

21 Icons S3

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21 ICONS South Africa launches a new generation of icons for Season 3

On 6 September 2015 on SABC 3 at 19h27, the acclaimed short-film series 21 ICONS will unveil the first of 21 youth icons for its third season: the next generation of South African leaders, influencers and role models exploring these creative and exceptional young people's lives who are shaping our future.

21 ICONS traces South Africa's history over the course of its three seasons, moving from the fight for freedom to the country's growth during democracy, and concluding with a vision of the future. 21 ICONS is a celebration of individuals who inspire multitudes through their impact, integrity and influence.

Inspired by the life of Mandela, previous seasons' icons included social masters like George Bizos, Nadine Gordimer, Desmond Tutu, Albie Sachs, Hugh Masekela, Sophie Williams de Bruyn and many more.

As a world-class communicator of powerful stories, 21 ICONS uses photography, film and narrative to showcase the pivotal moments of South Africa's nation-building journey.

Gary van Wyk (34) will step up as principal photographer for the third season. In previous seasons, Van Wyk has been a crucial part of 21 ICONS camera work, visually recording the nuances and intimate moments of each shoot in his distinctive reporting style. Adrian Steirn, who initially conceived the project, continues his involvement capturing the behind-the-scenes images.

"We've got a young South African photographer shooting the best of young South Africa. There is something beautiful about that," says Steirn.

This season shares the stories of these icons experiences, deeds and positive actions that are shaping the country's future, shedding the spotlight on youth icons all under the age of 35 who are the cornerstones of a brighter future. Their energy and drive has been captured in colour portraits to reflect the vivacity and exuberance of youth; a major departure from previous seasons which featured black-and-white fine arts portraits.

The transition represents the renewed energy and vision that the Season III icons will drive; the embodiment of South Africa's next generation of leaders and influencers. The objective is to inspire young South Africans through the future icons who echo the psyche and pulse of the youth.

"This season of 21 ICONS is the most relevant so far. It's all about South Africa in the now, and nothing represents that more than Gary. He is one of the most talented photographers I've ever worked with, and handing over to him – a person who I first got to know through work and then as one of my closest friends – is one of the highlights of my career," says Steirn.

Season III's first five icons include performance artist Athi-Patra Ruga, rape survivor and gender activist Jes Foord, community activist and co-founder of the Kliptown Youth Program Thulani Madondo, Paralympic wheelchair tennis player Lucas Sithole, textile and knitwear designer Laduma Ngxokolo, and former Miss Earth, international climate activist, environmentalist and food security advocate Catherine Constantinides.

While this generation does not have a foot in the past, only a respect for it, each of these icons has already started a compelling journey to make good on those opportunities afforded by their forefathers.

Often, they have been motivated by the pursuit of a personal goal, but their struggle to achieve their objectives has impacted positively on those around them. In overcoming their personal challenges, these people have proved themselves selfless individuals who act for the benefit and greater good of others – true icons.

21 ICONS' purpose is to provide a platform for their stories, providing a showcase for their tremendous passion and infectious candour. South Africa's youth need role models; and these icons demonstrate that small achievements have the ability to transcend barriers and overcome adversity. They prove that, collectively, we can move humanity forward and the future is now in their grasp.

21 Icons engages with the public through:

Twitter: [@21Icons](#)

Hash-tag: #OurFutureIsNow

Instagram: [@21icons](#)

Website: <http://www.21icons.com>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/21Icons>

Pinterest: <http://www.pinterest.com/21ICONS/>