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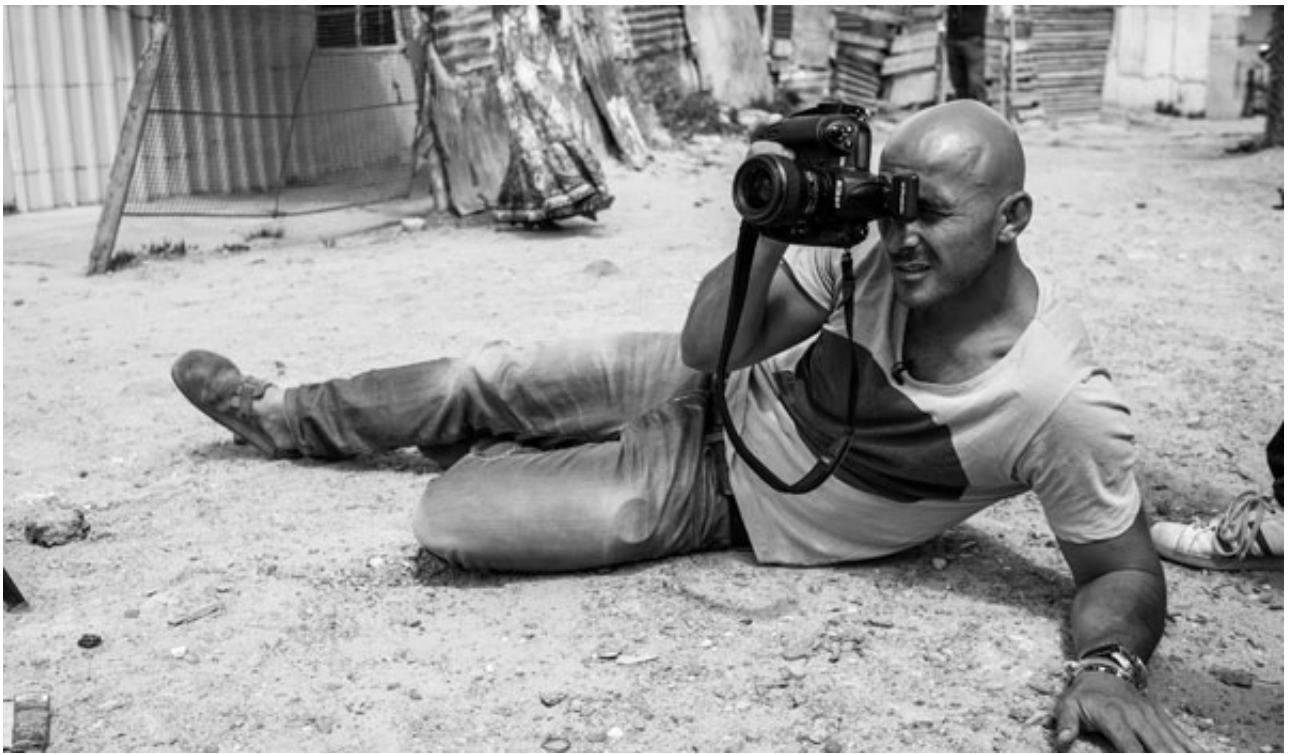
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21 Icons is an annual collection of narrative portraits and short films by Adrian Steirn, who is one of Africa's pre-eminent photographers and filmmakers. It captures the essence of South Africans who, through their own ingenuity and extraordinary social contribution, have embraced the transformative power of cohesion and the fostering of dignity to make a sustainable difference to society. (Images: [Grapevine Communication \(mailto:liesl@grapevinecommunications.co.za\)](mailto:liesl@grapevinecommunications.co.za))

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Staff Writer

A second season of 21 Icons South Africa is on the way, following the success of the debut season, which had a global following of 130 million. Season two reveals more extraordinary stories about South Africa's global heroes, and will continue to honour the legacy of Nelson Mandela, who taught people to keep looking forward and to improve the world for all.

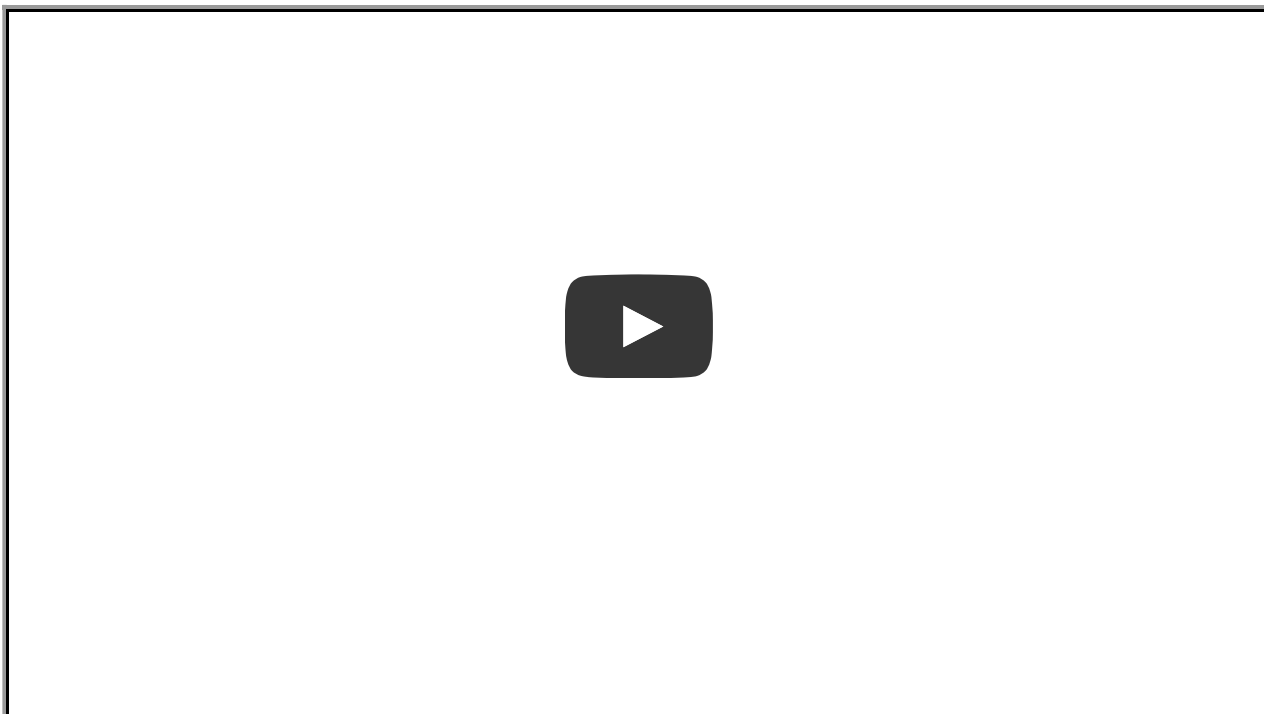
21 Icons is an annual collection of narrative portraits and short films by Adrian Steirn, who is one of Africa's pre-eminent photographers and filmmakers. It captures the essence of South Africans who, through their own ingenuity and extraordinary social contribution, have embraced the transformative power of cohesion and the fostering of dignity to make a sustainable difference to society.

Season two includes Albie Sachs, who was appointed a judge of the Constitutional Court by Mandela in 1994; Imtiaz Sooliman, the founder of the Gift of the Givers Foundation; Frene Ginwala, the journalist and politician who was the first female, and longest-serving, Speaker of the National Assembly; Francois Pienaar, the former Springbok captain who led South Africa to victory in the 1995 Rugby World Cup; and Herman Mashaba, the veteran entrepreneur and founder of hair-care brand, Black Like Me.

The intention is to inspire ordinary citizens to learn from, and emulate, the lives of these remarkable people. "I've met many people whose stories are incredibly powerful," Steirn says. "It's a true privilege to discover more about the human spirit and share these individuals' personal accounts, their positive character traits, and their propensity to influence and shape perceptions and transform societal norms for the better, impacting the communities around them."

Celebrating the nation's living icons is important to Steirn, and he believes it ensures that their legacy is maximised and not confined to memory and history books. Sachs aptly sums up the beauty of living in the present in a conversation with Steirn: "It's that intermediate moment, so it's filled with the energy of the past and the possibilities of the future. It's a great time to be in, the present."

Watch Albie Sachs on 21 ICONS



21 Icons South Africa series two will debut on Sunday, 3 August, and will feature Sachs. The short film will be screened on SABC3 at 8.27pm; the series will run for 21 weeks. The first of 21 Portraits will be revealed in City Press on 3 August, and readers will be able to collect the series, starting with the portrait posters of Sachs and Sooliman, on Sunday, 10 August.

Steirn believes that the determined and positive attitude seen in the featured individuals, is the future of South Africa. Evidence of this can be heard in the words of Sooliman, who told Steirn: "We have a great generation of people coming up looking beyond the colour, looking beyond the race, and I think in time this is going to be a great country – it's already a great country; it's just going to get even better."

One of the goals for this season is to stimulate public participation and dialogue in the project, and in so doing, create future icons. Through competitions, panel discussions and other activities, 21 Icons will relay the message that South Africa has an endless list of icons, and that everyone, regardless of race, creed or socio-economic standing, can act with integrity and make a positive impact on and influence change in our world today.

The portraits from season one will be auctioned off later this year, and all revenue generated will be donated to charity of each icon's choice. For Steirn, this tangible aspect of helping to provide financial aid to charitable causes is an important aspect of 21 Icons South Africa's quest to give back to the country.

21 Icons as a concept has gained traction worldwide, and international icons are looking to join the project. As a result, 21 Icons will go global at the end of the year to celebrate some of the social masters around the world.

Mercedes-Benz South Africa is a sponsor of season two. The company's divisional manager of group corporate affairs, Mayur Bhana, says: "What the world today needs most is a generation of young people who are empowered to make sound moral choices, and above all who are not afraid to stand up for a set of beliefs that will sustain cohesion in our developing society. South Africa has an abundance of stories of ordinary people who have achieved the extraordinary, and have made a positive contribution to the social fabric of our country.

"Mercedes-Benz South Africa continues to support the 21 Icons initiative because we believe that this project exposes our nation to the kind of role models whose example can continue to guide us on our path to greatness. We are very excited about the dialogue that this project has already stimulated and will continue to create in season two."

Aisha Mohamed, SABC3's head of bouquet, says premiering the series is a coup for the channel. "It is a great honour for SABC3 to bring the second season of this wonderful series of 21 Icons short films to South Africa. This world-class, locally produced series will once again be a weekly highlight on our schedule."



Photographer and filmmaker Adrian Steirn photographing Albie Sachs in Clifton, Cape Town for 21 Icons.

Background features

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