



People in the city

# A musical torch in the dark

CARL COLLISON

To shed light on blindness-inducing cataracts, South African soprano Magdalene Minnaar is, quite literally, turning the lights out:

With her upcoming performance, titled *In the Dark*, Ms Minnaar is offering audiences the opportunity to experience the beauty of classical music in darkness.

Says Ms Minnaar: "By withdrawing all possible visual distractions from the performance space, the audience is able to experience thought-provoking music in a unique new sensory way.

"By performing these transporting works in total darkness, the sense of hearing is heightened, creating a new kind of listening experience."

So where did the idea come from?

"It was an idea I had for a long time. I wanted to create a new way of listening to classical music."

Ms Minnaar, a Vredehoek resident, adds: "I also started becoming really aware of the unnecessary blindness that is caused by cataracts.

"The thing with cataracts is it is such an easy thing to fix. It costs something like R600 to have removed."

All proceeds made from the

event will go towards Mercy Vision, a division of the international aid organisation Mercy Ships, which seeks to address the unnecessary blindness as a result of cataracts of those in need.

As this is the first of what she hopes will become a quarterly fundraising event, Ms Minnaar concedes, laughingly: "It will probably be a bit trial and error.

"We are also still looking for a sponsor to help cover the costs.

"Although everyone I am working with is basically doing this for free – because we all love the project and want to support the cause – if we are going to turn this into a quarterly event, I will have to pay them a professional fee."

As to who these musicians are, Ms Minnaar says: "I will be performing alongside Minette du Toit-Pearce, an awesome mezzo soprano, and Mario Nell on the harpsichord.

"I really want to bring some really stunning classical pieces to the city centre because the city has such a cool and happening vibe.

"It will be really amazing."

● *In the Dark* will be performed at Youngblood, 72 Bree Street, on Wednesday December 11 at 7.30pm. Tickets cost R120 and can be booked by calling 021 424 0074.

For more information, visit <http://www.biblioteek.co.za> or [www.ybafricanculture.co.za](http://www.ybafricanculture.co.za)



■ Magdalene Minnaar