

Al Araba Al Madfuna
Wael Shawky

We are pleased to invite you to an evening dedicated to renowned Egyptian artist **Wael Shawky**, including the launch of the book "Wael Shawky: Al Araba Al Madfuna" and the Egyptian premiere of the film "Al Araba Al Madfuna" (Part 1).

Wael Shawky's film oeuvre is remarkably impressive due to its consistent development and extraordinary precision: His re-performances of historical and political events ignite unconventional perspectives, which exceed reflections of Egyptian societal structures. He creates images that are crafted with technical mastery and therefore induce an immediate persuasiveness."

With these words the jury granted Wael Shawky the acclaimed Ernst Schering Foundation Award 2011 comprising 10,000 Euros, a solo exhibition at the KW Institute for Contemporary Art in Berlin, and a publication. Through this award, Shawky realized the first part in a new series of film works "Al Araba Al Madfuna" (2012). The film, shot with children in Upper Egypt, is based on a story by Egyptian novelist Mohamed Mustagab. It premiered with the solo exhibition "Wael Shawky: Al Araba Al Madfuna", curated by Susanne Pfeffer, at KW Contemporary Art Institute, Berlin (26 August – 21 October, 2012).

"Wael Shawky: Al Araba Al Madfuna" (2014) is the artist's first monograph in Arabic and in English, featuring his past and present projects, and includes interviews and essays by Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, Heike Catherina Mertens, Jessica Morgan, Susanne Pfeffer, and Sarah Rifky.

Saturday, 08 February

19:00—Introductions by Heike Catherina Mertens (Ernst Schering Foundation) and Sarah Rifky (*Beirut*)

19:30—"Al Araba Al Madfuna" (Part 1), 22 mins.

20:00—Susanne Pfeffer (Kunsthalle Fridericianum, Kassel) and Wael Shawky in conversation

The event will be in English with Arabic translation informally available on request. Refreshments will be served.

About the artist

Based on extensive periods of research and enquiry, Wael Shawky's work tackles notions of national, religious and artistic identity through film, performance and storytelling. Whether instructing Bedouin children to act out the construction of an airport runway in the desert or organizing a heavy metal concert in a remote Egyptian village, Shawky frames contemporary culture through the lens of historical tradition and vice versa. Mixing truth and fiction, childlike wonder and spiritual doctrine, Shawky has staged epic recreations of the medieval clashes between Muslims and Christians in his trilogy of puppet animations – titled *Cabaret Crusades: The Horror Show Files* (2010), *The Path to Cairo* (2012) and *The Secrets of Karbala* (2014) – while his two-part film, *Al Araba Al Madfuna* (2013), uses child actors to recount poetic myths, paying homage, rather than mere lip-service, to the important narratives of yesteryear.

Wael Shawky

was born in Alexandria in 1971 where he lives and works. Recent solo exhibitions include Serpentine Galleries, London (2013-14); KW Contemporary Art Institute, Berlin (2012); Nottingham Contemporary (2011); Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2011); Delfina Foundation, London (2011) and Cittadellarte – Fondazione Pistoletto, Biella (2010). He has participated in the 11th Sharjah Biennial (2013); Documenta 13, Kassel, (2012); the ninth Gwangju Biennial, (2012); SITE Santa Fe Biennial (2008); Istanbul Biennial (2005); and the 50th Venice Biennale (2003). Recent awards include the Award for Filmic Oeuvre created by Louis Vuitton and Kino der Kunst (2013); the Abraaj Capital Art Prize (2012), the Schering Foundation Art Award (2011), as well as The International Commissioning Grant and an award from the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, in 2005. Shawky founded the educational space MASS Alexandria in 2010 and is represented by Sfeir-Semler Gallery in Beirut and Hamburg

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