



Scan for Upcoming Events at Talbot Rice!

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Image credits  
Wael Shawky. Installation view, Talbot Rice Gallery, 2025.  
Courtesy Talbot Rice Gallery, University of Edinburgh.  
Photo Sally Jubb



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Wael Shawky



Activity Book  
Age 5+

Who is Wael Shawky?

Welcome to Talbot Rice Gallery!

This is a place where you can explore contemporary art, which is art made by people now.

All the artworks around the gallery are made by an artist called Wael Shawky!

Wael was born in a country called Egypt, where he lives and works.

Egypt is in the Middle East and is known for cool things like pyramids!

He is a great storyteller! He uses his art to share lots of exciting stories from history and from all around the world.

He started his own art school so that other people can learn how to make art too!

He composes music, writes movies, draws pictures, makes sculptures and lots more.



I SPY!



The marionettes costumes are made of expensive fabrics from a city in Italy, called Venice! Look at all the different colours, textures, shapes and patterns! Can you spot the marionettes that match these fabrics?



LET'S PLAY!

What would your marionette look like? Draw it here!

The way Wael Shawky's marionettes look comes from imagination!

They are called marionettes! Marionettes are puppets that can move when their strings are pulled from above. They're controlled by real people, making them look like they have come to life! They all have different faces, bodies, colours and costumes. Some can even blink their eyes, how fun is that!



Do you see these creatures made of glass?

Now go into the side gallery!



The film playing is Cabaret Crusades III: The Secrets of Karbala

The adventure starts in the White Gallery, next to reception!

It is Arabic! It is spoken all around the world and especially in the Middle East, between Africa and Asia. The Middle East is a region with a long and important history and is where some of the world's oldest civilisations began.

Do you know what language they are speaking?

The film tells the story of the Crusades, but what actually is a crusade?

A long time ago, religious people from Europe called Crusaders traveled to Jerusalem in the Middle East. Jerusalem is a sacred city to Jews, Christians, and Muslims. The Crusaders carried weapons because they wanted to take control of the city. Wael Shawky tells the story about the Crusaders, but most stories talk even though many people already lived there.

and had to defend themselves. from the point of view of the people who lived in Middle East

Now go up the stairs!

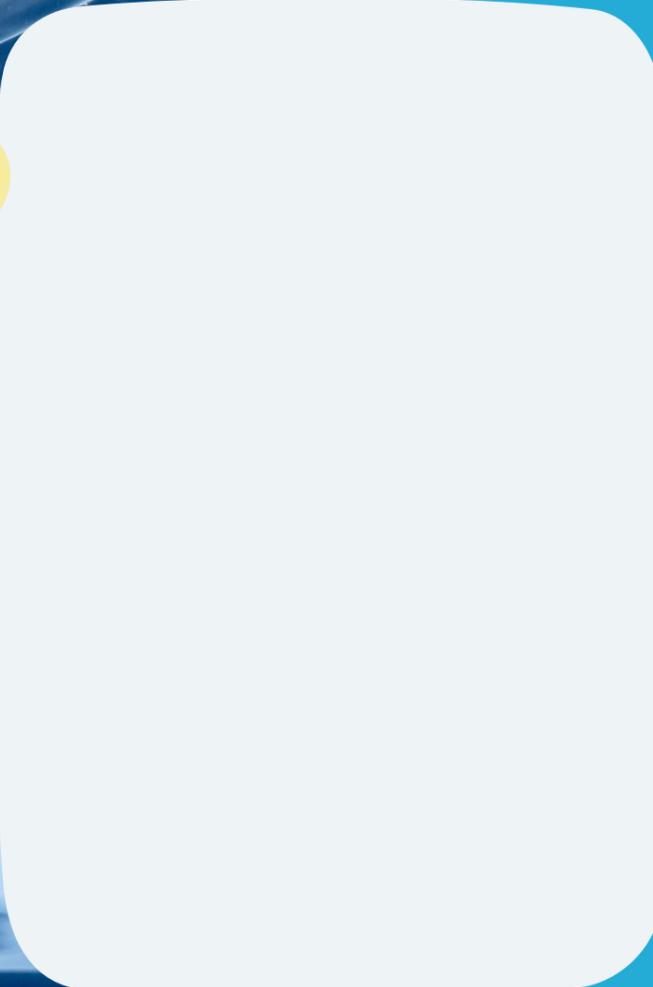
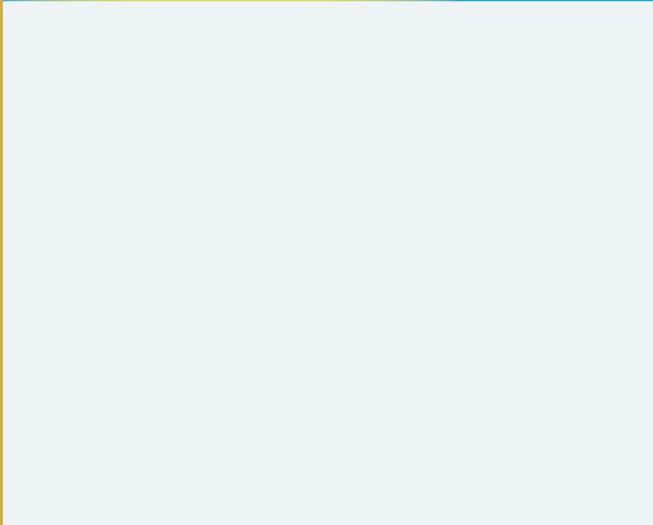


Here you will find glass sculptures, drawings and flags!

A flag is usually a rectangle with colours and shapes used to represent a country or a group of people.

Now draw your own!

What would a flag for you or your family look like? Think about your favourite colours, pictures and even words. Your flag can look however you like!



Do you see the glass sculptures on the blue tables?

Pick your favourite one and use your imagination to give it a story!

WHAT'S THE STORY?

What is their name? Where do they live? Do they have special powers? What language do they speak?

Write your story here!

Now it's time to make your own marionette!

You can do this at home, with the help of an adult!



You can use these shapes or draw your own!

Here you have

- Heads
- Bodies
- Arms
- Legs

- You will need:**
- Coloured pens or pencils
  - Scissors
  - Hole punch
  - Paper fasteners
  - String
  - A straw or stick

**Start here!**

**Step 2**  
Poke small holes where you see the crosses, using a hole punch or pencil!

**Step 1**  
Decorate the marionette's body parts and cut them out!

**Step 3**  
Link the body parts together! Use paper fasteners or string to connect the legs, arms and head to the torso through the holes.

**Step 4**  
Cut 3 long pieces of string, each about the length of your forearm!

**Step 5**  
Tie one end of each piece of string to the marionette's head and hands!

**Step 6**  
Tie the other ends to a straw or stick. Make sure they are spaced out so you can move the marionette!

Done!

