

## 21 ICONS - Jill Farrant

Jill Farrant - "My life has been a series of near death experiences and resuscitations. I've had three almost fatal incidents and I've been able to, like my plants, resurrect, dry down, resurrect, and dry out again. I think the analogy goes one step further for me in that when you add a drop of water to those plants and they resurrect as for me, you have to add a drop of (holy) Spirit."

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 the sixteenth icon of its second season: Jill Farrant, a scientist and professor of molecular and cell biology at the University of Cape Town (UCT) specialising in plant responses to water deficit stress. Described as one of South Africans heroines, she has the ability of 'Raising the Dead.'

In an intimate conversation with Steirn, Farrant talks about her life growing up in a small village in Limpopo and her fascination with outdoor exploration. "It was a time of discovery and being allowed to explore nature." Today, she is a pioneer in the field of plant molecular and cell biology and has made a global impact with her research into 'resurrection plants'; extraordinary drought resistant plants that magically 'come back to life' from a dried up, death-like state just 24 hours after being given water.

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