

# THE GRAND SOFAR HOTEL

## AN ART EXHIBITION BY TOM YOUNG

Under the patronage of the Sursock Family

**Private View:** 15th of September, 4pm - 10pm

**Public Opening:** 16th of September, 2018, 11am - 7pm

Contact Information:

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*The Grand Hotel Casino Ain Sofar* built in 1892 by the *Sursock* family was for decades the most famous hotel in the Middle East. One that encapsulated the glamorous frivolous accounts of the 1920's and the swinging 1960's, luring Kings and Emirs, artists, socialites and diplomats from across the world into its chambers not merely for rest and slumber but for song, dance and poker.

Breezing through the Grand Hotel's seventy five roomed corridors you can almost hear the secret deals being made between generals and ministers as celebrity love affairs nestled in the corners of the *Monkey Bar*.

The hotel was an unfortunate victim of the civil war, scarred by looting and destruction. However, under the care of one of its owners, *Roderick Sursock Cochrane* (a direct descendent of *Alfred Moussa Sursock*) the grand architectural wonder is being carefully restored as an art and reception venue and is now opening its doors to the public once more.

In the year 2013, the Artist and Activist of British nationality *Tom Young* known for his artistic and architectural interventions was invited to take up residency at the hotel. Four years later, the collaborative project came to fruition with the exhibition set to open on the 16th of September, 2018.

*Young's* art practice encompasses the reexamination of memories and revival of abandoned spaces through art and restoration. He is primarily engaging with the hotel and the remnants left by former guests and residents as well the adjacent disused train station. *Young* is responding to the history of the *Grand Sofar Hotel* that embodies a time capsule of imaginary narratives like the legendary *Oum Kulthoum* enjoying an Eau De Fleurs with *Farid el Atrash* and *Asmahan* on a summer afternoon.

*Young* settled in Lebanon ten years ago and has since adopted several derelict 19th Century palaces and mansions, some of which have flourished into cultural venues and others that remain under the uncompromising grasp of developers.

*The Grand Sofar Hotel* exhibition will comprise of forty artworks on canvas spread across the ground floor in a curatorial attempt to transport visitors to suspended moments in history. In collaboration with Independent Art Curator *Noor Haydar* and *Production Designer* *Tarek Mourad*, the painting exhibition will also revolve around site specific object based installations, theatre, dance and music performance, art educational workshops with children and students (all of which will be included in the exhibition program).

*Cochrane* and *Young* intend for the exhibition to help reinvent the site and attract both local and international attention as a cultural venue. In turn, it is hoped that this will help regenerate the local area and Lebanon as a whole.



Hafla  
250cm x 180cm  
Oil on canvas  
2018



Sofar Boy  
150cm x 180cm  
Oil on canvas  
2018



The Tracks  
180cm x 140cm  
Oil on canvas  
2018



Sofar City  
180cm x 250cm  
Oil on canvas  
2018



Chemin De Fer  
180cm x 250cm  
Oil on canvas  
2018



Sofar Girl  
80cm x 60cm  
Oil on canvas  
2018





# Tom Young

## Artist Biography

### 2018

**Exhibition** of artworks in coordination with the British Embassy in aid of *Rebecca Dykes Foundation*

**Lecture** at Soho House, London  
*Art and Intervention in Beirut*

**Lecture** at Levantine Heritage Foundation  
*The Lost Levantine Houses of Beirut*, London

**Lecture** at the British Academy, London  
*Troublemaker, Liberator, Scapegoat, Spears In Lebanon 1941 - 1944*

**Keynote speaker** on Art and Transformation in Lebanon, Sarajevo, Bosnia  
*Why Remember? Ruins, Remains, Reconstructions International Conference*

**Produce and co-direct film** about Lebanese Independence and General Spears titled  
*The Painter and the General* (Work in Progress)

### 2017

**Lecture** at American University of Beirut  
*House of Spears*

**Exhibition** at Arthaus Beirut (*Beit Boustani*), and organisation of group show and art workshop with refugee children, Mar Mikhael, Beirut  
*In Residence*

**Exhibition** at *Villa Paradiso* (Residence of European Union Ambassador to Lebanon, Beirut)  
*Revival*

**Exhibition** in aid of Teach a Child, Beirut Yacht Club Gallery

**Exhibition** at Al Zaher residence, Beirut  
*Beirut: Memory and Dream*

**Exhibition** at Haigazian University, Beirut  
*Full Circle*

### 2016

**Residency** and teach art workshops to children of Dar Al Aytam orphanage at Al Zaher, Zarif, Beirut

**Lecture**, Film screening and exhibition at Alwan For The Arts, New York City  
*Memory and Transformation*

**Exhibition** at British Embassy Residence, Lebanon  
*Spectrum*

**Art Residency** in Beit Boustani and Holiday Inn, Beirut

**Exhibition**, 54 The Gallery, London

*Flowers Of Lebanon*

## 2015

**Stop motion animation film** - a collaboration with Lebanese children, and Syrian and Palestinian Refugee children at Al Bass Roman Hippodrome, Tyre, South Lebanon. The project screened at 'Archeolife' Film Festival, Cagliari, Italy.

*Tyre Art Jam*

**Group Exhibition** at La Magnanerie, Beirut

*Common Fest*

## 2014

**Exhibition** at the Rose House Mansion. Transforming an iconic empty mansion into an exhibition venue and cultural center for 3 months, Beirut

*At The Rose House*

**Exhibition** at CAP, Kuwait

*Talk Peace Act Love*

**Art Symposium** at Al Asmakh International Art Symposium, Doha, Qatar

## 2013

**Exhibition** at British Embassy Residence, Lebanon in aid of SOS Children's Villages, Lebanon

*Fairground*

**Art Workshops** with children from SOS Children's Villages, Lebanon

**Produce four short films**, *Carousel*, *The Beat Goes On*, *Out Of Armenia* and *SOS- Hayda Libnen*

**Exhibition** " at Villa Paradiso, Beirut

Help to restore an abandoned mansion that had been derelict for 40 years, transforming it into a venue for the exhibition. The villa has since become a permanent center for the Arts.

*Carousel*

**Teach** painting and drawing at the Art Market Academy, Venice to coincide with the Venice Biennale.

## 2012

**Exhibition** at Avenue, St James's, London

*Cityscapes*

**Art commission** for the Olympic Broadcasting Services Building, London Olympic Village

300 signed prints of the painting presented to heads of the world's media at Games Opening Ceremony

**Art commission** to collaborate on a live art performance about the Royal Jubilee River Pageant from roof of City of Westminster School, London

**Art commission** to paint in New York, London and Oman

**Public Screening** at 'Whitewall' street art exhibition at Beirut Art Centre, Beirut and Das Scharf International Film Showcase, Berlin  
*Beirut Art Jam*

## 2011

**Exhibition** landscapes at Gabala International Art Exhibition, Azerbaijan

**Exhibition** new paintings at group summer show at Aida Cherfan Fine Art, Beirut

**Art collaboration** with artists Dominic Madden and Noor Haydar on stop motion painting animation, Beirut  
*Beirut Art Jam*

**Teach** art and music at Al Kamandjati School, Bourj al Barajneh Refugee Camp, Beirut

## 2010

**Exhibition** at St Pauls Cathedral 300 year anniversary exhibition, St Pauls, London  
*Road to Damascus*

**Exhibition** at Aida Cherfan Fine Art, Beirut  
*Portraits of Beirut*

**Art commission** to paint public mural, Saifi, Downtown Beirut

**Teach** art workshop at SOS Children's villages, Lebanon

## 2009

**Exhibition** at group summer show at Aida Cherfan Fine Art, Beirut

**Art commission** landscapes in Andalucia, Spain

**Exhibition** of French and Moroccan landscapes at Le Grenier aux Artistes, Roquecor, France

## 2008

**Art commission** of landscapes of Jerusalem and the West Bank for Al Quds Media head office

**Exhibition** at Unesco, Paris  
*12 centuries of Fez, Morocco*

**Teach** drawing and painting course, South West France

**Exhibition** at Russell Gallery, London  
*The Thames*

**Exhibition** about Lebanon, Indar Pasricha Fine Art, London  
*Resilient Spirit*

**Art commission** to paint landscapes in India, Lebanon and England

## 2007

**Exhibition** Adam Street Club, the Strand, London  
*From London to the Levant*

**Exhibition** at Oakham Gallery, St James's, London  
*A Select Six*

**Art commission** of landscapes in India, Morocco, Mallorca, Italy and England

## 2006

**Exhibition** at Adam Street Club, the Strand, London  
*I Love Beirut*

**Exhibition at** West Eleven Gallery, Notting Hill, London  
*Moods of London*

**Touring exhibition** about London in Berlin, Barcelona and Milan  
*London Streets*

**Art commission** to paint landscapes in Lebanon and Syria

**Teach** drawing workshops with children in Dahiye, Beirut

## 2005

**Exhibition** at Russell Gallery, London  
*The Thames*

**Exhibition** at Rainbird Fine Art, Clerkenwell, London  
*Metropolis*

**Art commission** of landscapes in Venice, France and Cumbria

**Project** artist for Liam O'Connor Architects, London

## 2004

**Exhibition** at Artbank Gallery, Clerkenwell, London  
*Cityworks*

**Group Exhibition** of new city paintings at Artbank, Russell and St'art Galleries, London

## 2003

**Group Exhibition** at new work with St'art Gallery at New York, Dublin, Glasgow and Chelsea Art Fairs

## 2002

**Exhibition** at Gallery 54, Mayfair, London  
*From Life*

**Exhibition** at Cusp Gallery, Burghley House, London

**Exhibition** at Chateau de l'Hoste, France  
*Landscapes and Nudes*

## 2001

**Exhibition** of figurative work at Oxo Tower Gallery, South Bank, London  
*Living Presence*

**Exhibition** of nudes Coningsby Gallery, Soho, London  
*Body*

**Art commission** to paint cityscapes in Rome

## 2000

**Exhibition** of French and Italian landscapes, Hall and Knight Gallery, New York

**Exhibition** at Studio 115, Oxo Tower, South Bank, London  
*From Abstraction to Landscape*

**Exhibition** of Abstract work at Oxo Tower Gallery, South Bank, London  
*Blu r red*

## 1999

**Exhibition** of landscapes, private residence, New York

**Exhibition** at African American Art Fair, Philadelphia  
*Soul Music*

**Art commission** to paint Western Wall in Jerusalem

## 1998

**Art commission** to paint Sainte Chapelle in Paris for Mellon Foundation private collection, USA

**1997**

**Exhibition** private residence, London  
*Spanish landscapes*

**Gallery coordinator and artist**, Valencia, Spain

**1996**

**Founder and manager** Fusion Art Collective, Newcastle

## **Education**

**1992-5:** BA(Hons) Architectural Studies, Newcastle University

(time spent studying in Istanbul and Prague during the degree)

**1991-2:** Foundation Studies in Art and Design, Norwich School of Art

**1986-91:** Uppingham School, England

**1973:** DOB, England