

ARTIFACT

a film by Avery Pack

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Synopsis

In 1968, Israeli general and amateur archeologist Moshe Dayan sends a small girl into a cave to assist him in an “unofficial” excavation of a sensitive holy site. Shot in both Israel and the United States, *Artifact* weaves a recreation of contemporary Israeli folklore into a mysterious and colorful allegory about art, history and biography.



About the production

Using the cinematic language of adventure, horror, archeological thrillers and documentaries, *Artifact* constructs a giddy and abstract tale about a young artist’s struggle to find her voice.

Directed by Avery Pack, *Artifact* was shot by veteran cinematographer Irv Goodnoff. Additional historical sequences in the film were shot on location in Israel by the director at an archeological excavation in the hills of Jerusalem.


Artifact features a roster of established and rising talent. The film proudly introduces Stephanie Greco, as Rebecca; as well as Michele Matheson (*Hitters Anonymous*, *Kingpin*, *Threesome*) as her art dealer. The film also presents Halina Laster, a renowned Holocaust educator and founder of the first Holocaust survivors’ network, in her first dramatic role.



About the director



First-time director Avery Pack has a broad background in the intersections of art and technology, developing his interests through computer game design – publishing his first game by age 15. Avery, now 28, is a graduate of Columbia University where he studied Visual Arts. Avery has been featured in numerous publications for his award-winning work in digital entertainment and design including *GAMES Magazine*, *Electronic Games*, and *Computer Game Review*.



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Cast and credits

Cast

(in order of appearance)

Michal Arbel
Jonathan Lubell
Stephanie Greco
Luis Vega
Halina Laster
Michele Matheson
John Trapani

Producer, Director, Editor

Avery Pack

Story by

Sara Liss
Avery Pack
David Sauvage

Written by

David Sauvage

Director of Photography

Irv Goodnoff

Art Direction

Derek Zeitel

Music by

Andrew Condon

Additional Music

The Silver Jews
courtesy of Drag City

Fischerspooner
courtesy of Capitol Records

Makeup & Wardrobe

Sasha Sicurella
Sara Liss

Costume Design

Lotta Stensson
Rachae Robb

Camera Assistants

Daniel Fernandez
Gena Bestoso

Production Assistants

James Joyner
Casandra Windels

Assistant Producer (Israel)

Aliza Meltzer

Associate Producer (Israel)

David Sauvage



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Director's Statement

While flipping through the out-of-print coffee table book “Living with the Bible,” Moshe Dayan’s quasi-autobiographical history of the Jews through his lens of biblical archeology, I ran across a thrilling and haunting story. In 1968, soon after Israel had access to the city of Hebron, Dayan attempted yet another highly-unofficial and spontaneous excavation. This time at the Cave of Machpelah, the Cave of the Forefathers, widely believed to be the burial site purchased by Abraham in the bible and hallowed and revered as the actual resting place of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But Dayan ran into a problem – his only way into the cave was a very small opening, far too small for any of his crew to enter. His solution: find a child small enough to fit through the hole and to find them another way inside. The “excavation party” found an adventurous young Israeli girl in a nearby village, gave her a camera and a notepad, and lowered her into the unexplored, mystically charged, revered and feared darkness – alone.

Artifact, is an attempt to pay tribute to this piece of contemporary Israeli folklore by weaving and twisting it into a colorful fiction. Then, to take that fiction and through a further gesture of playful faithfulness – pretend it’s real. The film unfolds in three parts: a semi-faithful recreation of the excavation; a contemporary allegory about a young artist; and an interview with a Jewish scholar who believes in all of it.

Avery Pack



First-time director Avery Pack has a broad background in the intersections of art and technology, developing his interests through computer game design – publishing his first game by age 15. Avery, now 28, is a graduate of Columbia University where he studied Visual Arts. In addition to game design and filmmaking, Avery is the founder and president of a marketing company that develops online marketing programs for such global brands as Comet, Chloraseptic and Clear eyes. Avery has been featured in numerous publications for his award-winning work in digital entertainment and design including *GAMES Magazine*, *Electronic Games*, and *Computer Game Review*.

Avery is also a founder of Petakim, an innovative nonprofit that provides technology and marketing consulting to Jewish organizations as well as develops technology driven ideas that connect young Jewish adults to each others' ideas. Most recently, Petakim developed the Internet strategy for Jewish Impact Films, a Los Angeles-based fellowship established by leading Hollywood producers to empower the next generation of young Jewish thinkers to use creative media, specifically short Internet-based films, to effectively communicate ideas about Judaism and Israel.