



PRESS RELEASE

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Famous 21 Icons portrait breaks records for charity

The 21 Icons South Africa portrait of Nelson Mandela has been bought by a private collector for a record-breaking \$200 thousand that will be donated to the Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital and the World Wide Fund.

The portrait depicts Nelson Mandela's face reflected in a mirror and was the first of 21 signed portraits of iconic South Africans to be unveiled during the first season of this three-year project.

"I wanted Madiba to hold a mirror so that we could see a man reflecting on his life. As he reflects on his life, we reflect on his legacy and our future," says 21 Icons creator and photographer Adrian Steirn.

The other portraits, including that of Desmond Tutu and FW De Klerk will go under the hammer at a charity auction in March 2014. All proceeds will be donated to a charity of each icon's choice.

Eykyn Maclean, a New York and London-based gallery, facilitated the sale of the Mandela portrait, which was bought by a New York art collector wishing to remain anonymous. The buyer said about the portrait, "I am honored to own what has already become an iconic image of one of the greatest statesmen the world has ever known. In a single frame the photographer has captured the essence of dignity, principle, conviction and courage in this great man from whose life's work and dedication to a greater cause we all have much to learn, and by which I am inspired daily."

And while Eykyn Maclean specialises in Impressionist and 20th century European and American Art, the signed portrait of Nelson Mandela was a rare and valuable find for the gallery. "Adrian Steirn's medium is photography, his tool a camera, but thanks to his skill as an artist in the centuries-old tradition of portraiture, Steirn preserves for posterity a visual manifestation of the innermost character

of his subjects – as exemplified in his spellbinding portrait of Nelson Mandela," says gallery co-owner Christopher Eykyn.

The first season of *21 Icons South Africa*, is a celebratory look at some of this country's icons, those men and women who have inspired us and continue to do so in a way that makes us think about the remarkable journey we have taken as a nation, from suppression to democracy. The portraits depict these South African 'heroes' through a series of short films and portraits, which ultimately capture their incredible spirits and are published on and offline weekly, and are also televised every Sunday on SABC3 at 18h57, until 15 December 2013.

Now the record-breaking sale is providing a massive boost to the Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital telethon organised by the SABC Foundation and broadcast live on 5 December on SABC2's Morning Live. The state-of-the-art hospital, being built in Johannesburg, is scheduled to open late in 2014 and will be a 200-bed facility providing world-class paediatric care to Southern Africa's children, irrespective of their social and economic status.

The construction of a children's hospital has been a lifelong dream of Nelson Mandela and he has tirelessly campaigned for funds for its construction. Swati Dlamini, his granddaughter who has been closely involved with the 21 Icons project, said the family was thrilled that its sale has raised \$200 000 for the hospital as well as the WWF.

Says Swati Dlamini, "To see this beautiful and moving portrait of our father and grandfather raise such significant sums for causes dear to him is heartwarming for our family. And for the project overall to raise crucial funds for so many important South African charities is a fitting tribute to Madiba as well as the other icons."

21 Icons turns the spot light on world-famous activists and politicians like Nelson Mandela, FW de Klerk, Desmond Tutu, Sophia Williams De Bruyn, Nadine Gordimer, Kumi Naidoo, artists like William Kentridge, Johnny Clegg and Yvonne Chaka Chaka and Helen Sebidi, and sports heroes such as Gary Player and Evelina Tshabalala, to name some.

Public participation is invited on **Twitter: @21icons;**
www.21icons.com and www.facebook.com/21icons.



For more information about the Eykyn Maclean Gallery
please go to www.eykynmaclean.com.

21 Icons South Africa is proudly sponsored by Mercedes-Benz South Africa, Nikon and Deloitte and supported by The Department of Arts & Culture as a nation-building initiative.

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On behalf of **21 ICONS South Africa**

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