"Defying the Odds"

Video, colour, 28 mins. 42 secs.

Defying the Odds celebrates the achievements of four women of diverse ages and backgrounds who share one thing in common - the courage and determination to balance age-old traditions with new roles at the centre of social change.

The first profile is of Asma Jahangir, an internationally-renowned lawyer, who is founder of Pakistan's first all-female law firm. Working under tremendously difficult circumstances, even death threats, Asma details the challenges of working for women's rights in her society.

Sandra Gonzalez is a union activist in the textile factory where she works in Guatemala City. Sandra bears the responsibilities of single parenthood, while struggling against the social condemnation it brings in Guatemala.

Mara Kimele, a Latvian theatre director, is among the artists who kept alive the traditions of Latvian culture during years of occupation and political turmoil. Mara believes in the continued importance of theatre to the young, newly-forming nation.

"Defying the Odds" concludes with a profile of Tam Goossen, a Chinese immigrant who has successfully adapted to her new home in Canada. Tam wins a local election while caring for her aging mother and raising a daughter who is a student leader in her own right.

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