

# **PRESSKIT**

**»Eran Shakine: A Muslim, a Christian and a Jew«**

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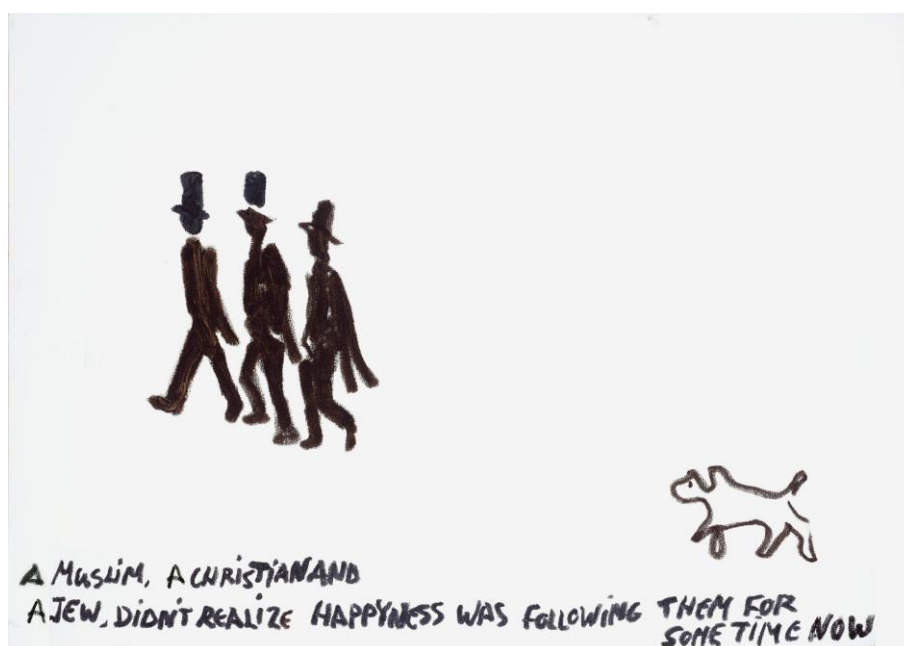


# Jüdisches Museum Berlin

24 October 2016

## Press Release

**: A Trio on a Quest for Happiness**  
**“Eran Shakine: A Muslim, a Christian and a Jew”**  
28 October 2016 to 5 March 2017



Eran Shakine: A Muslim, a Christian and a Jew didn't realize happiness was following them for some time now, 2016, oil pastel on canvas, 90 x 120 cm © Courtesy of the artist

Starting on Friday, 28 October, the Jewish Museum Berlin will be presenting the Israeli artist Eran Shaine's first solo show in Germany. The exhibition "**A Muslim, a Christian, and a Jew**", in the Eric F. Ross Gallery, will be displaying roughly 40 large-format drawings on paper and canvas and three metal sculptures.

In his current series "A Muslim, a Christian, and a Jew", Eran Shakine humorously critiques the question of the commonalities and differences between three major world religions: Islam, Christianity, and Judaism.



### **A Trio on a Quest for Happiness**

The exhibition's title alludes to the opening line of a stereotype-driven joke. In sketch-like drawings in oil pastel, a Muslim, a Christian, and a Jew – visually indistinguishable – explore life. On a quest for their religions' shared origins, they find themselves in situations both routine and absurd and encounter such figures as Moses, Buddha, and Nelson Mandela. "I don't laugh at religion. I laugh at human behavior," says Eran Shakine, clarifying his approach, which employs humor in grappling with religious contexts.

The loose lines of the oil pastels are misleading: what appear to be visual stories drawn in passing take commonplace prejudices to their absurd limits with a humorous undertone. In fact, interfaith dialogue emerges as his earnest subject. "If you take away all the things we use to set ourselves apart from each other, we all have the same basic need," says Shakine of his series. "Happiness."

### **Art as a Reflection of Culture and Society**

Eran Shakine's work ranges from drawings and paintings to sculptures and public art. Shakine himself stresses how his practice has been influenced by street art, which he paid close attention to when he was living in New York in the 1980s. He always sees his art as a reflection of culture and society. In his works, which are often tongue-in-cheek, he addresses topics such as the mechanisms of the art business, the connection between self-image and public image, and the relationships between religions. His latest series "A Muslim, a Christian, and a Jew" has been very concretely informed by his personal experience of life in Israel. "To live in the Middle East is to live in the eye of a storm. It's like trying to lead a normal life in a volcanic crater."

Eran Shakine was born in Israel in 1962 to a French father and a Hungarian mother. Both his parents had come to Israel after surviving the Holocaust. After spending a number of years in Paris and New York, he now lives and works in Tel Aviv.

His work has been exhibited at solo shows in New York, London, Paris, Brussels, Toronto, and Tel Aviv. It can be found in the holdings of the British Museum, the Ludwig Museum in Aachen, the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, the Israel Museum,



and many private collections.

Eran Shakine is available for interviews from 20 October on; the Press and Public Relations office will be happy to coordinate **interview requests** in advance.

**Exhibition dates:** 28 October 2016 to 15 March 2017

**Location:** Eric F. Ross Gallery, Libeskind Building, ground floor

**Hours:** Tues–Sun: 10am–8pm; Mon: 10am–10pm

**Admission:** With museum ticket (8 euros, 3 euros discounted)

As an accompanying event, the artist will be giving an **Artist Talk with Live Painting** at the Jewish Museum Berlin on 7 February 2017.

The **art book** *Eran Shakine: A Muslim, a Christian and a Jew Knocking on Heaven's Door*, edited by Jürgen B. Tesch, has been released by Hirmer Verlag (96 pages, German/English, retail price: 9.90 euros).

**Current press images** for attributed use are available for download [here](#).  
([www.jmberlin.de](http://www.jmberlin.de) -> Presse -> Bildmaterial für die Pressearbeit -> Eran Shakine).

**For more information**, see: [www.jmberlin.de/eran-shakine](http://www.jmberlin.de/eran-shakine) und [www.eranshakine.com](http://www.eranshakine.com)

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# Jüdisches Museum Berlin

2016

## Artist of the Exhibition

: Eran Shakine



Eran Shakine © Foto: Shay Kedem

Eran Shakine was born in 1962 in Israel, to a French father and Hungarian mother. Both were Holocaust survivors who came to Israel after the Second World War.

After living in Paris, London and New York City, he currently lives in Tel Aviv. Shakine has had solo shows in The Drawing Center in New York, as well as in London, Paris, Brussels, Toronto and Tel Aviv. His works are in the permanent collections of the British Museum, London; Ludwig Museum, Aachen, Germany; Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Israel and the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, as well as in many private collections.



Born in Tel Aviv, 1962

Studied art at Wizo Art School, Tel Aviv

1987-1992 Lived in New York, assistant to artist Karl Appel

- 2014 Graffitigirl, Zemack Contemporary Art Gallery, Tel Aviv  
One On One - Serge Tiroche / Eran Shakine, Hatzedef 8, Jaffa
- 2013 Art for Sale/Sail, Special project for fashion night TLV
- 2012 Sunny Side Up, Zemack Contemporary Art Gallery, Tel Aviv
- 2011 Good help is hard to find..., Zemack Contemporary Art Gallery, Tel Aviv
- 2010 Catwalk, Gallery 39, Tel Aviv Minimal contradictions, TWIG Gallery,  
Brussels, Belgium
- 2009 Don't worry, Julie M. Gallery, Toronto
- 2008 Sabbath Match, Gallery 39, Tel Aviv
- 2007 The Artist Who did not Look Back, Gallery 39, Tel Aviv
- 2003 Domestic, Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art
- 2000-02 Julie M. Gallery, Tel Aviv
- 1997 New Sculptures, Museum of Israeli Art, Ramat Gan
- 1995 Pools, Artists House, Jerusalem
- 1990 Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art, Israel
- 1989 Selected 43, The Drawing Center, New York
- 1987 Givon Fine Arts Gallery, Tel Aviv

#### **Selected Group Exhibitions**

- 2014 START Art Fair London, Saatchi Gallery
- 2013 Pulse Art Fair Miami
- 2012 Pulse Art Fair NYC, Shanghai Contemporary, Art Platform Los Angeles,  
Art Toronto, Art Miami, with Zemack Gallery
- 2012 "We have a champion!" Eretz Israel Museum, Tel Aviv
- 2011 Pulse Art Fair, LA and Miami, with Zemack Gallery
- 2010 Art Brussels, with TWIG Gallery
- 2009 Timebuoy, The Tel Aviv Biennial, Art TLV



- 2008 Van Gogh in Tel Aviv, Rubin Museum, Tel Aviv  
2005 On the Banks of the Yarkon, Tel Aviv Museum of Art  
2000 The Vera, Silvia and Arturo Schwarz Collection, Tel Aviv Museum of Art  
1999 Drawing: New Acquisitions, The Israel Museum, Jerusalem  
1994 Contemporary Art Meeting, Tel Hai 94, Israel Israeli Sculpture 1948-1998, The Open Museum, Tefen  
1984 Noemi Givon Gallery, Tel Aviv

### **Public Sculptures and Permanent Installations**

Museum Tower Plaza, Tel Aviv / Rothschild Boulevard, Tel Aviv / Tel Aviv Artists House / Ashdod Park / Gan HaTzuk, Netanya / The College of Management, Rishon LeZion / Gan Kineret, Kfar Saba

### **Grants and Scholarships**

1995 Artist in residence, Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris  
1989-90 Arts Matters, New York

### **Public Collections**

The British Museum, London / Ludwig Museum, Aachen, Germany / The Israel Museum, Jerusalem / Tel Aviv Museum of Art / Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art / The Open Air Museum, Tefen / Ein Harod Museum

### **Selected Bibliography**

Barbara A. MacAdam, ARTnews  
Nuit Banai, Artforum International Magazine  
Aviva Lori, Haaretz Magazine

### **Books**

"A Muslim, a Christian and a Jew Knocking on Heaven's Door", Hirmer 2016  
"Sunny Side Up", Hirmer 2011





# Jüdisches Museum Berlin

## Pressefotos of the exhibition


Eran Shakine »A Muslim, a Christian and a Jew«

28 October 2016 – 5 March 2017



Photos can be downloaded for use in reports with full acknowledgments at

[www.jmberlin.de/bildmaterial-ausstellung-eran-shakine](http://www.jmberlin.de/bildmaterial-ausstellung-eran-shakine)

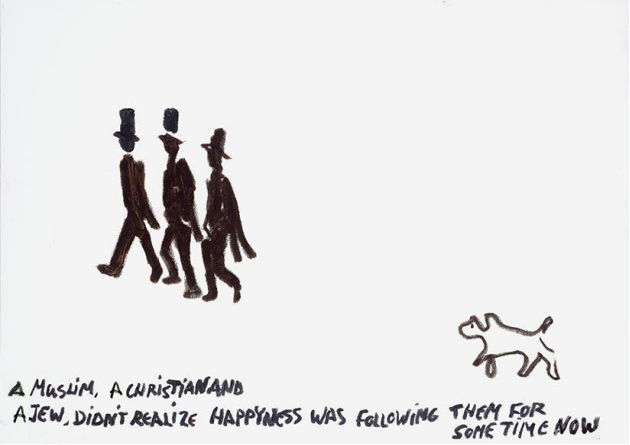
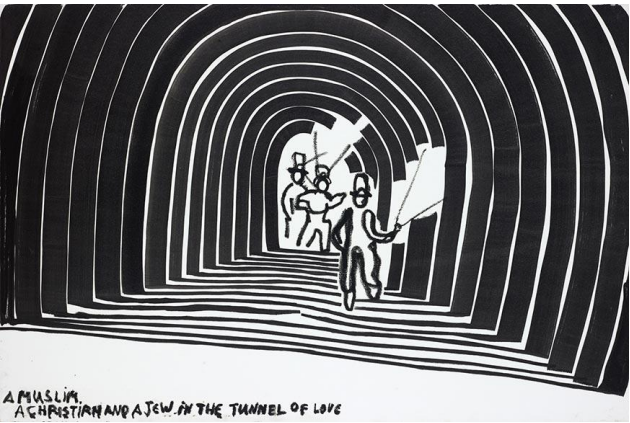

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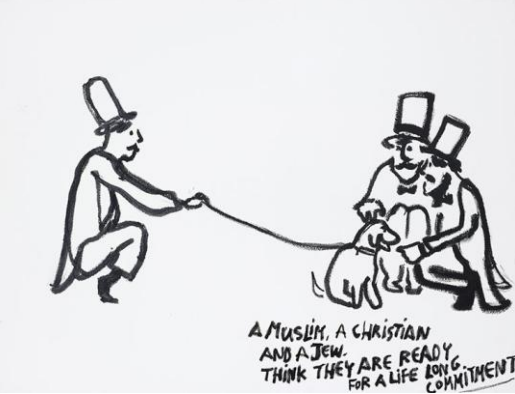



	<p>Eran Shakine</p>	<p>© Shay Kedem</p>
	<p>Eran Shakine: A Muslim, a Christian and a Jew knocking on heavens door 2016 Oil paintstick on canvas 140 × 90 cm</p>	<p>© Courtesy of the artist</p>

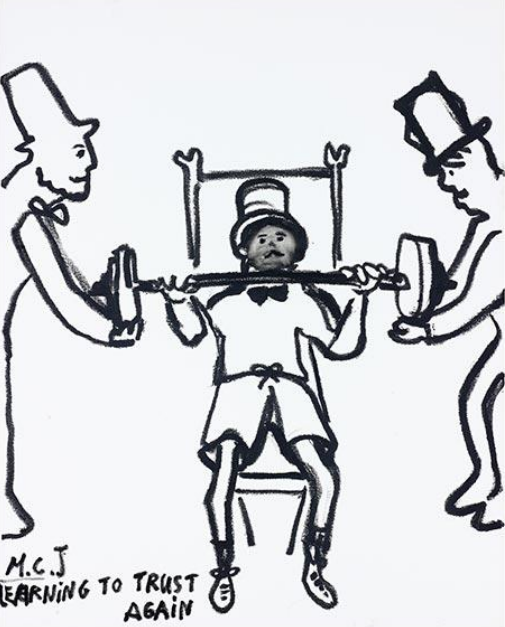



 <p>A MUSLIM, A CHRISTIAN AND A JEW, DIDN'T REALIZE HAPPINESS WAS FOLLOWING THEM FOR SOME TIME NOW</p>	<p>Eran Shakine: A Muslim, a Christian and a Jew didn't realize that happiness was following them for some time now 2016 Oil paintstick on canvas 90 x 120 cm</p>	<p>© Courtesy of the artist</p>
 <p>A MUSLIM, A CHRISTIAN AND A JEW IN THE TUNNEL OF LOVE</p>	<p>Eran Shakine: A Muslim, a Christian and a Jew in the tunnel of love 2016 Oil paintstick on canvas 100 x 150 cm</p>	<p>© Courtesy of the artist</p>
 <p>M.C.J. LEARNING TO PLAY IN TUNE</p>	<p>Eran Shakine: A Muslim, a Christian and a Jew Learning to Play in Tune 2016 Oil paintstick on canvas 60 x 90 cm</p>	<p>© Courtesy of the artist</p>





	<p>Eran Shakine Muslim, a Christian and a Jew Think They are Ready for a Life Long Commitment 2016 Oil paintstick on canvas 90 × 120 cm</p>	<p>© Courtesy of the artist</p>
	<p>Eran Shakine: A Muslim, a Christian and a Jew Looking at the Future of Contemporary Art 2016 Oil paintstick on canvas 100 × 80cm</p>	<p>© Courtesy of the artist</p>



	<p>Eran Shakine: A Muslim, a Christian and a Jew Learning to Trust Again 2016 Oil paintstick on canvas 100 ×80cm</p>	<p>© Courtesy of the artist</p>
	<p>Eran Shakine: A Muslim, a Christian and a Jew Meeting Buddha 2016 Oil paintstick on canvas 100 × 140cm</p>	<p>© Courtesy of the artist</p>



 <p>A MUSLIM A CHRISTIAN AND A JEW Looking for <sup>THE</sup> LOVE OF GOD</p>	<p>Eran Shakine: A Muslim, a Christian and a Jew Looking for The Love Of God 2014 Oil paintstick on canvas 120 × 100cm</p>	<p>© Courtesy of the artist</p>
 <p>A MUSLIM A CHRISTIAN AND A JEW ON THE ROAD</p>	<p>Eran Shakine: A Muslim, a Christian and a Jew On the Road 2016 Oil paintstick on canvas 110 × 100cm</p>	<p>© Courtesy of the artist</p>



Bei Rückfragen und weiteren Fotowünschen wenden Sie sich bitte an:

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# Jüdisches Museum Berlin

2016

## Background information

### **: Interview with Eran Shakine JMB Journal 15**

#### **What does "A Muslim, a Christian and a Jew" show?**

"A Muslim, a Christian and a Jew..." sounds like the beginning of a joke. But that is just to get your attention.

The show is an installation consisting of 40 paintings on canvas, drawings and three metal cut-out sculptures.

The three similar figures, their religious background unidentifiable, create situations by means of a vivid and comical body language. In every drawing they witness and experience major events in history or philosophy, or meet important figures like Moses, Buddha or Nelson Mandela. The three heroes, dressed as 19th century gentlemen, help each other in their journey to find the love of God.

Here, there are no stereotypes, no one is the laughingstock, everyone is the same; we see three human beings who explore life, nature, culture and philosophy, out of shared curiosity, without trying to prove each other wrong.

#### **Why did you start to work on *MCJ*?**

Living in the Middle East is like living in the eye of a storm. Like trying to live a normal life on the edge of a volcano. In my lifetime, I have witnessed five wars (the first one at the age of six), and long periods of uncertainty in which life is threatened by suicide attacks. I also remember travelling with my family as a child, visiting towns and villages where people were genuinely happy to see us and were nice and friendly, places that today might be considered dangerous. In *MCJ* I wanted to remind us of simplicity and humility. It's important to look at things happening around you with open eyes.





### **What inspired you while working on *MCJ*?**

I remember reading Jules Verne's *Around the world in Eighty Days* as a child while lying in the bomb shelter under our building. I was drawn into his abiding interest in man's position in the cosmos—making him one of the last of the universal humanists. It was a much-used copy of the book and a bad translation, but I enjoyed it tremendously.

Another major influence is *The adventures of Tintin* by Hergé. I was always fascinated by his style of drawing; I also grew to love Japanese block printing and master painters like Katsushika Hokusai. I have become very interested in Japanese calligraphy.

As a young adult, I was fascinated by archeology, I loved Ancient Greek vase painting and Greek mythology. In the late eighties I was living in New York City, and was struck by its street culture, especially graffiti works done by Jean-Michel Basquiat and Keith Haring.

I think you can find all of these influences in *MCJ*.

### **Why do all three individuals in the series have the same shape?**

Once you strip off everything we use in order to distinguish ourselves from one another, we all have the same basic need: We all want to be happy.

### **How is the relationship of your art to classic art, e.g. to the art by Michelangelo you refer to in the Sketch *A Muslim, a Christian and a Jew Visiting Moses, San Pietro in Vincoli*?**

For me art is a mirror to society. The point with art of the past is that we can no longer know what this or that artwork was reflecting at the time. So we have to think what it means for us. If it doesn't mean anything, it is not relevant anymore. Good art can be seen by different people at different times and stay relevant. That doesn't mean it keeps the original intention of the artist. Most of the time it doesn't.



**Is the Series *MCJ* characteristic of your artistic work?**

The appearance of my artworks change, but I am always dealing with the same subject: art as a mirror to culture and society. My last exhibition was called *Looking at You - Talking to Myself*, which dealt with the place one tries to put oneself in society. We know that today many of these self-representations – maybe a photo, shared instantly – are false. They express an idealized social image rather than showing the actual person.

**What is your relationship to religion?**

I don't consider myself a religious person.

**What does distinguish Muslims, Christian and Jews? What do they have in common?**

They are related: two are the sons of Abraham, Ismail, and Isaac. And Jesus was born Jewish. They belong to the same family. Sometimes the worst enemies come from the same family. (Or the best of friends.)

**May we laugh about religion?**

I don't laugh about religion. I laugh about human behavior.

**Can art make the world a better place?**

People can make the world a better place. Not art.

Art can show a different way of looking at things, and hope to do the impossible: show a different path, a different journey. In the last few years, we have been reminded of the power of art in a negative way; cartoonists have been attacked and killed, and world treasures have been destroyed and lost forever. Artists and art can be manipulated and be manipulative. Art is a trigger; you just have to hope no one will get hurt.

*Interview by Gregor H. Lersch  
Jewish Museum Berlin*

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**EXHIBITION OPENING**  
**27 OCTOBER 2016, 7 PM**



**Jewish Museum Berlin**



**A MUSLIM, A CHRISTIAN AND  
A JEW, DIDN'T REALIZE HAPPYNESS WAS FOLLOWING  
THEM FOR SOME TIME NOW**

A Muslim, a Christian and a Jew didn't realize happiness was following them for some time now, 2015, Ink and pencil on paper, Courtesy of the artist

## **Eran Shakine** **A Muslim, a Christian and a Jew**

The Jewish Museum Berlin cordially invites you and your friends to the opening of the exhibition "Eran Shakine - A Muslim, a Christian and a Jew."

Born in Tel Aviv in 1962, Eran Shakine humorously explores the similarities and differences between Muslims, Christians, and Jews in his large-scale drawings. Three outwardly indistinguishable figures go in search of common origins, the love of God, and dialog with Moses and thus experience bizarre and everyday situations time and again.

The artist will be present.



© Eran Shakine, photo Shay Kedem

"Here, there are no stereotypes, no one is the laughingstock, everyone is the same; we see three human beings who explore life, nature, culture and philosophy, out of shared curiosity, without trying to prove each other wrong."

*Eran Shakine*

The volume "A Muslim, a Christian and a Jew Knocking on Heaven's Door" with all the exhibition's drawings is published by Hirmer Publishers, 96 pages, approx. 50 illustrations.

**WHEN** ————— Thursday, 27 October 2016, 7 pm  
**WHERE** ————— Jewish Museum Berlin, Eric F. Ross Gallery  
**ADMISSION** ——— free

Please accept our apologies for the inconvenience and delay which may be caused by the security checks at the entrance.

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# Jüdisches Museum Berlin

September 23, 2016

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **: GOLEM: Opening of the major exhibition at the Jewish Museum Berlin**

**Exhibition dates: September 23, 2016, to January 29, 2017**



View of the exhibition © Jüdisches Museum Berlin, Photo: Yves Sucksdorff

Today, September 23, the Jewish Museum Berlin opens a major exhibition about the golem. This most famous of Jewish legendary figures has inspired generations of artists and authors right up to the present day. The exhibition presents the golem from its creation in a Jewish mystical ritual to its presence in popular storytelling. Seven extensive chapters and an epilogue display stories, objects, and works of art covering a span of 600 years. The centuries-old myth of the golem remains fascinating even today, and has also become a metaphor for modern scientific and political developments that threaten to get dangerously out of control.

Renowned artists such as David Aronson, Fritz Ascher, Christian Boltanski, Yves Gellie, Anselm Kiefer, R.B. Kitaj, Hugo Steiner-Prag, and Charles Simonds have



created variations on the golem motif in their works. The 900 m<sup>2</sup> of the Jewish Museum Berlin's exhibition bring together loans from important museums and private collections all over the world, including the Jewish Museum New York, the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and the Israel Museum, Jerusalem.

### **The Golem Lives On**

"The golem can look back on a long career, in Judaism and far beyond," says Peter Schäfer, Director of the Jewish Museum Berlin. "Its story begins in the Hebrew Bible and continues, in constantly new transformations, into the present day. The ancient human dream of creating artificial beings connects with today's world: genetic technology and artificial intelligence, computers and robots. All these are endeavors to create a kind of golem."

Every generation makes its own golem, to mirror its own needs, anxieties, and hopes for redemption. The exhibition begins in the present day. Right away, in the entrance area, it demonstrates how omnipresent the golem remains today. As a motif and metaphor, the modern golem stands for uncontrollable progress that may unleash primal fears. It symbolizes the ambivalence of optimism and skepticism toward the achievements of an increasingly technologized world. Humanoid action figures, cyborgs, and robots populate the cosmos of role-playing and computer games as the golem's modern descendants. Artificial creatures, they obey the commands of their creators — but the potential to run out of control is always lurking within them.

### **Jewish Mysticism**

A separate chapter explores the origins of the golem legend. Medieval manuscripts containing "recipes" for creating a golem are juxtaposed with contemporary artworks. Jewish mystics of the Middle Ages saw the creation of a golem as an attempt to get closer to God. Formed out of dust or earth (in Hebrew, *golem* means "unfinished substance"), the golem was awakened to life through incantations, ritual acts, and particular combinations of Hebrew letters. The process of creation itself was more important than any practical purpose to which the golem could be put. The artworks of David Aronson, Lynne Avadenka, and Joshua Abarbanel address aspects of this mystical tradition.



### **Transformation: Art as an Act of Creation**

Processes of transformation are at the heart of the golem motif. For artists, the golem acts as a metaphor for creativity and the process of animating inanimate matter. This core idea gives birth to works of art concerned with the process of becoming. As soon as the artwork is completed, it escapes the control of the artist, just as the golem escapes its creator. Artists deploy a wide diversity of techniques and media to give visibility to these processes of transformation. For example, Michael David deliberately exposes his work to fire and other forces of nature, which change his large-format pieces repeatedly over long periods of time. David Musgrave uses *trompe l'oeil* techniques to explore the ways in which materials are transformed in the process of making art.

### **Legendary Prague: The Myth Continues**

No other location is so closely associated with the golem legend as Prague, to which two rooms in the exhibition are dedicated. The legend crystallizes around the sixteenth-century Rabbi Judah Loew, who is said to have created a golem out of clay in the hope that it would help protect the Jewish ghetto against persecution. The perpetuation of the legend was favored by the fertile spirit of a period inspired by alchemy and astronomy, magic and the occult. Evidence of this intellectual atmosphere is Emperor Rudolf II's *Wunderkammer*, or cabinet of curiosities, which visitors can discover as a virtual installation using 3D glasses. The myth of the Prague golem continues to this day, with many historical sites in the city. These appear in the exhibition in historical photographs, drawings, and the lithographs of Hugo Steiner-Prag.

### **Horror and Magic**

The actor and director Paul Wegener was uniquely influential in shaping the image of a clumsy, robot-like golem. Wegener's cinematic masterpiece *The Golem, How He Came into the World* of 1920 is considered a milestone in the horror genre. The film left its mark on many different incarnations of the golem or related figures, from the classic *Frankenstein* (1931) to the *Simpsons* episode "You Gotta Know When to Golem" (2006). In this chapter, the best-known film adaptations of the golem legend emphasize the threatening and monstrous aspects of the figure. Movie clips, film posters, and sketches for Hans Poelzig and Marlene Moeschke's three-dimensional film sets are shown. The three-channel film installation *AE/MAETH* by Stefan Hurtig and Detlev Weitz, based on clips from more than sixty feature films, plays in a separate space as an eight-minute loop.



### **Out of Control: The Golem as Protector and Destroyer**

A crucial question around which many golem portrayals revolve is whether the golem can be described as a human being, and if so, in what sense. Certainly, it is alive, but it has no will of its own and only executes the orders of its creator. In many golem stories, this superhumanly powerful creature gets out of control. Designed to be a helper or rescuer, it now becomes a threat to the one who created it. This makes the golem a metaphor for the challenges facing modern society. We benefit from many modern developments, but will we be able to control them? Or do they control us? The exhibition explores the responsibility borne by creators and the interplay between power and salvation. This continuation of the narrative is reflected in exhibition objects and recordings of international theatrical productions.

### **Doppelgänger and Epilogue**

The last chapter and the epilogue lead visitors back into the present day and confront them with visions of the future. The golem figure is frequently associated with the many-faceted motif of the doppelgänger: the golem as an alter ego that gives form to hidden longings. Disturbing doppelgänger motifs from robot laboratories are presented in this chapter, including Yves Gellie's series of large-format photographs showing the Japanese scientist Hiroshi Ishiguro with his mirror image, the robots Geminoid H1 to IV. Gellie explores the borders between man and machine, asking what constitutes the essence of humanity. In the **Epilogue**, visitors encounter interactive and playful elements, game consoles, the Comic Lounge featuring comics as original editions and on tablets, a Minecraft game station, and a face morphing station where visitors can guide the expressions of a golem face. The closing motif of the exhibition, covering an entire wall, is the scenery of the production *Golem* by the London-based theater company 1927 (dir. Suzanne Andrade/Paul Barritt). This production set offers a glimpse into a future when everyone will carry a golem in their ear and be controlled by it.

**Exhibition dates:** September 23, 2016, to January 29, 2017

**Location:** Old Building, Level 1

**Admission:** with the museum ticket (€8, reduced €3)

The **accompanying program** will be presented at the press conference.



**Photos** can be downloaded for use in reports with full acknowledgments at <http://www.jmberlin.de/ausstellung-golem>

For further information, visit: : [www.jmberlin.de/golem](http://www.jmberlin.de/golem) and [www.jmberlin.de/thema-golem](http://www.jmberlin.de/thema-golem)

The **catalogue** *Golem*, edited by Emily D. Bilski and Martina Lüdicke for the Jewish Museum Berlin, is published by Kerber Verlag (183 pages, German, retail price: €34, museum shop price: €29). It can be purchased at the press conference for the special price of €10.

### **Media partners**

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