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SA's crusaders for change celebrated

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By Lerato Mbangeni and Desree Ralebipi

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THE series known for documenting some of South Africa's legends has returned; now 21 Icons is looking at the icons of the future.

The third season of the multi-media project was launched in Joburg yesterday, with the first five icons taking part being announced.

Also in attendance were icons from previous seasons, including singer Yvonne Chaka Chaka and jazz musician Pops Mohamed.

To celebrate Future of a Nation, principal photographer Gary van Wyk took portraits of textile designer Laduma Ngxokolo, performance artist Athi-Patra Ruga, gender activist Jess Foord, Paralympic tennis player Lucas Sithole, community activist Thulani Madondo and conservationist Catherine Constantinides.

Ruga, the winner of this year's Standard Bank Young Artist of the Year Award for performance art, said he approached it with humility.

"Being an icon can be something overwhelming because it means you are a representation of something, and a lot of hopes, fears and aspirations are laid on to you," he said.

Madondo is the executive producer at the Kliptown Youth Programme, which provides food, school uniforms and computer literacy for 460 children.

"I am excited and honoured to be part of the project," he said.

Constantinides said she had been following the project but wasn't expecting to be part of it.

"I was blown away and overwhelmed because it's an amazing platform to tell my story."

She starts shooting on Tuesday. A quarter of the series has been shot.

Foord is part of Cinderella Dresses, which collects old matric dance dresses for underprivileged matriculants for their dances.

"We are the generation of change; we are privileged to make a difference," she said.

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INSPIRATIONAL PEOPLE: Catherine Constantinides, former Miss Earth SA, and performing artist Athi-Patra Ruga are part of the 21 Icons project which launched Season 3s Future of a Nation in Joburg yesterday.

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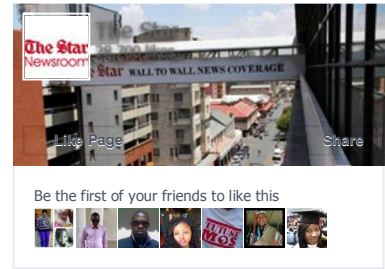


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