



TV

UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

U.N. IN ACTION

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TRANSFORMER: AK-47s INTO GUITARS

VIDEO

EL NOGAL (EXPLOSION,
WOUNDED PEOPLE RUN, FIRE,
AMBULANCES...)

CESAR AND OTHER MUSICIANS
PRACTICE

CESAR ON CAMERA

CESAR PLAYS

AUDIO

NARRATION

In February 2003, a car bomb tore through an elite social club in Colombia's capital Bogota, killing dozens of people, and wounding more than 100. (10)

For Cesar Lopez, and a number of other musicians, it was a turning point: (4.5)

CESAR LOPEZ: (Spanish) **M**

"When the bomb went off at the 'El Nogal' Club, we rushed out there with all our guitars and our drums. // We ran over there to play music for the victims." (12)

NARRATION

Using music to heal Colombia's wounds was always a part of Cesar's thinking. But since that day, a new obsession took hold. He thought: what if weapons could be transformed into musical instruments? (13)

MAESTRO PAREDES ON
CAMERA

PAREDES: (Spanish) **M**

“César spent three years trying to get the weapons, then we made the initial design.” (4.5)

NARRATION

Cesar’s idea finally became a reality in the workshop of one of Colombia’s most respected instrument makers, maestro Alberto Paredes. (8.5)

MAESTRO PAREDES
ASSEMBLES ‘ESCOPETARRA’

PAREDES: (Spanish) **M**

“When you hold one of these weapons, you know it has been an instrument of death. The challenge is to rid it of its negative energy” (9.5)

NARRATION

ESCOPETARRA

Working with his son, Jose Alberto, Paredes found a way to turn assault rifles into guitars. (6.5)

PAREDES: (Spanish) **M**

“In technical terms, it’s not that difficult. The rifle has the same basic shape as the guitar. You hold it the same way – that’s how Cesar Lopez got the idea – and that’s the genius of it.” (11)

NARRATION

CESAR INTERACTS WITH FANS
/ SHOWS ‘ESCOPETARRA’

And pure genius it was, judging from the public’s reaction...(4)

GRAPHICS

The instrument is called ‘escopetarra’ – a fusion of the Spanish words for “rifle” and “guitar”... (5.5)

WEAPONS / CROSSFIRE

Now it's become part of a campaign to bring attention to the tens of thousands of weapons coming into Colombia illegally - and fuelling violence in the country. (9.5)

ARMORY / VARIOUS GUNS

Working with Colombia's law enforcement agencies, the United Nations' Office on Drugs and Crime hopes to reduce the availability of illegal arms like the ones stored in this police armory, all of which have been used to commit a crime. (13.5)

PEOPLE IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE WORLD CARRYING AND SHOOTING THE AK-47

Known as the "world's favourite killing machine", the AK-47 is the most widely-used weapon in conflict zones across the globe, and the one responsible for the most deaths. (11.5)

CESAR PLAYS IN THE STREETS

Its notoriety lends the "escopetarra" a symbolic power that resonates with musicians from around the world. (6.5)

STILL IMAGES OF ARTISTS RECEIVING 'ESCOPETARRAS'

Irish rocker Bob Geldof now has one, as do Argentina's Botafogo, and the Franco-Spanish artist, Manu Chao. (7)

CESAR SHOWS INSCRIPTIONS / GUERRILLA ARCHIVE FOOTAGE

Cesar's own guitar has a unique history, some of which is visible in the inscriptions it bears. It once belonged to left-wing guerrillas. Then it passed into the hands of right-wing paramilitaries, until finally, it was turned in to the authorities. (15)

PAULITA RIOS SINGS

Now Cesar Lopez and singer Paulita Rios use

the instrument to strike a chord with former child soldiers. Kids who once might have used the AK-47 to kill, kids whose hope is now for a second chance in life. (15)

FORMER CHILD SOLDIERS
HANDLE 'ESCOPETARRA'

It's the dream of transforming their lives into a positive force, just as the artists do with their music. (7)

PAULITA ON CAMERA

PAULITA RIOS: (Spanish) **F**

"Our lives too are an impossible dream, of music. It just goes to show that you can live your dream; you can be anything you want. (8)

CESAR LOPEZ AND BAND AT
SCHOOL CONCERT

NARRATION

One concert at a time, one teenager at a time, that's the message of Cesar Lopez and of his band... and of an instrument - transformed. (10)

UN LOGO

This report was prepared by Michele Zaccheo for the United Nations.