

## **MISS SARAJEVO: A documentary by Bill Carter**

Carter became involved in the Balkan conflict when he was traveling the world after his girlfriend died in a car crash in 1991. He joined The Serious Road Trip, a humanitarian aid organization distributing food and medicine to places the United Nations and the Red Cross would not go. Arriving in Sarajevo, he decided to stay with the Sarajevans, inspired by the way the city-dwellers tried to maintain the life they had before the siege began. Carter began to do some work for the Sarajevan television, and managed to get an interview with Bono from rock group U2. Bono, who later admitted that he was deeply touched by Bill Carter's story, heard about the importance of pop music in Sarajevo and said that he would love to play in Sarajevo. Knowing that playing in a besieged city was impossible, Carter invented another way of connecting rock music with Sarajevans; instead of "bringing U2 to Sarajevo" he would "bring Sarajevo to U2", by means of satellite linkups to U2's Zoo TV Tour concerts, giving the people of Sarajevo a chance to tell their story to the world.

In 1995 Bill Carter made the documentary film Miss Sarajevo out of the video material he shot for the uplinks. The film was produced by Bono, and U2 provides 2 songs which serve as a soundtrack, including "Miss Sarajevo," a bilingual duet with Luciano Pavarotti (see lyrics on the following page). Miss Sarajevo won the International Monitor Award, the Golden Hugo Award and the Mavrick Director Award.

Miss Sarajevo chronicles one of the more bizarre events of the war in former Yugoslavia--when several artists mounted an elaborate beauty contest under mortar fire. The camera follows the organizers through the tunnels and cellars of the city, giving a unique insight into life during a modern war, where civilians are the targets. The film captures the dark humor of the besieged Sarajevans, their stubborn refusal to be demoralized, and suggests that surrealism and Dadaism are the appropriate responses to fanaticism.

In the director's own words, when editing the film, "I wanted the viewer not to feel comfortable, not to fully understand what's happening. The media has become our buffer against the realities of death and war and hence our buffer against life itself...All the images have become nice, neat, sterile packages that make us numb and distant from our own world."

Below are the lyrics to "Miss Sarajevo":

Is there a time for keeping your distance  
A time to turn your eyes away  
Is there a time for keeping your head down  
For getting on with your day

Is there a time for kohl and lipstick  
A time for cutting hair  
Is there a time for high street shopping  
To find the right dress to wear

Here she comes  
Heads turn around  
Here she comes  
To take her crown

Is there a time to run for cover  
A time for kiss and tell  
Is there a time for different colours  
Different names you find it hard to spell

Is there a time for first communion  
A time for East 17  
Is there a time to turn to Mecca  
Is there time to be a beauty queen

Here she comes  
Beauty plays the clown  
Here she comes  
Surreal in her crown

Dici che il fiume  
Trova la via al mare  
E come il fiume  
Giungerai a me  
Oltre i confini  
E le terre assetate  
Dici che come fiume  
Come fiume...  
L'amore giunger  
L'amore...  
E non so più pregare  
E nell'amore non so più sperare  
E quell'amore non so più aspettare

(You say that the river  
Finds the way to the sea  
And like the river  
You shall come to me  
Beyond the borders  
And the thirsty lands  
You say that as a river  
Like a river...  
Love shall come  
Love...  
And I'm not able to pray anymore  
And I cannot hope in love anymore  
And I cannot wait for that love anymore)

Is there a time for tying ribbons  
A time for Christmas trees  
Is there a time for laying tables  
And the night is set to freeze

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