

T H E P O L Y G O N



Wael Shawky: *Al Araba Al Madfuna*

October 18, 2019 to January 12, 2020

This exhibition brings the extraordinary and timely art of Wael Shawky to the west coast for the first time. Shawky's ambitious, multilayered film productions look at the ways in which history and mythologies are recorded, highlighting the fallibility of cultural memory, while offering critical perspectives on our current narratives of uncertainty and change. Shawky brings into dialogue real and imagined histories of the Arab world in provocative retellings that pose timely questions about truth and fabrication.

The last part of a trilogy of films, *Al Araba Al Madfuna III* was shot in the temples of the Pharaoh Seti and Osirion in the archeological city of Abydos in Upper Egypt, nowadays the village of Al Araba Al Madfuna. This work is inspired by Egyptian writer Mohamed Mostagab's short story "Sunflower", and by the artist's travels in the region, where he observed local people digging tunnels underground in search of ancient treasures. In Shawky's theatrical restaging, he employs amateur child actors and film shot in negative to emphasise the many contingencies of historical understanding.

EVENTS

Thursday, October 17

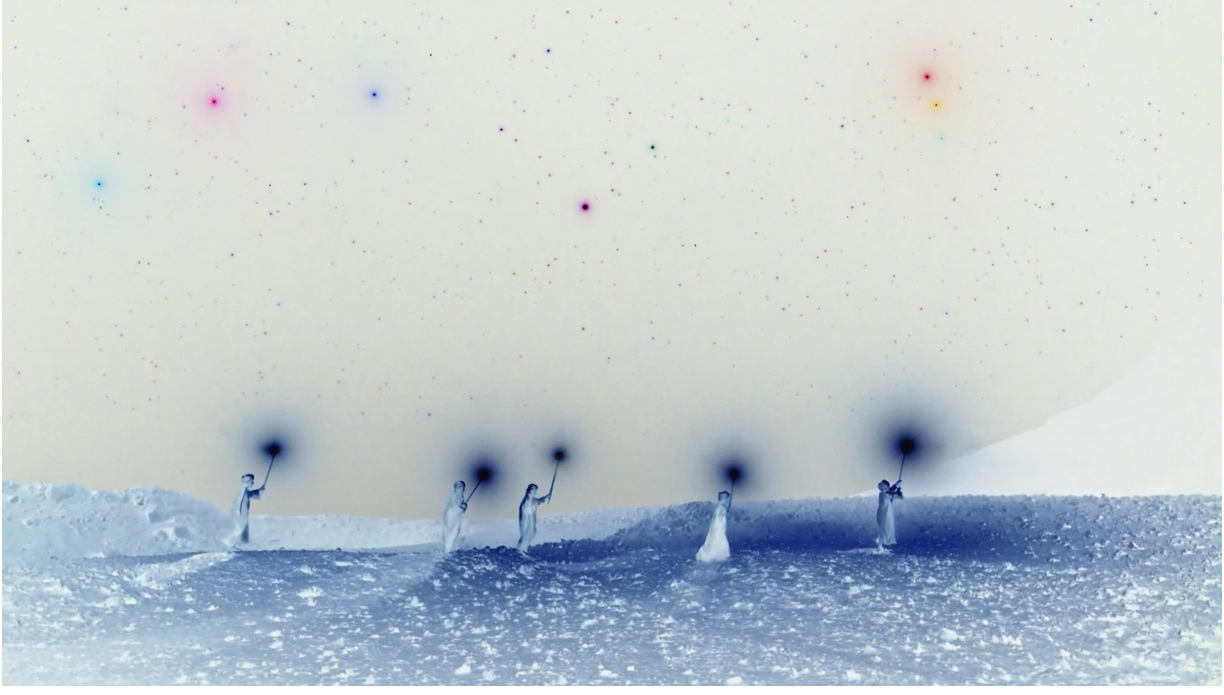
7pm A Conversation with Wael Shawky

8pm Opening Reception

Screenings of *Al Araba Al Madfuna I* and *II* will take place at The Polygon Gallery during the run of the exhibition.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Wael Shawky was born in Alexandria Egypt in 1971. He studied at the University of Alexandria and the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, and is the founder of MASS Alexandria, an artist residency program. His work has been exhibited widely including solo shows at Kunsthaus Bregenz, Austria; Mathaf, Doha; MoMa PSI, New York; Serpentine Gallery, London; and Castello di Rivoli, Turin. He is currently exhibiting at Lisson Gallery, New York. He has participated in major international exhibitions including the Istanbul Biennial, Sharjah Biennial and documenta (13). He is the recipient of the first Mario Merz Prize and his film trilogy *The Cabaret Crusades* was voted this month as the 7th most important artwork produced in the 21st Century by *The Guardian*.



Presenting Sponsor:



Generously supported by the Munford Family Foundation.

This presentation is part of The Polygon Gallery's exhibition series *New Perspectives: revealing diverse perspectives, untold stories, and new voices in visual art*.

Images: Wael Shawky, *Al Araba Al Madfuna III*, 2016, video still (detail), courtesy the artist and Sfeir-Semler Gallery, Beirut/Hamburg

Media Contact

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Listing Information

The Polygon Gallery presents *Wael Shawky: Al Araba Al Madfuna*, October 18, 2019 - January 12, 2020. This ambitious video installation looks at the ways history and mythologies are recorded, highlighting the fallibility of cultural memory. Admission is always by donation.

Exhibition Dates: October 18, 2019 to January 12, 2020

Venue: The Polygon Gallery, 101 Carrie Cates Court, North Vancouver BC, V7M 3J4

Hours: Open Tues - Sun, 10am - 5pm. Closed Mondays.

Website: thepolygon.ca/exhibition/wael-shawky/

Social Media

Facebook: [thepolygongallery](https://www.facebook.com/thepolygongallery)
Twitter: [@_ThePolygon](https://twitter.com/_ThePolygon)
Instagram: [@thepolygongallery](https://www.instagram.com/thepolygongallery)
Hashtags: #ThePolygon #WaelShawky

About The Polygon Gallery

Known as Presentation House Gallery for four decades, The Polygon Gallery is considered one of Canada's most international acclaimed public art galleries. With a mandate to exhibit and disseminate photography and media art, the Gallery emphasizes contemporary Canadian artists within a context of historical and international art.

Nearly 30 years in the making, The Polygon Gallery's new purpose-built home, which opened its doors on November 18, 2017, is a landmark building situated on North Vancouver's waterfront designed by British Columbia's internationally lauded architectural firm, Patkau Architects, for the presentation of the preeminent art form of our age.

Admission is always by donation, courtesy of BMO Financial Group.

The Polygon Gallery
101 Carrie Cates Court
North Vancouver, BC
V7M 3J4
thepolygon.ca

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