



Egyptian artist Mohamed Fawzi Bakkar poses for a photograph with his favorite puppets at his workshop, in Cairo, Egypt. — AP photos



People watch a marionette performance with Umm Kalthoum, the most famed singer of classical Arabic music, using puppets made by Egyptian artist Mohamed Fawzi Bakkar, at the El-Sawy Cultural Center.

IN EGYPT, A MARIONETTE MAKER STRINGS TOGETHER MEMORIES



Egyptian artist Mohamed Fawzi Bakkar works on a puppet with wood at his workshop.

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We all dream of having an academy in Egypt that would teach the art of puppetry and to have a theater in every city

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In a tiny Cairo workshop, Mohamed Fawzi Bakkar designs and builds marionettes from scratch, hoping to revive a traditional art. The 32-year-old spends hours or even days designing puppets inspired by Egyptian life - farmers, street vendors, butchers and the occasional celebrity. He devotes special care to the faces, hoping to make them as unique and realistic as possible, and then he puts on shows.

Puppet shows were traditionally performed for adults and children alike, often as nightly entertainment during Ramadan, the holy month when Muslims fast from dawn to dusk, which began last week. The art form has deep roots in Egypt.



Marionettes of Umm Kalthoum, the most famed singer of classical Arabic music, and her band, made by Egyptian artist Mohamed Fawzi Bakkar, perform at the El-Sawy Cultural Center.