

Silent auction of 21 ICONS runs until end March

Filmmaker and photographer Adrian Steirn presented the 21 ICONS fine arts portraits at the 21 ICONS Charity Auction and Gala Dinner held at the CSIR in Pretoria on 28 February 2015. The silent auction will conclude on 31 March 2015, to accommodate international bidders.



The gala dinner saw icons that were part of the project come together for a charitable cause. It is the largest photographic portrait portfolio and a cross-section of the country's iconic personalities by a single artist to be auctioned for charity within South Africa.

The collectable handheld mirror taken from Mandela's portrait shoot as well as an exclusive portrait sitting with Steirn went under the hammer on the night. The distinct hand mirror fetched R100,000 for The Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital and the portrait sitting raised R50,000 for the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

Stephan Welz and Co. authenticates the silent auction. The lot comprising of the remaining 20 South African black and white fine-art portraits include Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, FW de Klerk, Yvonne Chaka Chaka, Nadine Gordimer, Philip Tobias and Hugh Masekela.

Master printer, Michael Dyer in London has produced each photographic portrait, which is accompanied by certificate of authenticity and the negative film. The reserve has been set at R120,000 apiece and the portraits will not be available to own again. Selected lots include memorabilia and props taken from the portrait shoot.

All revenue generated through the auction will be donated to the icons' chosen charities and is the tangible aspect of the project that intends to provide financial aid to important causes for the betterment of our country and to make a sustainable difference in the community.

Steirn is responsible for conceptualising the 21 ICONS project that combines fine-art portraits, short films, behind the scenes photography, written narrative and a feature length documentary. The intention is to capture in an immersive manner the lives of the 21 extraordinary South Africans who have captured the global imagination with their dignity, humanity, hard work and selfless struggle for a better world. Behind each portrait lies a carefully planned concept that captures not only the essence of each icon visually, but also in spirit and in terms of their unique legacy.

Guests, icons mingle

At the Tshwane leg of the auction, guest appearances included celebrities and well-known media personalities as well as a gathering of icons, Advocate George Bizos, nature conservationist Kumi Naidoo, songstress Yvonne Chaka Chaka, actor John Kani, storyteller Gcina Mhlophe, Dr Lillian Cingo a neurological nurse, political activist Sophia Williams De Bruyn, HIV positive athlete Evelina Tshabalala, and artist Helen Sebedi.



Anchoring the event was master of ceremonies Loyisa Gola and host, executive mayor of Tshwane, Cllr Kgosientso Ramokgopa. He said, "Indeed we deserve to celebrate those who led us and inspired our diverse contributions to the building of a united and democratic South Africa. The people of Tshwane welcome 21 ICONS to the birthplace of our democracy and the project is undoubtedly one of the most innovative initiatives on the palette of our nation-building and social cohesion storybooks."

"To our bidders, the priceless pieces of South African history and history-making are worth it. By supporting through your corporate conscience and contributing to the 21 ICONS project those in need will benefit from our benevolence. More

importantly it will ensure that we continue to tell the stories of our trials, triumphs and tribulations."

The mayor thanked the project partners Mercedes-Benz South Africa, Momentum Asset Management, Nikon, Deloitte and the Department of Arts and Culture for their participation.

Portraits and charities

The portraits of the icons include Ahmed Kathrada; Desmond Tutu; Evelina Tshabalala; FW de Klerk; Gary Player; Gcina Mhlophe; George Bizos; Helen Sebidi; Hugh Masekela; John Kani; Johnny Clegg; Karel Benadie; Kumi Naidoo; Lillian Cingo; Nadine Gordimer; Phillip Tobias; Sophia Williams De Bruyn; William Kentridge; Yvonne Chaka Chaka and Zackie Achmat.

Among the charities that will receive donations are The Ahmed Kathrada Foundation, The Desmond and Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation, Positive Heroes, The FW de Klerk Foundation, The Gary Player Foundation, The Gcinamasiko Arts and Heritage Trust, The South African Hellenic Educational and Technical Institute, The Hugh Masekela Heritage Trust, The Market Theatre Foundation, The StarFish Foundation, The Tracker Academy, Greenpeace Africa and Food & Trees for Africa, Phelophepa I and II Trains, Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital, The Sophia de Bruyn and Henry Benny Nato de Bruyn Legacy Foundation, Friends of the Johannesburg Art Gallery, The Princess of Africa Foundation and The Social Justice Coalition.

For more information, go to www.21icons.com.

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