

Pass It On®...

The Cellist of Sarajevo.

In the grips of war, the people of Sarajevo waited anxiously for some kind of resolution. Much of the city had been reduced to rubble. Life hung by a thread. The notes of hope cut through the air for 22 days straight as cellist Vedran Smailović risked death to fill the air with music.

In 1992, the country of Yugoslavia was being torn apart. Warring factions created chaos in this otherwise beautiful city. On May 27, an explosion rocked a bakery in the city, killing 22 people and wounding 108 more who were in line to buy bread. The horrors of war were suddenly made manifest.

The following morning, as images of the war poured into living rooms around the world, Vedran Smailović put on his tuxedo, carried his cello and a chair outside, and sat in the midst of the rubble to play Albinoni's "Adagio in G Minor" for those who had been massacred. He would return every day for 22 days. Some days, he was ducking sniper fire. But each day, each victim deserved a tribute to the life they lived and the unbearable way in which they died.

Modern war is a complex tangle of ideologies, power seizures and political maneuverings. It rarely respects the lives of the innocent. Smailović sensed that each individual in a society is worthy of respect and that, by seeking beauty through the arts, we find the language of peace. Throughout the war, he played in graveyards and at funerals, delivering hope to those caught in the machinations of power.

Artists have a unique role in our world, offering up their talents on the altars of civilization. They seek the beautiful and the honest, the truth of our souls and the courage of our hearts. In the turmoil of the American Revolution and its bloody birth, John Adams wrote to his wife Abigail: "I must study politics and war that my sons may have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy ... geography, natural history, naval architecture, navigation, commerce and agriculture, in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music"

And lest we forget what we have freed ourselves from, we should remember the image of the single musician playing a mournful tribute to each of us from the rubble of smoldering city, a reminder that

there is hope, and it is embodied in each of us, carrying it forward like a banner promoting peace to all nations.

The Peace of Music...[PassItOn.com](https://www.passiton.com)

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