

The Official page of  
**Mostar Sevdah Reunion™**

Snail  
**Records**



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#### About the CD "Cafe Sevdah"

BBC - WORLD REVIEW MUSIC/Album  
 08 January 2008

*...Throughout, the musicianship of the group's veteran performers is impeccable - wonderfully fluent, sinuous and brimming with passion. While the overall feeling may be melancholy, it's a beautiful kind of sadness that leaves the listener inspired rather than depressed. This reviewer is not the first to label Mostar Sevdah Reunion as the Balkans' answer to Buena Vista Social Club, but lazy journalism or not, the comparison is apposite and well earned....*

Froots - january 2008

*...New vocalists Nermin Alukic, Elmedin Balalic and Suad Golic handling things superbly while the arrangements vary from jazz piano flavours on two tracks to the elemental Ottoman voice, hands and feet of Ali-Pasha in Herzegovina...*

Songlines january - 2008

*...It is a beautifully package album, with translated lyrics - very important with these poetic, usually melancholy songs - and images from beautiful old postcards of Mostar in the early 20th century...*

The Guardian - december 2007

*"Sevdah is the ancient, often pained and passionate music of Bosnia, but in the hands of its best-known exponents, the Mostar Sevdah Reunion, this Balkan answer to the blues is transformed and updated by being matched against contemporary blues and jazz influences. In the process, what at times may be an often solemn, sadly soulful style suddenly becomes far more varied and unpredictable. The band consists of local musicians who first recorded eight years ago and have developed a sophisticated approach to their music by matching sturdy vocal work against unexpectedly inventive playing. So a traditional song like the witty "The Beautiful Hajrija Fell Ill" matches straightforward, declamatory singing against a flurry of rapid-fire, gently stomping fiddle and ragtime guitar, while on "Who's Girl Is That?", the 70-year-old veteran Fevzija Sarajlic-Fevzo is backed by a female chorus and piano work that veers between eastern Europe and Latin America. Then there are the bleak and bitter laments, from "This Red Rose", transformed by an inventive accordion solo, to "Old Jusuf Sits By the Window", a tragic story of old age with delicate guitar and piano work. A subtle and intriguing band."*

Clive Davis, the Sunday Times, November 2007

*"What would happen if you parachuted Van Morrison into deepest Bosnia? It might seem a silly question, but the collision of cultures on this latest release from one of the great Balkan institutions really does conjure up fleeting thoughts of the gloomy one in full swing. It's not hard to detect a melancholic hint of the blues in the Bosnian folk style of sevdah, and the unabashedly jazzy flavour of some of these pieces underscores the connection. The band is on a roll at the moment, and this roughhewn recording is every bit as varied and full-blooded as previous collaborations with the likes of Ljiljana Buttler."*

#### About the CD **Mostar Sevdah Reunion - "Saban"**



**Runner up for the Critics Poll Albums of the Year 2008 !**

SONGLINES - August-September 2008 (**Top of the World**)

*..The ten minute jam Saban vs MSR is the musical equivalent of your hat being blown off in a gale and the voice and guitar magic of the track that follows it. ..*

#### About the CD **Mostar Sevdah Reunion and Ljiljana Buttler - The Legends of Life"**

BBC - WORLD REVIEW MUSIC/Album by Jon Lusk , 11 January 2008.

"The bulk of the songs are traditional, but Buttler's own brooding masterpiece Tesko Je Umreti hangs in the air with a mesmerising power, amplified by sterling instrumental support. The slithering violin of Slobodan Stancic lights up this and several other pieces, as does Mustafa Santic's empathetic accordion and clarinet. A walking bass on Mirisni Cvetak is one example of the subtle jazz influence that colours some arrangements, and the epic traditional song Placem Vec Tri Dana sounds like an inspired Balkan rewrite of Led Zeppelin's blues showstopper, Since I've Been Loving You.

There are a few upbeat dances such as Verka Kaludjerka and Andro Verka and even some laughter to lighten things, but it's the slower numbers that really burn themselves into the memory. Misery has seldom sounded so musical."

Jon Lusk, BBC Music magazine proms - BBC Music Choice, August 2007.

"After a Stellar Career in the Kafanas (music bars) of former Yugoslavia, Gypsy singer Ljiljana Buttler fled the Balkan war for obscure exile in Germany in 1990 before intrepid producer Dragi Sestic 'rediscovered' her. With the virtuoso acoustic group Mostar Sevdah Reunion, they made The mother of Gypsy soul (2003), a breathtaking collection of classic Bosnian sevdalinka - slow, tragic love songs. This 2005 follow-up of Roma and Yugoslav standards is marvellous. Buttler's deep, sobbing voice is given sterling instrumental support, in particular by Mustafa Santic's accordion and clarinet and quest violinist Slobodan Stancic. A few upbeat dances lighten the mood, but otherwise misery has seldom sounded so musical."

Garth Carthwright, Froots Magazine, UK, June 2007.

...The legends of Life is, to me, an even better album than Mother of Gypsy Soul. For a start, singer and band are more familiar with one another so the music rolls effortlessly forward. Ljiljana's wonderfully deep voice sailing above the ensemble's beatific playing...

...A colossal Achievement!"

Sunday Times, UK, April 2007.

"Now here is a voice that has been lived in. Once a leading light of Balkan gypsy music, Buttler spent a decade or more in obscurity in exile, at one time working as a cleaner to make ends meet. A comeback album won acclaim a couple of years ago, and this new disc is every bit as atmospheric. Buttler's voice is surprisingly masculine and bluesy; and, if it is occasionally wayward, she has magnificent support from that Bosnian institution the Mostar Sevdah Reunion, creating a relaxed ambience poised between jazz, folk and blues. Another local legend, Saban Bajramovic, makes an appearance, but this is very much Buttler's show."

About the CD **Mostar Sevdah Reunion - " A Secret Gate"**

Garth Cartwright FRoots Magazine-UK, January/February 2004.

"... and the overall flavour of the album is that of a soulful melancholy, music made by people touched by tragedy, yet determined to keep on living. Very highly recommended."

John Lusk, Froots Magazine-UK, November 2003.

"...Mostar Sevdah Reunion does have an embarrassment of talented musicians. It's no surprise that comparisons have been made between them and the Buena Vista Social club."



**2 Davorins**  
Bosnian Music Award  
for the  
**Album of the Year**  
(all categories!)  
and  
**Best World Music**  
Album of 2005

About the CD Mostar Sevdah Reunion presents "**Ljiljana Buttler - The mother of Gypsy soul**"

Simon Broughton, Songlines -UK, September/October 2002

"...Ljiljana Buttler is one of the great re-discovered voices of Eastern Europe. Deep, dark and distinctive. Her recording with the Mostar Sevdah Reunion band, "The Mother of Gypsy Soul (Snail Records) is one of my CDs of the year and impresses everyone I've played in to."

Garth Carthwright, FRoots Magazine, UK January/February 2003

"...Ljiljana Buttler's debut CD is delicious: Ljiljana's deep, almost masculine, voice picks out words and tosses them into the air with effortless grace. And the instrumental backing by Mostar Sevdah Reunion and legendary trumpet virtuoso Boban Markovic is inspired: the musicians spoon out the notes with a tangible, almost erotic, delicacy while Ljiljana sails above them, her voice caressing the listener."

Kim Burton, Songlines,-UK, September/October 2002.



**Davorin**  
Bosnian Music Award  
for the  
Best World Music  
Album of 2003

*Songlines recommends!!!" ...Something very special indeed!"*

Mark Nolis, Roots Town Music-Belgium , 2002

*"...a master piece in every aspects!"*

Zlatko Gall, Slobodna Dalmacija- Croatia, May 2003.

*"Gypsy Cosmic blues, 5\*\*\*\*\* ...Mother of Gypsy soul is simply one more perfect album with signature of Mostar Sevdah Reunion and the best CD released by Ljiljana."*

*...beautiful music which breaths sadness, bitterness, melancholy and hope. Beautiful recorded and produced. 5\*\*\*\*\* ( Twentse courant, Holland, 03.02.2003)*

Platomania, Holland, February 2003.

**.... No Risk Disc!**

Senad Avdic - Slobodna Bosna- Bosnia and Hercegovina, 20.02.2003.

*"...The fantastic music product - probaly the greatest gypsy singer in the world!"*

About the CD **Mostar Sevdah Reunion presents Saban Bajramovic - "A Gypsy Legend"**  
(released by World Connection 2001, WC 43024)

*"...the Serbian singer is clearly a giant talent, comparable in his own way to Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan or Mari Boine Persen, someone capable of bringing their music to life with such vivid spirituality that it vaults with ease over the most impenetrable cultural barriers." (Andy Gill - The independent / United Kingdom, 15.2.2002,*

*... "The Balkan CD of the year"*  
( Ilko Culic -National / Croatia,25.10.2001)

*...It is difficult to stay objective in this review while listening to this master-piece. The saying goes that no one should go down on one's knees and bow one's head before a living human being, but in this case an exception should be made."*  
(Mladen Hlubna-Oslobodjenje / Bosnia and Hercegovina,06.12.2001)

*\*\*\*\*\* (5 stars) "... Saban Bajramovic,a gypsy legend? No that is not an exaggeration,it is an absolute fact !"*  
(Zlatko Gall-Slobodna dalmacija / Croatia, October 2001)

*"...the next 66 minutes were one of the rarest moments in my life. I was crying because of the sheer beauty of this music.Together with Mostar Sevdah Reunion the great gypsy singer created an exceptional album , probably the best ever produced in this Balkan area."*  
( Miljenko Jregovic-Jutarnji list/Croatia,10.11. 2001).

*"...He is unique. More than one hour of music is passing smoothly, keeping the listener under its spell uninterruptedly , musically supreme, relaxing in atmosphere, in the best possible way catching the musical poetry of gypsy legend and musical maturity of Mostar Sevdah Reunion.. "*  
(Ognjen Trtkovic- Valter / Bosnia and Hercegovina, 31.10.2001)

*"...This is a CD after which nothing is going to be the same again, neither Saban, neither his music, neither western music lovers. "*  
(Ahmed Buric-Dani,Bosnia and Hercegovina,16.11 2001 )

About the CD **Mostar Sevdah Reunion - "Mostar Sevdah Reunion"** (released by World Connection, 1999. WC 43011)

*"..This is a fascinating album , half meditative, half danceable, with excellent musicianship and remarkably coherent as an artistic work...I can not recommend it too much: this is one helluva monster sevdah reunion !"*  
(Don Weeda / Roots World Magazine)

*"...A jewel from a war-torn land "*  
(Andrew Cronshaw/Folk Roots Magazine)

*"...This is a fantastic introduction to a music far too little known outside its homeland"*  
(Kim Burton/ Songlines Magazine)

*"...Powerful, energetic, exciting , fantastic album"*  
(Le Monde /France)

*"... \*\*\*\*\* (5 stars) Pure Masterpiece!"*  
(Zlatko Gall/Feral Tribune / Croatia)

Nomination from DEUTSCHEN SCHALLPLATENKRITIK/ FOLKLORE for the best CD of year 1999

