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PHAKAAATHI

Entertainment 4.10.2015 12.00 pm

21 ICONS featuring Catherine Constantinides

◀ 18 ▶ 18

Citizen reporter



“We need to teach people to dream and to hope because it’s only when members of society believe in something greater than the circumstances they found themselves in, they become active citizens that achieve change” - Catherine Constantinides

21 ICONS will feature international climate activist, social entrepreneur and food security advocate, Catherine Constantinides.

The former Miss Earth is also a passionate humanitarian who has worked throughout Africa and across the world championing human rights issues and empowering women. She has travelled across the world promoting sustainable community development, social entrepreneurship and food security through Generation Earth, of which she is the co-founder, an international youth leadership initiative that engages students and learners to discuss sustainable development, low carbon futures and resource management specifically in Africa.

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4 **Entertainment**

The Miss Earth South Africa leadership programme aims to empower young South African women by providing a platform to create a sustainable difference and combat the destruction of our country’s natural heritage through education and awareness. She says: “I’m driven by a passion to empower women through the environment and conservation to take on larger roles in their communities. Those women are the pillars in our communities. They’re the women that stand up and understand that they are the pivotal change makers.”

During a portrait sitting, Constantinides tells Van Wyk how her roots have always been firmly entrenched in a passion for the protection of our environment and the development of Africa. As a budding social entrepreneur she started her own eventing, branding and marketing business at the age of 16 in order to create awareness for social and environmental issues in South Africa.

She reflects how she had her sights on becoming South Africa’s first female president. At the age of six she wrote numerous letters to President Nelson Mandela, and after many months of writing received a series of responses from the desk of the President. She eventually met with Madiba, and she indicates that her engagements with him had a major influence and impact on her life.

The film gives an insightful and inspiring glimpse into her role as an ambassador for climate change and food security as well as the early influences that shaped her understanding of the importance of nature.

She says: “If we don’t invest in looking after our natural heritage, our children and our grandchildren will suffer. We must protect the environment for the generations that we’ll never meet.”

On the future of South Africa, she comments: “We can each be a building block to the kind of South Africa we believe is possible if we all live as active citizens, every single day.”

Catch this episode on the October 4, 2015, on SABC 3 at 7.27pm.

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Poll

Should the rights of traditional leaders override constitutional laws?

- Yes, traditional laws should be separate from the constitution
- No, no one is above the constitution
- A middle ground needs to be reached in a case like this

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