

PHOTOGRAPHY

21 Icons of the future

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The **21 Icons** photography and documentary series, inspired by late former president Nelson Mandela, is returning for a third season, starting tonight. The new season, called *The Future Of A Nation*, has a fresh direction and younger focus.

Unlike the previous two seasons, this year's portraits are being shot in colour and not by the founding photographer, Adrian Steirn, but by the first two seasons' behind-the-scenes photographer, Gary Van Wyk.

In the past, Van Wyk was a vital part of the 21 Icons project's camera work, visually recording the nuances and intimate moments of each shoot in his distinctive documentary style.

He and Steirn have in effect swapped places and Steirn now captures the behind-the-scenes images.

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

In the promo video for the new season, Van Wyk explains that "using colour signifies that it's about the present and moving into the future. There's going to be a new energy."

The main new focus for this year's season sees the 21 icons being young people, all under the age of 35, who have been identified as the new generation of icons. The season kicks off with 2014 Standard Bank Young Artist

Award winner Athi-Patra Ruga talking to Van Wyk at his studio in Woodstock about his work, the importance of using his body to communicate his stories and his belief that unity can be achieved through disruptive art.

● Season 3 debuts tonight and will be broadcast for a further 20 weeks, with a short film screened every Sunday on SABC3 at 7.27pm

SELF-EXPRESSION 21

Icons' third season features future icon Athi-Patra Ruga

PHOTO: GARY VAN WYK

