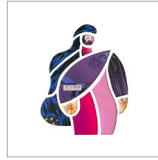


Number 8

“Ragman”

FOR FACING FEAR

Featuring Ragman, DC’s first canonical Jewish super hero, whose story draws inspiration from golem narratives.



Number 9

“Clay”

FOR BECOMING A HERO

Featuring Wonder Woman, a founding member of the Justice League, formed from clay by her mother’s hands.



Number 10

“Night”

FOR MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

Featuring Marc Spector (the Jewish super hero Moon Knight), and the Night Nurse, known for her healing skills.



Number 11

“Eicha”

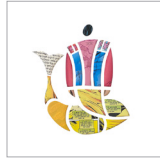
FOR TISHA B'AV

Featuring Jason Rusch, one half of the super hero duo known as Firestorm; a reflection on violence and martyrdom.



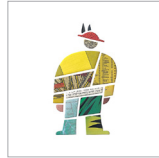
Number 12

The Ziz is a giant bird from Jewish mythology, known as “the celestial singer.” This anthropomorphic version features Dazzler, a mutant super hero who can transmute sound into waves of power.



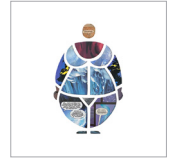
Number 13

The Leviathan is a sea serpent whose eyes shine with light, and who takes Job on an undersea trip to look into the future. Featuring the hero Jubilee, who generates popping bursts of light.



Number 14

The Behemoth is a mythical beast, a primeval chaos-monster whose roar is overwhelmingly powerful. Featuring Banshee, whose powerful voice helps him fight evil wherever encountered.



Number 15

“Breathe”
FOR BLACK LIVES MATTER
Featuring Ororo Munroe, aka Storm; leader of the X-Men; princess and queen; and champion of civil rights who speaks and fights for the disenfranchised.



Number 16

“Smoke”

FOR PROTECTION FROM SMOKE

Featuring Martian Manhunter, a hero whose weakness is fire; made during a series of West Coast wildfires.



Number 17

“We Come From the Fire”

FOR PROTECTION FROM FIRE

Made during a devastating spate of West Coast wildfires, this golem is nonetheless rising from the flames unscathed.



Number 18

“Fury”

FOR BLACK LIVES MATTER

Featuring Jefferson Pierce (Black Lightning) an African-American high school principal and crimefighter.

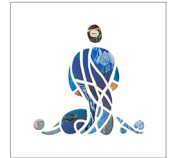


Number 19

“Reverse Fury”

FOR TOO MUCH ALL AT ONCE

This golem is surrounded by the chaos of the world, taken from comics with super villain Lex Luthor.



Number 20

“Fireman”

FOR FIGHTING FIRE
Featuring Aquaman; this hero is all about water, after all. Its forehead has the word “Truth” – the traditional word used to empower a golem.



Number 21
"Destiny"

FOR LOOKING BACK AND FORWARD

Featuring the Legion of Super-Heroes; based on 1915 novel *Der Golem*, in which a mysterious being has a multicolored beard.



Number 22
"Skies"

FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

Featuring Dark Tower comics; made when the Pacific Northwest skies were red, reflecting the fires raging across the region.



Number 23
"What Now?"

FOR INDECISIVENESS

Featuring What If?, Fables, and Justice comics; a companion to Number 24.



Number 24
"It's Time"

FOR DECISIVENESS

Featuring What If? comics with speech bubble: "I got your intense rage right here!"; a companion to Number 23.



Number 25
"Lumpkin"

FOR VOTING BY MAIL

Featuring Willy Lumpkin, longtime postman of the Fantastic Four. Made in the lead-up to the presidential election.



Number 26
"The Fighter"

FOR FIGHTING FIRES AND MORE

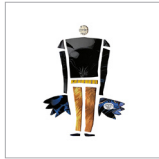
Featuring Aquaman, since we were still in the midst of fires... but also dealing with everything else at the same time.



Number 27
"Free"

FOR PASSOVER

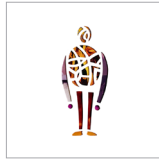
Featuring the Hulk, made during the Jewish "festival of freedom." We know that no one can be free until we all are free.



Number 28
"Vote"

FOR US ELECTION DAY, 2020

Featuring Mr. Terrific (Michael Holt), the third smartest man in the DC universe; advocating truth and universal suffrage.



Number 29
"Waiting"

FOR A TIME OF UNCERTAINTY

Featuring unidentifiable comic pieces, in a chaotic arrangement, reflecting the artist's anxiety.



Number 30
"Freedom Fighter"

FOR SAVING DEMOCRACY

Featuring Steve Rogers and Sam Wilson, both known as Captain America, symbols of freedom (and fighting for it).



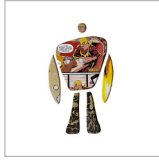
Number 31
"Ellipsis"

FOR DESPAIR
Featuring Spider-Man giving up the mask; made during the disputation of the presidential election results.



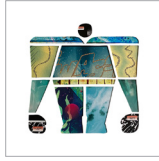
Number 32
"Tradition"

FOR MENTAL RESET
Featuring Gamora of the Guardians of the Galaxy: a powerful warrior, known for her strength and willingness to fight.



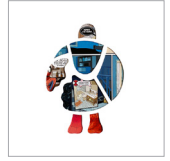
Number 33
"The Mask"

FOR PREVENTING THE SPREAD
Featuring Iron Fist, telling Power Man why he likes masks. Also includes part of a "self-defense system" advertisement.



Number 34
"More"

FOR FINDING INNER STRENGTH
Featuring the Legion of Super-Heroes and a speech bubble which reads: "the more I am, the more I will be."



Number 35
"Spider-Home"

FOR MORE STAY-AT-HOME ORDERS
Featuring Spider-Man from a ridiculous issue taking place entirely within his apartment.



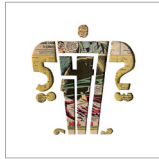
Number 36
"Some Cure "

FOR THE SEARCH FOR A VACCINE
Featuring Superman, working at super-speed to develop a cure for a deadly virus.



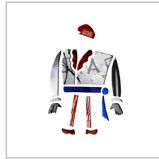
Number 37
"Bobbi"

FOR THE SEARCH FOR A VACCINE
Featuring Mockingbird (Bobbi Morse) searching for a cure for a deadly virus, and pondering its efficacy.



Number 38
"Numbers"

FOR ELECTORAL VOTE TABULATION
Featuring ROM, Space Knight; also a looming figure, forms and numbers.



Number 39
"Sans Culottes"

FOR LET-THEM-EAT-CAKE MENTALITY
Featuring Department of Truth, Uncle Sam and the Freedom Fighters, Automatic Kafka; friend to Number 40.



Number 40
"Marianne"

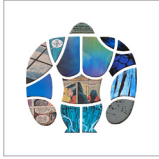
FOR LIBERTY, EQUALITY, FRATERNITY
Featuring Department of Truth, Uncle Sam and the Freedom Fighters, Automatic Kafka; friend to Number 39.



Number 41
"Strange"

FOR DOCTORS AND SCIENTISTS

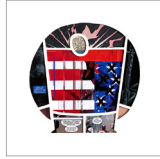
Featuring Dr. Strange; a reflection on the power of doctors and scientists to help us fight the virus and find a vaccine.



Number 42
"Barda"

FOR MORE STAY-AT-HOME ORDERS

A light-hearted look at home lockdowns, featuring Big Barda of the New Gods (and an ad for Sea Monkeys).



Number 43
"Insurrection"

FOR SHOULDERING DISTRESS

Featuring Captain America and Department of Truth, reflecting on an attempted coup at the U.S. Capitol.



Number 44
"The Darker Truth"

FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Featuring Mr. Terrific, the world's third smartest man, disillusioned by the world metaphorically on fire around him.



Number 45
"Winter"

FOR WINTER STORM URI IN TEXAS

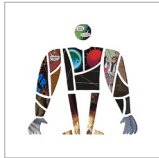
Featuring "Justice League: Endless Winter" and Western comics. This golem has wrapped itself in a blanket for warmth.



Number 46
"Roadside Assistance"

FOR VOTER SUPPRESSION

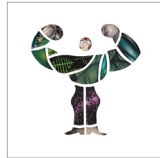
Featuring Captain America, in an alternate universe in which the United States has fallen into civil war.



Number 47
"Peter "

FOR VACCINATION APPOINTMENTS

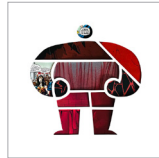
Featuring Peter Parker (when he's not Spider-Man), in a science lab, preparing to fight a villain named Corona.



Number 48
"Me Too"

FOR INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

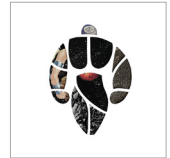
Featuring Masada (Deborah Konigsberg), a female super hero created during the 1990s burst of hypermasculine heroes.



Number 49
"Georgia"

FOR EQUAL ACCESS TO SUFFRAGE

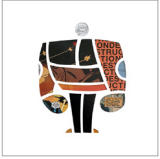
Featuring Batwoman and Wonder Woman, who tells us to vote, because "the struggle continues."



Number 50
"Donna Troy"

FOR WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Featuring Donna Troy, based on tweets of women imagining a world safe for women to walk alone at night, and a midrash about Dina.



Number 51
"Bullets"

FOR FIGHTING GUN VIOLENCE

Featuring Luke Cage, bulletproof super hero, made after mass shootings in Atlanta and Boulder.



Number 52
"Armor"

FOR FIGHTING ANTI-ASIAN VIOLENCE

Featuring Hisako Ichiki (aka Armor), Asian-American mutant super hero and member of the X-Men.



Number 53
"Koi Boi"

FOR BAD NEW LAWS IN AK AND TN

Featuring Koi Boi (Ken Shiga), transgender hero with marine powers; self-proclaimed "protector of the scales of justice."



Number 54
"Justice"

FOR A HOPEFUL FUTURE

Featuring "The lightning of truth... and thunder of memory," made during the trial of George Floyd's murderer.



Number 55
"Electro"

FOR POWER OUTAGE

Featuring Thor and other heroes with electrical powers, after an outage cost us everything in our fridge and freezer.



Number 56
"Open"

FOR MY EMERGENCY SURGERY

Featuring Dr. Strange and other doctors, after my emergency gall bladder surgery.



Number 57
"Recovery"

FOR STRENGTH AND HEALING

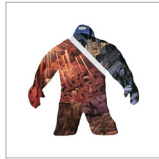
Featuring different versions of Jewish hero Ben Grimm, aka "the ever-lovin' blue-eyed Thing" from the Fantastic Four.



Number 58
"Resiliency"

FOR VIOLENCE IN ISRAEL

Featuring Reed Richards (Mr. Fantastic), with stretchy powers and a blue-and-white suit in reference to Israel's flag.



Number 59
"Prague"

FOR RISING ANTI-SEMITISM

Featuring rocks and mud and earth from multiple comics, in an homage to the traditional golem narrative.



Number 60
"Juneteenth"

FOR FREEDOM

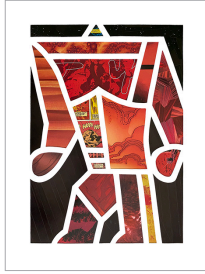
Featuring Steel and the Blood Syndicate, commemorating the end of U.S. slavery... at what felt like the end of the pandemic.



Unreasonable

When reason fails, sometimes being unreasonable is the only way to proceed.

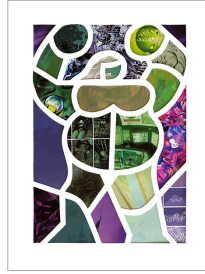
Featuring: Superman (Clark Kent), introduced in 1939, and Steel (John Henry Irons), introduced in 1993.



Unbreakable

Not totally unbreakable, but nearly. Given time, he'll be good as new.

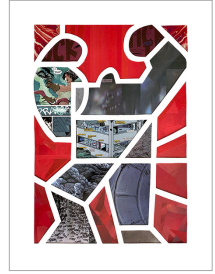
Featuring: Wolverine, the mutant superhero whose healing power makes him hard to kill (though he still feels pain).



Access Granted

Power is control of your own body, and control of your own choices.

Featuring: Jessica Jones and Batgirl, who refuse to be defined as victims, and fight for better futures.



Here Comes Science

We have the ability "to save us from our apparent fate" if we only embrace it.

Featuring: the Fantastic Four and Adventureman, superhero and superscience families.



Without Fear

The golem created by Rabbi Judah Loew ben Bezalel acted as a paralegal; "Without Fear" is made of comics featuring Daredevil, a hero who is also a lawyer.



Gotham

The substance a golem is made from is often drawn from the land it will protect; "Gotham" is made of Batman comics featuring Gotham City, under his protection.



Smash

Another lawyer-cum-super hero, She-Hulk brings brawn and brains to battle evil, even as she struggles to find strength to fight her inner demons.



Unformed

Made during Passover as we imagined freedom on the other side of the Reed Sea, "Unformed" has the courage to step forward in hopes of breathing free.



How About Now?

Gun violence was a plague in America before the pandemic, and continues to drag us down. "How About Now?" asks when we will break the cycle.



Insurrection

Featuring ultraviolent and hypermasculine comics of the 1990s, "Insurrection" is a reflection on American violence during a transition of power.



Inauguration

Inspired by the words of young poet Amanda Gorman, "Inauguration" is a rejection of hate and a celebration of a progressive American future.



Grief

The super hero known as the Scarlet Witch has a story filled with loss; her story is used in "Grief" to explore all that we lost during the pandemic.

ORIGINALS

PAGES 2 – 7

Numbers 1 through 60

12" x 12" • \$750

PAGE 8

**Unreasonable
Unbreakable**

**Access Granted
Here Comes Science**

18" x 24" • \$2000

PAGE 9

**Without Fear
Gotham
Smash
Unformed**

**How About Now?
Insurrection
Inauguration
Grief**

24" x 36" • \$5000

PRINTS



The golem story is one of power and protection. When the pandemic began and the world seemed to unravel in so many different ways, I wanted to regain a sense of control over my life, and so I started making golems.

And yet, what we create to safeguard us from danger may not always be under our complete control. A golem is a source of security and also dread, of potential that can save us or doom us.

The golem story is an opportunity to consider what it means to make one's protection with one's own hands, from whatever materials are around — be it mud or paper — and to consider what role we play in our own salvation or destruction.

A handwritten signature consisting of the letters 'J' and 'B' with a superscript '2' (JB²).

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