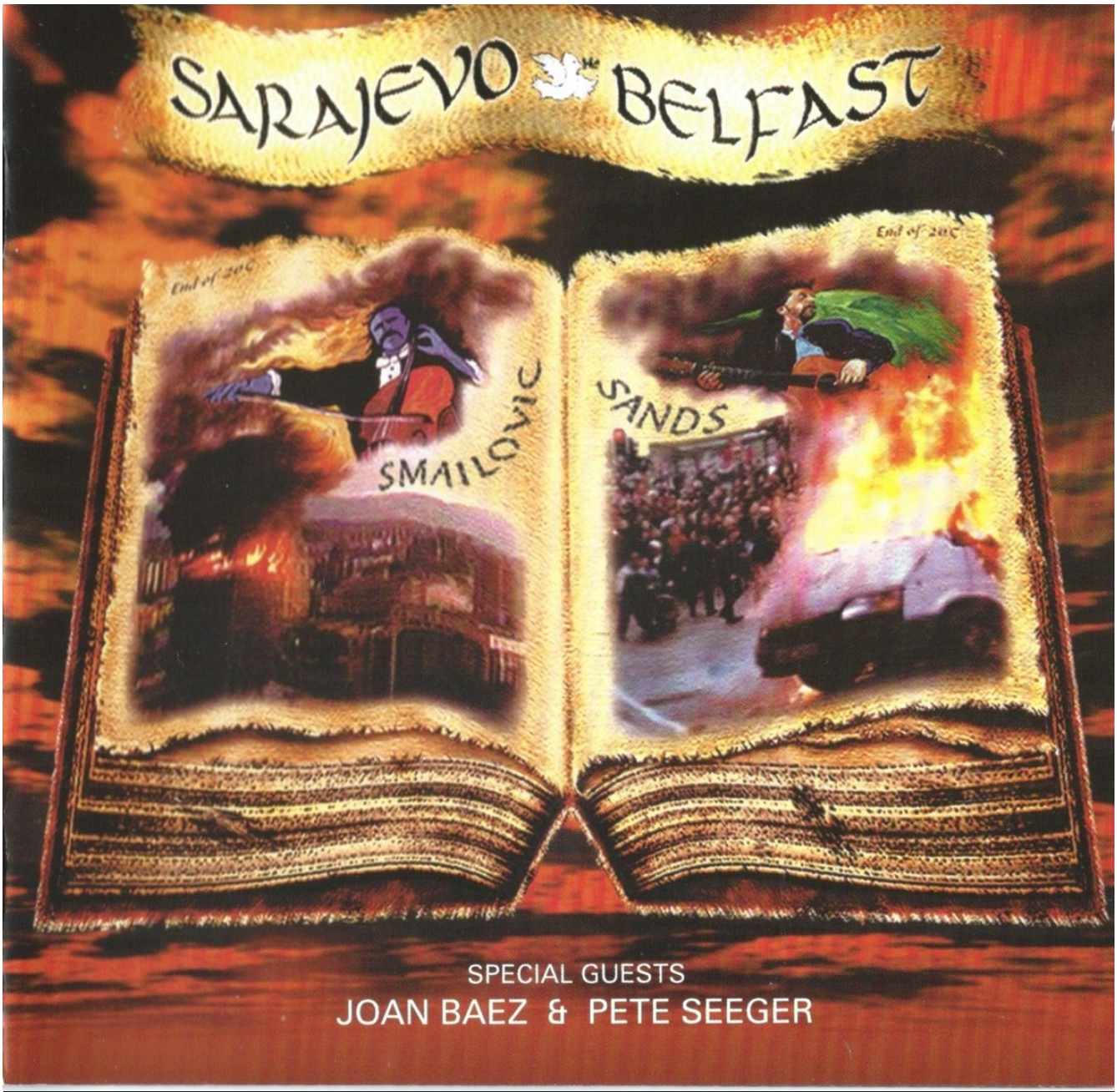


Sarajevo–Belfast

Vedran Smailovic & Tommy Sands

With Joan Baez & Pete Seeger

The recording

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Introduction

The fact that Vedran Smailovic and Tommy Sands come from two troubled parts of Europe is not the only element that unites them. Each comes from a family steeped in music, and each has a remarkable story to tell. Separately, they have literally taken their music to the streets. Together they continue to use music as a tool to bring attention to war and injustice, from The Statue of Liberty in New York, where they marked one thousand days of the siege of Sarajevo in January, 1995 - along with Pete Seeger, Odetta, Vanessa Redgrave and Bianca Jagger - to Northern Ireland in 1998, where they performed to encourage the signing of the historic Good Friday Peace Agreement, with a combined chorus of children from both communities.

When I visited Northern Ireland in 1993, I was shocked by what I saw. The British Army patrolled the border with the Republic tanks and armed soldiers were everywhere in the city streets. When I returned in March (1999) to visit Tommy and Vedran, thankfully that was no longer the case. I was delighted that as we were crossing the now unguarded border, the clouds suddenly parted and a ray of light came shining down, growing steadily stronger as we advanced - a welcome symbol of the renewed sense of hope and optimism, the quiet resolve of the people not to go back to hatred and war.

During my days with Vedran and Tommy, I thought a lot about the horrors of war, the violence of this century. I thought of 252 wars and 199,888,000 war-related deaths. Sadly civilians are the major victims of war. Even more shocking, this trend is on the rise: In the 1960's, civilians accounted for 63 percent of the recorded war deaths, 74 percent in the 1980's and 80 percent in the 1990's. Together we watched video film documenting some of the appalling events of the siege of Sarajevo - the burning of the National Library, the shocking bread-queue massacre, the daily dreaded sniper fire. After an hour, I was drained in body and mind by the terrible images. But I also saw the strength and heroism of Vedran Smailovic as he played his cello in the Square - a lone figure trying to bring attention to the madness of the siege. We joked about the TV journalist who, at that time, asked if Vedran was not crazy to sit there playing his cello while 'they' were shelling Sarajevo. With impeccable irony and an elaborate gesture towards the assailants hidden in the surrounding hills, Vedran replied: "Why don't you go and ask them if they are not crazy, shelling Sarajevo while I sit here playing my cello?" While watching news coverage of the outrages in Kosovo, I saw his eyes well up in dismay at how his country is still being torn apart by fear, hatred and war.

Appleseed is honoured to welcome Pete Seeger and Joan Baez as special guests. Both of them have spent their lives working for peace and social justice. Both have performed in the midst of conflict and strife. When there was bombing in Vietnam, Joan Baez went there to perform and to send back reports which helped to raise awareness about the pain and suffering of the Vietnamese people. Joan also went to Sarajevo and performed there during the siege. Pete Seeger's songs have been used to empower and elicit hope during troubled times. From the Union Movement, to the Civil Rights movement, to the Peace Movement, he has been there, and his songs have brought vision, courage and hope.

Woodie Guthrie once said that a musician cannot cut himself away from the people; that he must inject himself into the vein of social movements and feel the pulse of the people. Like Joan Baez and Pete Seeger, Vedran Smailovic and Tommy Sands have done this. Tommy Sands' songs of sorrow, hope and humor have been performed and recorded around the world by Tommy, and by countless

other artists. Vedran Smailovic, the Cellist of Sarajevo, is celebrated in films, novels, plays, music, verse and song. He has been the feature of a New York Times editorial, CBS News stories, articles in the New York Times, Newsweek and many other publications. This is the first time he has recorded a musical statement and testament to his life.

Appleseed is proud to release the unique Smailovic/Sands collaboration, "Sarajevo/Belfast." It is our privilege to join with the artists in dedicating the album to peace, to justice, to hope and to healing.

Jim Musselman · President and Founder, Appleseed Records

Vedran Smailovic

VEDRAN SMAILOVIC was born on November 11, 1956, the fourth of five children born into a celebrated musical family in the heart of Sarajevo. His father was former Yugoslavia's most celebrated contemporary composer Avdo Smailovic. His mother Munira was not a musician, but "a hero who raised musicians" - two masters, three teachers and one doctor of music. Vedran, a child prodigy, was the only son and the only cellist in his family; his sisters played violin and piano. During his school years from primary through university and the academy of music, he consistently claimed the first prize in all competitions - local, national and federal.

Avdo Smailovic was an educator as well as a composer. As his children grew in musical skill and virtuosity, he formed a family ensemble called "Musica Ad Hominem" - music for the people. As well as performing for sophisticated audiences in prestigious venues, the family troupe travelled to remote locations in the villages and countryside, taking specially adapted cultural programmes to local audiences and children in schools, totalling a staggering one hundred and eighty concerts per year. They did this to honour their father's heartfelt principle that good music is not only the right of the rich and privileged, but is equally the right of poor and uneducated people.

So along with the music, Vedran absorbed from his father a strong sense of civil justice and humanitarian commitment. As a young adult he was known to sponsor and organise actions to help people, and he received many diplomas and awards for humanitarian work. For example, when one hundred and eighty miners were tragically killed in a disaster at Tuzla, Vedran immediately mobilised his friends and associates, including artists from the National Theatre, who raised funds through collections and performances. Volunteers paid their own expenses, ensuring that 100% of the donations could be delivered to the deserving disaster victims.

Telling this story, Vedran reflects on the ethics of 'charity' and expresses concern that such a small proportion of charity funding, and in some cases none of it at all reaches those for whom it was intended.

Throughout his early adult years, Vedran played in symphonic and chamber orchestras and also played traditional, folk and pop-rock music. A prominent performer, he also conducted, composed and produced. Highly regarded as he was for his music, he was also well loved for his fidelity to the traditions of Sarajevo, 'the soul of the city'. He particularly loved 'Fijaker', the traditional use of horses and traps, and continued to use this means of transport long after it had been relegated to the realms of tourism, creating a fiesta wherever he went. Up to 1992, Vedran Smailovic was fully occupied by his involvements in the Sarajevo Opera, The Sarajevo Philharmonic Orchestra, The

Symphony Orchestra RTV Sarajevo, and The National Theatre of Sarajevo, as well as playing the festival circuit and working in recording studios.



The Smailovic family: parents Avdo and Munira, twin sisters Vildana and Sidika (violin), Meira (piano), Vedran (cello), 1968

Looking back now and remembering that period, Vedran describes himself and his associates as "totally naive". So great was their confidence in their unity and in their plurality, he says, that even when they were watching what was happening in Slovenia, they felt absolutely certain that similar destruction could never happen in Sarajevo - that it would be impossible to destroy such strong unity. That was the dream. Sadly the reality was sheer horror... and by 1992, "Sarajevo was the capital of hell". After the notorious bread-queue massacre in May of that year, in which twenty-two people lost their lives, Vedran made his decision to "daily offer a music prayer for peace" playing in ruins, bomb sites and graveyards, becoming the inspiration for civil resistance in Bosnia. He continued his Music for Peace initiative until December, 1993, when finally "with the help of God and nice people" it became possible for him to leave Sarajevo.

From then on, even though he was without a cello, Vedran still carried the inspiration of his father Avdo and Musica Ad Hominem deep in his soul and continued to bring music to people around the world, moving between the biggest concert halls and the poorest places. He remembers his visit to Favella Santa Marta in Rio with particular affection. Eventually, through the Influence of Rio cellist, David Chew and with the help and enormous support of Raphaelo Greca, Lord Mayor of Curichiba, Vedran received his 'Freedom Cello', the treasured instrument featured on this album.

Widely celebrated in poetry, story, music and song, Vedran now lives in Northern Ireland, performing, composing, conducting, arranging and producing music, locally and internationally.

Tommy Sands

TOMMY SANDS was born and reared, and still lives by the foothills of the beautiful Mourne Mountains in the north of Ireland. As a child, he heard the lively fiddle and accordion, and the traditional songs and stories of his mother and father welcoming neighbours into the small farmhouse kitchen. "When words would no longer express the feelings inside, my father would reach for his fiddle, or my mother would reach for the accordion. The neighbours would come in too, from both sides of the divide, and the long cold winter evenings were transformed into unforgettable sessions of warmth and togetherness." Later, with his brothers and sister, The Sands family, he would travel the world, bringing these same songs and stories to stages as far apart as Moscow's Olympic Stadium and New York's Carnegie Hall.

After the tragic death of his beloved youngest brother, the extremely talented Eugene Sands, in a car accident while on tour in Germany, the family toured less together. Tommy eventually set off in a more solo direction, writing and recording his own material as well as producing and presenting a very popular and successful radio programme on Downtown Radio Belfast.

The song became the vessel that would reach deepest into the well of emotions. From his first solo album in 1985, through to the Sarajevo/Belfast collaboration in 1999, Tommy Sands has written with wit and charm, documenting the important and constantly changing events of his life and times. When mere words rang hollow or dried up altogether, the song took over and became a welcome friend to us all. The music would laugh and cry for us"

His soul and his commitment to the struggle for unity in Northern Ireland and among people all around the world is easily recognisable in Tommy Sands' albums. 'Singing of the Times' (1985), remembered best for the most beautiful and painful song, 'There were Roses', is now regarded as a classic.

Down by Bendy's Lane came next, followed in 1992 by 'Beyond the Shadows'. In 1995, Tommy released a wonderful new album, The Heart’s a Wonder, where we find the unique 'Music of Healing' featuring the words and voice of the legendary Pete Seeger, and for the first time, the soulful sound of the cello of the inimitable Vedran Smailovic.

Tommy Sands' words and music have been a courageous beacon of hope to many bewildered by the darkness of violence and conflict. He has been associated with, initiated and has contributed to numerous peace and reconciliation initiatives in Northern Ireland, most notably the historic 'Citizen's Assembly' in 1996, a forum created by Ulster artists and literary figures to facilitate inter-party exchange. A series of annual seminars inspired by the song, 'Music of Healing', also encouraged cross-community cultural and political dialogue.

Tommy Sands continues to carry his message of peace and healing to audiences at home and abroad.



The Sands family: Colum, Tommy, Eugene (Dino), Mary, Ann, Hugh and Ben

Two voices, one recording

"When I started to create this album, full of grief and sadness for the tragedy in Bosnia and Hercegovina during 1992-1995, I was also filled with hope that the appalling events of that place and time could never, never happen to anyone on planet Earth ever again. The hope was just a dream. At the end of the 20th Century, we wake up to a very cruel reality - the pitiless, merciless, unrelenting reality of war and famine.

What monsters have we become, preoccupied with our personal megalomania, that we go about our daily business untouched by this nightmare? Unseeing, unhearing we pass by, witnessing with hearts of cold stone, the hunger and thirst, the killing and dying of innocent civilians. How is it that we do not cry out?

Insolently, arrogantly without a blush on our cheeks, we carry the title 'human', though we have long lost the dignity and responsibility the title implies. We are losing our right to call ourselves human, a title right now, at the end of the 20th Century, more worthy of the dolphin, the lion, the small singing bird or the swan.

But despair and cynicism are the ultimate triumph of fascism, so out of our grief and despair we continue to believe, to hope and to trust that the way things are is not the only way they can be.

This album is a collection of truly strong, serious, sad and powerful melodies and stories. An anguished cry from the broken heart, it is at the same time an exultation of the living and of life, a monument to the triumph of the human spirit over death and destruction."

Vedran Smailovic

"When I saw Vedran Smailovic play on TV in agonised Sarajevo, I felt he was an ally and I knew somehow, somewhere we would meet up and play together. We did. We have played together at The Statue of Liberty in New York, at Canary Wharf in London, and at Stormont Castle in Belfast. I am

proud today that he is here with melodies from his land and songs from my own."

Tommy Sands



Tommy Sands and Vedran Smailovic

01 Ode to Sarajevo

Music: Tommy Sands & Vedran Smailovic. Lyrics: T. Sands. Arrangement & orchestration: V. Smailovic. Produced by V. Smailovic, Tommy Sands & Colum Sands.

"This song, 'Ode to Sarajevo', I feel in a very special way, is different from all the others. I want to explain this difference to help each person to listen, to really hear, and to understand. Please, when you listen, try to learn something about what's really going on. There's nothing philosophical about it; it's actually quite simple.

In the chorus - 'Sarajevo, Sarajevo', 'the whole world sings your song', it seems to me that the world did indeed 'sing 'Sarajevo, Sarajevo!' The world sang that chorus before the occupation, and during the occupation and now continues to sing 'Sarajevo, Sarajevo!' ..just the same as the world sang, and continues to sing choruses to Palestine, Northern Ireland, South Africa, Rawanda, Chechenia, etc. The world prepared all that happened in Sarajevo! What happened was the choice of the world. The choice is yours!! The choice is not ours! And it never was at any single moment. Who would choose what we experienced? But somebody is choosing... not just for Sarajevo but for all war-torn cities, everywhere. Sarajevo symbolises all of them. Tommy Sands instinctively captures that raw truth in this song.

When I arranged this song for The Symphony Orchestra, folk-pop-rock band and mixed choir, it was with the sacred hope that Joan Baez would perform this song. It was a dream, but the dream has

come true! During her recent European tour, Joan Baez travelled to a small town in Northern Ireland to make the recording. Thank you Joan!"

"I will never forget my first meeting with Joan, in Sarajevo in July, 1993. I was playing on the street, at the scene of the bread-queue massacre. She came from behind, passed me, and without a word knelt down in front of me. Some strange feeling of energy shot through me, an extraordinary feeling. When I finished and opened my eyes, she was there. She was crying, as I was. We embraced each other and cried together, and when I went to pack my cello, she sat on my chair and sang 'Amazing Grace'. There are very few like Joan Baez. Not many people gave us Sarajevan artists such huge support and fuelled us with new energy to continue with our work, giving hope for a better tomorrow to all Sarajaven citizens.

Vedran Smailovic



Joan Baez with Vedran, Sarajevo, July 1993

"I got a telephone call from Vedran one Thursday. What are you doing this weekend?, he asked impatiently, 'Sarajevo is already 1000 days under siege. People are dying every hour in my country and yet no one seems to be doing anything about it. Please telephone Pete Seeger and Odetta. I will telephone Vanessa Redgrave, Bianca Jagger and Joan Baez. We will all go to New York and play at The Statue of Liberty. We must tell America and the whole world what is happening in my country!"

I admired Vedran's spirit but I never thought it could work in such a short time. These great friends would be very busy and could be anywhere. It would take an explosion or the like to gather them in one place in such a short time. Well, there was an explosion, but it was one of generosity and humanity for these inspiring people dropped everything and joined us for a memorable concert in the church of St. John The Divine and later at The Statue of Liberty. The media came too, and I would like to think that this special event which drew attention to the plight of Sarajevo helped in some small way to further the hopes of peace in Bosnia. I wrote 'Ode to Sarajevo' for this occasion

and we all sang it together. As it happened, Joan Baez was unable to come to New York at this time but she more than made up for that when she joined us in the Spring recording studio in Rostrevor in January 1998. It is fitting that Joan sings these verses about events which she herself witnessed when she went to visit Sarajevo in 1993."

Tommy Sands

ON THIS RECORDING

Vocals · Tommy Sands and Joan Baez

Cellos · Vedran Smailovic

Backing vocals · Marjorie Wright, Ben Sands, Moya Sands, Tom Newman

Harp · Janet Harbison

Acoustic/electric guitar · Jon Johnson

Drums & percussion · Jamie Powell

Piano, keyboards & accordion · Rod McVey

02 Bembasa

Music: V. Smailovic. Arrangement: V. Smailovic & Bojan Andic. Produced by Tom Newman & V. Smailovic.

"Around 500 years ago, a community of Sephardic Jews arrived in Bosnia from Spain, fleeing persecution. Some settled around Sarajevo, bringing with them the richness of the Sephardic Jewish culture and traditions. Over the centuries, one of their most beautiful songs has become this popular Sarajevan melody, Bembasa. People are born, grow up and die, but like the river that gives it its name, this extraordinary melody has flowed on down the generations surviving wars and all the cultural, political and religious changes, to continue to be loved by all.

During the summer of 1962 when I was a little boy of six, my father, Avdo Smailovic - composer and professor of music, would wake me and take me down to the bank of the Bembasa in the very early morning. I remember the murmuring sound of the river, the glorious bird-song, the breeze that rustled the leaves and caressed my face like my mother's tender wakening fingers. Running around following the breeze and the butterflies, I sang this beautiful melody. From time to time, my father called me to him and when I came he clasped my little hand silently and released me again. I remember his earnest expression.

Much later I understood that during this time my father was composing a symphonic poem called 'Lyric from Ashes', based on the writing of the poet Dare Sekulic. One line says: When my son's arms grow strong enough, I will teach him to never disturb the silent beauty of the dawning day!"

Vedran Smailovic

"This was the first tune I heard Vedran playing when he arrived in Ireland and played on my weekly programme, Downtown Radio Belfast. He told me that it reminded him of his early morning strolls as a little boy, along the banks of the Bembasa River in Sarajevo, holding the hand of his composer father, Avdo Smailovic. In the distance he could hear the sound of the church bells and the Muslim calls, the mosaic of sound which so symbolised multicultural Sarajevo. The rich positive sense of

confluence rather than the feared one of compromise between traditions which live side by side.

Tommy Sands



Smailovic junior and senior

ON THIS RECORDING

Cello · Vedran Smailovic

Keyboards · Bojan Andic

03 Where Have All the Flowers Gone

Words & music: Pete Seeger. Arrangement: T. Sands, Jim Musselman, Rod McVey & V. Smailovic. Produced by Rod McVey.

"This classic was composed by Pete Seeger, based on a poem he came across while in the Soviet Union. The melody, Pete tells me, was inspired, albeit unconsciously, by an Irish-American lumberjack song called 'Jackson', which probably came from the same family as "Se fath mo Bhuartha" (The cause of my sorrow). I was very honoured when Jim Musselman asked us to sing this song on the tribute to Pete Seeger album, and also delighted that Liam Og O'Flynn was able to join us on Uillean pipes for 'Se fath mo Bhuartha' along with Ireland's greatest living sean nos singer Dolores Keane on vocals. The children singing with us are from both Catholic and Protestant traditions, many thanks to Siobhan O Duibinn for all her help. Vedran's cello and Liam Bradley's drums whisper the scandalous and sad reality that trains are still carrying innocent people to concentration camps even at this present time."

Tommy Sands



Lav Cemetery, Sarajevo, 1992

ON THIS RECORDING

Vocals · Tommy Sands & Dolores Keane

Cello · Vedran Smailovic

Accordion/keyboards · Rod McVey

Guitar · Arty McGlynn

Uilleann pipes & whistle · Liam Og O'Flynn

Double bass · James Blennerhasset

Percussion · Liam Bradley

Children's chorus · Sheena Best, Sosanna Ní Dhubhain, Garret O'Hare, Graham Blair, Paudie & Tomas Farrell, Ros Ní Dhubhain & Sara Mills

04 Waltz

Music adapted for cello by V. Smailovic. Arrangement: Smailovic & B. Andic. Produced by T. Newman & V. Smailovic.

I needed a long time to decide how to introduce this waltz, which is linked with a number of historic facts, for the simple reason that I didn't know where to start!

The Austro-Hungarian Archduke Ferdinand danced to this poignant, evocative waltz with his wife in the Town Hall of Sarajevo, just minutes before he was assassinated in 1914. This assassination was the spark that started the first World War. In 1992, an even greater tragedy befell Sarajevo. Parallel with their genocide of Muslim and Catholic citizens of Bosnia and Hercegovina, fascist monsters with their strong, heavy weapons and God only knows what madness carried out an evil campaign of 'Urbicide' - so called by the International Peace Centre in Sarajevo - the deliberate and systematic destruction of mosques, cathedrals, hospitals, theatres, schools, cultural institutions, museums, concert halls and all the communications systems built up through centuries, as well as their own Orthodox churches, the places in which they themselves worshipped. Well, if they believe in God, may their own God help them. Of all that was sacred and beautiful, nothing was spared. In August 1992, the National and University Library was destroyed, the same celebrated and historic building which was known as the Town Hall in 1914.

On that terrible summer day, I was in a bomb shelter which was the base for Sarajevo's 'War Theatre', rehearsing our first war play called 'Bomb Shelter'. The whole town was under fire, shelling heavier than usual. Our own building was shaking. Somehow news reached us that the National Library was burning. Our immediate reaction was that we must go there. It was absolute madness to even think of going out, but hard as people tried, there was no stopping us.

We ran through the rain of shelling towards the National Library, as if going about the most innocent of children's games, and straight into the blazing building. We hauled out books in metal cases and cardboard boxes, which we loaded onto the vehicle of a volunteer, saving what we could. The fire brigade tried, but it was impossible to save the beloved building, a time-honored symbol of Sarajevo itself and of the cultural, ethnic and religious pluralism in our country.

During this action, two firemen were killed by snipers, but miraculously all the artistic team and technical crew of War Theatre returned safely to the shelter, shocked and disbelieving. How is it possible they have destroyed the National Library! At the beginning of the Second World War, Hitler burned books. Today's fascists are worse and more dangerous, burning not only the books but the magnificent library building as well."

"When I returned two days after the fire with a Sarajevo journalist and a television crew, the ruin of the National Library was still very hot and dangerous. But the atmosphere was extraordinary, strong and powerful, sacred as a temple, at the same time so sad and glorious! It felt as if the outraged souls of all the authors of the burned books were there in silent warning, witness to the world. I brought my cello and a portrait of my beloved father - the famous Avdo Smailovic, celebrated composer and eminent professor of music. The portrait was painted by Dobrivoje Beljkasic, a renowned artist whose work, like all the art housed in the studios and galleries on the third floor, had been totally destroyed in the fire. The soul of my esteemed father was also there - in me, in my music and in

Dobrivoje's painting - and the spirit of all the painters, dead and alive. Nobody can destroy the soul, the spirit of art and creativity. This gesture symbolises that.

I played the waltz, this powerful symbol. But I stopped...had to stop...cry...realising this horror was true... the whole crew cried. That's when this famous photo was taken, this photograph which itself became a worldwide symbol of tragedy and the power of music.

Later, when I finished playing, I brought my father's portrait home. Then I returned to the place of the massacre and paused for just a moment, before once more playing Albinoni."

Vedran Smailovic



National University Library, Sarajevo



In the National Library, 1992. Photograph: Kemal Hadzic

ON THIS RECORDING

Cellos · Vedran Smailovic

Keyboards · Bojan Andic

05 Memento Mori · Albinoni Adagio

Preview note: source image 21 is not yet supplied. The opening of this account will be added once it is available.

"First the seriously wounded, then those with minor injuries, and finally the dead were taken away.

That night I couldn't sleep. Sitting, thinking about life, I couldn't understand why these innocent people, my good fellow citizens and next-door neighbours, with whom I had spent my childhood, should have their lives ended in such a terrible, terrible way. I understood only that in my town in time of war a life is worth absolutely nothing. Filled with sorrow, I eventually fell asleep at dawn, and was awakened by new explosions and the shouts of my neighbours, who were carrying children and blankets to shelters. I went to the shelter myself and returned home after the shelling was over. I washed my face and hands, shaved, and without thinking, put on my white shirt, black evening suit and white bow tie, took my cello and left home.

Looking at the new ruins, I arrived at the place of the massacre. It was adorned with flowers, wreaths and peace messages; there were posters on local shops saying who had been killed. On a nearby table was a solemn book of condolences which people were signing. I opened my cello case and sat down, not knowing what I would play. Full of sadness and grief, I lifted my bow and spontaneously made music. I thought of the cruel fate of my neighbours, aware of the fact that the same or even worse could happen again at any moment. I was playing and crying at the same time, but the tears pouring down my cheeks could not express the pain and sorrow I had deep inside me. At some moment, I recognised that the music, pouring from me like my tears, was Albinoni's Adagio, but different.... an arrangement with changes of time and key, a new variation uniquely creating itself out of the depth of grief and sorrow, out of the sheer emotional intensity of horror."

The passers-by stopped and listened and cried with me; they placed flowers, prayed, lit candles. When I finished, there was no applause. I slowly rose, stood in silence for one minute and put the instrument in its case. People gathered around me and we talked. I must say, I felt a little better.

Later in a nearby cafe, a friend asked me when I should play again. I said I did not intend to play again. He started to talk me into it. The cafe owner brought coffee and joined my friend in persuading me to repeat my musical prayer for peace. Other people joined in with the same idea. It became clear to me that they needed me to play because they too felt better after they heard the music. I understood then that Albinoni's Adagio is healing music, that music heals, and that this was no longer a purely personal issue. That was when I decided to play for twenty-two days in a row, disregarding the danger, and to dedicate one day to each of my twenty-two fellow citizens killed in the bread-queue massacre.

Albinoni's Adagio is the saddest, saddest music I know. The piece I play is a variation on a fragment of the original found, so the story goes, in the ruins of a burnt-out church after the sack of Dresden.

This track is dedicated to all innocent civilians who have been killed in wars everywhere throughout the history of planet Earth."

Vedran Smailovic



Railway carriage, Sarajevo, 1992. Photograph: Claudio Olivato

ON THIS RECORDING

Cellos · Vedran Smailovic

Keyboards · Bojan Andic

06 The Music of Healing

Words & music: T. Sands. Lyrics: T. Sands & Pete Seeger. Arrangement: T. Sands & V. Smailovic. Produced by T. Sands & Colum Sands.

"In the Irish tradition, the lament has always been very important, not to make us sad but rather to take the sadness out of us. After the tears, the time for healing must begin. The cry of the newborn baby heralds the new era of The Music of Healing. Described by John Hume, Minister of Parliament, as a 'new anthem for our time', this song was conceived in the physically modest but creatively inspirational home of Pete and Toshi Seeger on the high banks of the Hudson River in upstate New York. As usual we were talking of old songs and thinking about new ones, and the idea of music being a healing power came into our heads. Healing, not only between two people or two sets of people in conflict, but also between the conflicting thoughts in one's own head. The second verse of the song I put together from ideas that Pete's father had put to him many years before, and I was

thrilled that Pete and his grandson Tao were able to join us for this recording."

Tommy Sands



Nobel peace prize recipient John Hume, with Tommy Sands and Vedran Smailovic, 1996



Tommy Sands, Pete, Toshi and Tao Seeger

ON THIS RECORDING

Vocals · Tommy Sands and Pete Seeger

Cello · Vedran Smailovic

Backing vocals · Ben Sands, Ann Sands, Tao Seeger, Rod MacDonald, Greg Anderson

Mandolin · Ben Sands

Fiddle · Lisa Gutkin

Bass · Greg Anderson

Percussion · Liam Bradley

07 Bosfor

Music: V. Smailovic. Arrangement: V. Smailovic & B. Andic. Produced by T. Newman & V. Smailovic.

"This melody is based on a traditional Bosnian tune, a sad song about the death and dying of an old Muslim. But philosophically death and dying don't need to be such sad subjects; that is why I have organised and arranged the piece as I have done here. Using an electric cello and a slightly aggressive modern European rhythm gives it a strong contemporary pop influence, taking Bosfor out of a purely traditional frame. I am interested in bringing Bosnian traditional music into a new relationship, closer to the rest of the world in this way."

Vedran Smailovic

ON THIS RECORDING

Cello · Vedran Smailovic

Keyboards · Bojan Andic

08 Child of 2000

Words & music: T. Sands. Arrangement: V. Smailovic. Produced by T. Sands, Colum Sands & V. Smailovic.

"In 1995, the BBC in Belfast decided to make a special futuristic type of TV programme featuring writers and artists who would be given a theme in a sealed envelope at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. By 8 o'clock that evening, they would have created a work which would then be transmitted live. Each stage of the creation was filmed, and the idea was to transmit the programme again in the year 2000. When I opened the envelope, the title read: Write a song about a child in the year 2000:"

"It is easy to write a song in a few hours, provided you have twenty years to think about it. The arrangement was also created in that time frame by Vedran. Our many thanks to Rod McVey for being with us then, and on the recording. I have often written songs in the past from the viewpoint of the future. It is not important that the implied predictions are true. The important thing is that the song provides some hope for the time it was written."

Tommy Sands



Tommy with his son, Fionan

ON THIS RECORDING

Vocals · Tommy Sands

Cello · Vedran Smailovic

Piano & keyboards · Rod McVey

Low flute & whistles · Brendan Monaghan

Guitar · Jon Johnston

Percussion · Jamie Powell

Children playing · The McMahon family

09 Dilber

Music: V. Smailovic. Arrangement: V. Smailovic & Bojan Andic. Produced by T. Newman, V. Smailovic & C. Sands.

"The audience at the Belfast Festival at Queen's University introduces Dilber, a lively number based on the popular 'Sevdalinke', an old love song from Bosnian folklore. Sevdah in Turkish means love, and traditionally 'Sevdalinke' was given a very slow, heavy treatment in sympathy with its themes of painful, agonising love and loss. In this number, as in Bosfor, I wanted to break the stylistic mould and to reintegrate this music in a different way. I used an electric cello here to bring out the beauty of the Bosnian soul of the music, but also to locate Bosnia - especially Sarajevo, the epitome of harmony and inclusiveness - at the crossroads of east and west, where modern meets traditional, the contemporary converges with the historic and time crosses timelessness."

Vedran Smailovic



Tommy and Vedran at Westminster, February 1996

ON THIS RECORDING

Cello · Vedran Smailovic

Keyboards · Bojan Andic

10 Buskers

Words, music, arrangement & production: Colum Sands.

"This song was written by one of my favourite songwriters and one of my best friends who also happens to be my brother, Colum. The song looks at the real value of music. It is not just to sell records or impress small columns in large newspapers. It is also to give voice to the voiceless and an expression to universal emotions."

Tommy Sands

"I wrote this song after watching a television documentary about Vedran Smailovic, the cellist from Sarajevo. He was a member of the orchestra in that city until the Concert Hall was destroyed by shells which also left some of his fellow musicians dead and injured. In a city of fear and death, Smailovic took his cello into the streets, believing that music could bring hope in the midst of destruction. Later, when 22 people were killed by a shell as they queued for bread, Smailovic took his cello to the marketplace where they had died, and every day for 22 days he sat in the midst of the rubble and played his cello. The images in the documentary reminded me of the tremendous power of music, especially when it's taken to the people on the streets. I remembered some of the street musicians who had impressed me from my earliest days, like the Dunne brothers from Limerick, Maggie Barry from Cork and Klaus der Geiger who plays his fiddle in Cologne. Of all the songs I have written, none has brought me more reward than this one. When Vedran heard 'Buskers' he travelled

to Ireland to play cello on this recording.

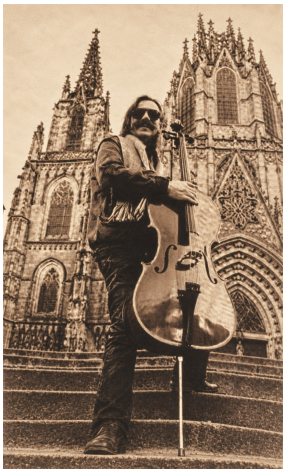
Colum Sands



Colum Sands

"I am very proud and touched by Colum Sands' song, Buskers. Once, during a session in a pub in Northern Ireland, somebody took a guitar and sang this beautiful song, not realising I was present. The song, the music, took my soul away. In my thoughts and imagination I was some few years ago and many miles far distant. So when a customer recognised me and asked me how I felt, the question came as a shock. It seems unreal - I was in two places, trying to answer a question in one place from far away in another. I could only gesture with my hand, my eyes full of tears. Thank God at that moment the barman brought me my pint of beer!"

Vedran Smailovic



Vedran in Barcelona, 1994

ON THIS RECORDING

Vocals · Colum & Tommy Sands

Cello · Vedran Smailovic

Backing vocals · Ben Sands

Bass · James Blennerhasset

Fiddle · Lisa Gutkin

11 Laganside

Words & music: T. Sands. Arrangement & orchestration: V. Smailovic. Produced by V. Smailovic, T. Sands & Colum Sands.

"Laganside' is totally unusual in that it is a love song in march form. Working on the arrangement, I was sensitive to the complex significance of marching in Northern Ireland and spent a long time trying to escape from that form. Eventually I understood that it is because the march is so deep in the lifestyle, imagination and habit of the people, that it comes out even in a love song. After patiently analysing and thinking intensively with respect to the seriousness of the message of the song, I decided to put the chorus on a Bolero atmosphere, to create a carnival using a rich ensemble of symphonic orchestra, male voice choir, cathedral bells, tin whistle, accordion, uilleann pipes and bagpipes. Finally, the beautiful harp sound of Ms. Janet Harbison brings a totally new dimension to this strong song."

Vedran Smailovic

"The Goddess "Erin", from the Tuatha De Dannen, was the earliest personification of Ireland, and since that time the vision of a beautiful woman has often been used by writers and poets alike to personify and symbolise the land in which we live. She has often appeared in times of great trials to give hope to her loved ones. At this defining time in our history, I pictured her on the banks of the Lagan extolling the riches of both our northern traditions. The River Lagan, which runs through Belfast, has witnessed many joys, sorrows and dreams down through the years, and, like the Bembasa of Sarajevo, it is influenced by every tributary, every raindrop and every tear that joins its journey, and is all the richer for it. The song was first performed at the invitation of Janet Harbison and the Belfast Harp Orchestra in the company of the Field Marshall Montgomery Pipe Band, on the occasion of the opening of the new Waterfront Hall in Belfast."

Tommy Sands



Tommy Sands

ON THIS RECORDING

Vocals · Tommy Sands

Cellos · Vedran Smailovic

Backing vocals · Ben Sands

Uilleann pipes & whistle · Brendan Monaghan

Scottish pipes · Richard Parkes (Field Marshal Montgomery Pipe Band)

Guitar · Jon Johnston

Harp · Janet Harbison

Piano & keyboards · Rod McVey

Thanks & credits

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Vedran Smailovic and Tommy Sands

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