

Artist revives Lebanon's abandoned historic buildings

SLEEPING BEAUTIES

British artist Tom Young studies the history of abandoned buildings in Lebanon. His exhibitions, held in the abandoned buildings, are free of charge and include community events to help stir public interest in their history



Tom Young



A visitor viewing paintings by 45-year-old British artist Tom Young during an exhibition at the Sofar Grand Hotel

SILHOUET

Syria's last shadow puppe

Syrians last week received news that their war-battered country's shado

AFP | Damascus

In a crowded dark room, Syria's last shadow puppeteer crouches on stage, holding two intricate figures against a brightly lit silk screen and voicing their animated chatter.

Hiding inside his booth and moving the silhouettes around on sticks, Shadi al-Hallaq gave a proud performance on Monday night after his disappearing art finally received international recognition.

Syrians last week received news that their war-battered country's shadow theatre has secured a coveted place on the UN's list of world treasures.

"When they rang to congratulate me, it was like a day dream," said the puppeteer, a slim 43-year-old wearing a dark grey suit and warm beige scarf.

His two star characters -- the naive but charming Karakoz and clever friend Eiwaz -- would finally receive the limelight they deserved, he said.

"There's no one in Syria who masters the art except me," said Hallaqa, who learned it from his late



Syria's last shadow puppeteer Shadi al-Hallaq is seen moving his puppets Karakoz (R) and Eiwaz (L) from inside his booth during a presentation



Shadi al-Hallaq, a puppeteer, holds two puppets during a performance in Damascus.