

television



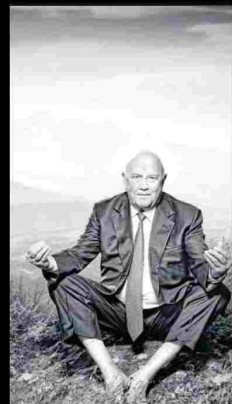
Evelina Tshabalala



Sophia Williams de Bruyn



Lillian Cingo



FW de Klerk



Yvonne Chaka Chaka



ACTIVIST: Frene Ginwala at a shoot in Mouille Point for photographer Adrian Steirn's *21 Icons* project. Behind the scenes photographer: Gary Van Wyk

ARTS WRITER

TELEVISED series *21 Icons* is an annual collection of photographs and short films of South Africans who have reached the pinnacle of achievement in their fields of endeavour.

Film-maker and photographer Adrian Steirn captures the essence of these inspirational men and women in pictures that make an evocative statement.

Season two's 20-week run is screening one of 21 short films every Sunday on SABC 3 at 8.27pm.

The series documents Steirn's conversations with these achievers and each segment offers insight into the subject and the photographer's creative approach to the portrait. Original signed photographs will be sold at an auction and the proceeds donated to his or her chosen charity.

This Sunday's slot features Frene Ginwala, the first female speaker at the National Assembly. The preview can be seen on YouTube. Says Ginwala. "The hallmark of a good leader is that you don't see yourself as a leader. Leadership is about listening to people, setting an example, thinking about the issues from all aspects and then leading by example, not just making speeches."

The Ginwala episode pays homage to those whose courage, dedication, vision and influence has had a global impact.

In addition to the short films, in which each subject speaks about their accomplishments and motivations that have propelled them forward, *21 Icons* comprises black and white portraits of each of these role models.

21 Icons' first season had a global following of 130 million. Season two reveals more extraordinary stories which honour the legacy of Nelson

POWERFUL STORIES OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT

Steirn's portraits hope to capture the essence of people who have embraced the power of cohesion

Mandela, who taught us to improve the world we live in.

Steirn's narrative portraits and short films hope to capture the essence of people who, through their own ingenuity, have embraced the transformative power of

cohesion and the fostering of dignity to make a sustainable difference in the community

This season's icons include judge Albie Sachs, Imtiaz Sooliman, Francois Pienaar and Herman Mashaba. These examples are intended to inspire ordinary citizens to emulate the lives of these remarkable locals.

Steirn comments: "I've met many people whose stories are incredibly powerful - it's a 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."

Steirn believes their legacy should be 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."

Steirn believes that the positive attitude reflected in the series is the future of South Africa.

In the words of Sooliman: "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 dialogue and, in so doing, create future icons.

Through competitions, panel discussions and other activities, Steirn hopes to relay the message that we have 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 to our world.

Steirn's work has earned him Portrait Photographer of the Year Award at the Africa Photographic Awards in 2010, as well as the Nikon Africa Professional Photographer of the Year Award in 2009. Artist William Kentridge has said of his portrait: "Steirn's photographs have an inventiveness and wit. He is able both to perceive unusual perspectives on his subjects and is able to convince his subject to participate in his exploration. Together with this, he brings a technical mastery that is tested to its limits by his perfectionism."

● To watch the *21 Icons* promo, see [youtube/U7_9DBTLq0U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U7_9DBTLq0U) Or for more see www.21icons.com Twitter: @21Icons Mobisite: www.21icons.com or see www.facebook.com/21Icons to make your comment.

AN EYE FOR DETAIL: Adrian Steirn at work shooting the greats.

