

# Platon's powerful portraits

*An intimate look at humanity and leadership*

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Thursday night Brevard made history when the world famous photographer Platon gave a presentation of his work in the Ingram Auditorium. For those who weren't able to attend, you missed out on a once in a lifetime experience.

Behind every famous photo was a story full of passion, heartache or even terrifying, gut-wrenching emotion. Platon can definitely say he worked his way into the history books through sweat, tears and even blood. He climbed his way to the top of the list of the most famous photographers known to man.

It all started after working for British Vogue for several years. Platon was invited to NYC to work for the late John Kennedy Jr. and his political magazine "George." He then started shooting portraits for a range of international publications including Rolling Stone, the New York Times Magazine, Vanity Fair, Esquire, GQ and the Sunday Times Magazine. Platon developed a special relationship with Time magazine, producing over 20 covers. In 2007, he photographed Russian Premier Vladimir Putin, for Time Magazine's "Person

Of The Year" cover. This image was awarded 1st prize at the World Press Photo Contest.

Even though 2007 was a big year for Platon, it didn't end there. In 2008 he signed a multi-year contract with the New Yorker. Platon has produced a series of large-scale photo essays, two of which won ASME (American Society of magazine Editors) Awards in 2009 and 2010.

Platon's New Yorker portfolios have focused on many themes: the U.S Military, portraits of world leaders and the Civil Rights Movement are just a few. All of these have made his career one of the best in the industry.

The following year, Platon teamed up with the Human Rights Watch to help them celebrate those who fight for equal rights and justice in countries that have been taken over by political forces. These projects have focused on human rights defenders from Egyptian revolution, as well as Burma. Following his coverage of Burma, Platon photographed the 2011 cover of Time. He had the world-famous Aung San Suu Kyi, a female political prisoner on this cover. This photo caused him to go undercover and sneak his way into the house where she was hidden from reporters and even protesters. During his presentation, Platon

talked about how he was chased by police for hours through Burma, just to prevent the publication of the innocent and breath taking photo of Aung San Suu Kyi.

Public speaking now plays a major role in Platon's career. He is represented by the Washington Speakers Bureau. He has been invited to be a keynote speaker on leadership at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Chanel, Nike, Yale University, Oxford University, Wharton University, the National Portrait Gallery in London and International Center of Photography in NY. He has also appeared on a range of television media, including Charlie Rose (PBS), Morning Joe (MSNBC), Fareed Zakaria's GPS (CNN) and the BBC World News. Platon was rewarded with a Peabody Award for collaboration on the topic of Russia's Civil Society with the New Yorker magazine and Human Rights Watch.

Platon has continued to capture images that no one else can imagine accomplishing. As long as he continues to take risk and follow his gut, he'll forever be gifted with experiences. Not only is he just taking photos, but he is leaving the photo shoot with new friends and memories: "To be blessed with a job didn't come easy" says Platon, "but so far, it has been one hell of a ride."

World renowned photographer Platon is seen here in a still from a YouTube clip on Hahnemuehle Digital FineArt Paper. Platon was on campus last week as part of the J.R. McDowell Speaker Series, which is sponsored by the Transylvania County Library Foundation in partnership with Brevard College.

