**Paper Midrash**

Biographies

*This is a joint biography of the “dynamic duo” to use as-is or to edit as needed.*

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*SHORT VERSION*

*Perfect for an in-person introduction.*

Husband and wife “dynamic duo” Isaac and Rabbi Shawna Brynjegard-Bialik create new pathways into Torah, combining deep Jewish scholarship with comic books and pop culture for a unique take on traditional texts. Isaac cuts up comic books and reassembles them into papercuts that explore the stories of the Jewish people. Rabbi Shawna adapts traditional Jewish concepts to a modern Reform context, and brings that synergy to students of all ages. Together, they are “Paper Midrash.”

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*LONG VERSION*

*May be appropriate for use in advance of a residency, in printed materials or on the web.*

Husband and wife “dynamic duo” Isaac and Rabbi Shawna Brynjegard-Bialik create new pathways into Torah, combining deep Jewish scholarship with comic books and pop culture for a unique take on traditional texts. They are the perfect fit for a community that wants to engage with Torah personally and deeply, with dynamic visual presentations and engaging hands-on workshops. They met at Jewish camp in high school, and have three children.

Isaac Brynjegard-Bialik cuts up comic books and reassembles them into papercuts that explore the stories of the Jewish people, connecting popular culture with sacred texts. He has shown his papercuts in galleries across the globe, and has commissions in museums, synagogues, hospitals, and private collections. Isaac regularly speaks and writes about the intersection of art and Judaism, and is on the Executive Board of Jewish Artists Initiative, committed to fostering visual art by Jewish artists and promoting dialogue about Jewish identity and related issues. His work is frequently featured in print and online, including recent articles in *The Forward, The L.A. Weekly, Cleveland Jewish News,* and KCET’s “Artbound” series.

Rabbi Shawna Brynjegard-Bialik adapts traditional Jewish concepts to a modern Reform context, and brings that synergy to students of all ages. She is an engaging teacher of Torah, bringing text to life with her unique, modern perspective. She received a Master of Hebrew Letters in 1998 from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, and was ordained in 2002 as a member of HUC-JIR’s first Los Angeles class. Shawna has been adjunct faculty in the Rhea Hirsch School of Education and Rosh Tefillah at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion’s Los Angeles campus, and is adjunct rabbi at Congregation Or Ami in Calabasas, California. Before starting Paper Midrash she served as an Associate Rabbi at a Southern California congregation for 13 years. Shawna has been a member of the faculty of URJ Camp Newman since 2008 and was Porter Creek Site Director in the summer of 2019.