

21 ICONS - Peter Magubane

Peter Magubane - “I used my camera as a gun. I did not want to carry a gun, and kill people. I used my camera as a weapon, and I think I was very successful.”

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 featured Peter Magubane, an internationally acclaimed photographer known for documenting the rise and fall of apartheid and both the dramatic events and daily life during these brutal times.

In an intimate conversation with Steirn, Magubane talks about being inspired by photography at an incredibly young age. Magubane covered many important political events during the 1950s, including the treason trials and demonstrations against the Pass Laws. Between 1955 and 1963, Magubane covered most of the major political events in the country and befriended the leading political figures of the liberation movements, in particular Nelson Mandela and he later became Madiba’s official photographer in 1990 to chronicle South Africa’s transition to a new political dispensation. He was the first Black South African to win a photographic prize in the country when he claimed the first and third prizes for Best Press pictures of the year in 1958.

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