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Keeping The Music Alive

Keeping The Music Alive (In Defiance of Taliban)

Episodes: 2 x 60 mins

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Distributor: Mediacorp

Zohra Orchestra, Afghanistan's first and only all-female musical ensemble was a story of global success. They were a symbol of freedom in the post war on terror Afghanistan, where talented women were nurtured and celebrated. That success also made them a prime target for extremists.

When the Taliban seized control once again in August 2021, the lives of these girls were turned upside down and danger lurked everywhere. Many fled the country while their family and friends remained. This is their story of courage, survival and hope.

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Episode 1: Return of Taliban

Zarifa, a former conductor of Zohra, Afghanistan's first and only all-female orchestra watches as the Taliban seizes control of her beloved homeland sending her bandmates scrambling to leave the country.

In Memphis, USA, cellist Nazira Wali is devastated as her parents and siblings are still trapped in Afghanistan, desperately hiding from the Taliban.

The film also revisits the glory days of Zohra and what this all-female ensemble stood for in a country where women's rights are curtailed once again.

Episode 2: Playing In Exile

For members of Zohra, starting a new life in Lisbon where they are offered asylum is by no means easy.

Many have left families behind and find the adjustment in a new culture difficult. But at least here, they are offered the freedom to study and practice music. The group's founder Dr. Sarmast meanwhile uses his position to raise awareness around the world, about the events unfolding back at home. He vows to fight the Taliban to restore the musical rights of the Afghan people.

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