

Sarajevo Blues

from one of bosnia s most prominent poets and writers spare and haunting stories and poems that were written under the horrific circumstances of the war in bosnia herzegovina semezdin mehmedinovic remained a citizen of sarajevo throughout the serbian nationalists siege and was active throughout the war in the city s resistance movement as one of the editor s of the magazine phantom of liberty sarajevo blues was originally published at the end of 1992 and was the first book in the biblioteka egzil abc series published in ljubljana which provided a forum for bosnian writers and translators under siege or living in exile semezdin mehmedinovic says that writing is finally quite a personal thing that doesn t make much sense unless you are practicing for the last word for those bosnians emerging from the siege or still in exile these last words remain intimate possessions one of the last bastions left against the commodification of tragedy sarajevo blues is widely considered here to be the best piece of writing to emerge from this besieged capital since bosnia s war erupted in april 1992 washington post a supreme masterpiece witnessed and redeems with total detachment i have experienced this only twice in my life with zoran mušić s drawings from dachau and semezdin mehmedinovic s sarajevo blues this book will be a classic tomaž Šalamun the book for my brother sarajevo blues is at once a battle report and a philosophical investigation in poems micro essays and prose vignettes semezdin memedinovic charts the collapse of a world with heart breaking clarity and precision his book conveys the same clear eyes passion for the truth that one finds in the young hemingway the hemingway of in our time paul auster book of illusions semezdin mehmedinovic was born in tuzla bosnia in 1960 and is the author of four books in 1993 he was cowriter and codirector with benjamin filipovic of mizaldo one of the first bosnian films shot during the war the film was presented at the berlin film festival in 1994 and won the first prize at the mediterranean festival in rome the following year he his wife and their child left bosnia and came to the u s as political refugees in 1996 his collection of poetry nine alexandrias is number 56 in the city lights pocket poets series

semezdin mehmedinović est connu dans les balkans pour être le plus grand poète de sa génération sarajevo blues son recueil le plus célèbre est traduit dans de nombreux pays et adulé aux États unis en voici donc la première traduction en france dans cette puissante succession de poèmes en prose semezdin mehmedinović relate son expérience du siège de sarajevo et partage ainsi avec le lecteur une vision intime et sensible de la guerre arpentant les rues populaires désormais désertées et épiées par des snipers l auteur erre dans une ville congelée vive dont les arbres ont été coupés pour produire du bois de chauffage il décrit le conflit à échelle humaine qu il s agisse d un membre de son équipe de football qui se transforme en nationaliste radical cagoulé et armé ou d un écrivain pour enfants devenu criminel de guerre de la mort de son père à laquelle il n a pu assister à celle de la perte de l innocence de son fils semezdin mehmedinović révèle l effroyable condition universelle des êtres prisonniers de la guerre

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