

21 ICONS - Pieter-Dirk Uys

Pieter-Dirk Uys: “We are the luckiest people in the world in this country. We could have been every horror story in the world.”

21 ICONS is a showcase for the South African spirit; a tribute to the men and women who have helped to shape our country and, indeed, our world. 21 ICONS features the eleventh icon of its second season: satirist Pieter-Dirk Uys who has been using comedy and caricature to oppose the Apartheid government for the last 30 years.

In an intimate conversation with Steirn, Uys reveals that his alter ego Evita Bezuidenhout first started as a character in a newspaper column. The plays had been banned, he says, because they portrayed South Africans living in a situation which was reputed to be normal and Christian and civilized – but was not. His characters reflected the confusions and hypocrisies of this society, earning him the outrage of the Apartheid government who lashed out him for blasphemy, obscenity and setting racial groups against each other – “which was great, coming from the architects of Apartheid.”

Having performed over 20 plays and 30 revues and one-man shows both in South Africa and around the world, Uys is committed to helping his audiences share his courage. Although the era of Apartheid may be over, he still finds plenty of subjects – from the comic to the controversial – to tackle, including South Africa’s new political regime and HIV.

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