

Mo's Birthday

2006 | Commissioned short for the Mozart year of 2006. Video, 1 min, PAL 4:3 | Colour | Stereo



On the visual level the film shows drummers on the streets of Dakar celebrating Mohammed's birthday during an electricity blackout while at the same time there is a transient presence of a piece Mozart—the second 'Mo' of the title—wrote for the glass harmonica in the last year of his life for a blind woman musician. It is played here by a Slovak street musician.

I was also interested in the use Mozart made of the Orient in his work—in *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, for example—which, although informed by the ideas of enlightenment, nevertheless handles the cultural space it allegedly deals with as a screen for Western imaginings. Since any real threat of actual cultural or military invasion had been dispelled these began to move towards the more exotic outgrowths of Orientalism.