

CLARENS ARTS FESTIVAL

Welcome to the first Clarens Arts Festival Newsletter



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24-27 April 2026

Clarens Arts Festival

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Our Vision

To cultivate a vibrant artistic community in Greater Clarens where youth are empowered to express their creativity, develop their talents, and engage with a diverse array of artistic influences, fostering a culture of innovation and collaboration that enriches the entire community.

Our Mission Statement

The Clarens Arts Festival is dedicated to promoting youth development in the visual and performing arts, including Literature by supporting local initiatives, discovering and nurturing artistic talent, and providing inclusive platforms for expression. We strive to educate and mentor the next generation of artists through workshops, competitions, and collaborations with established creatives, ensuring that all young individuals in Greater Clarens area have access to artistic opportunities that inspire and elevate their skills. Through our annual festival and ongoing activities, we aim to create a thriving environment that celebrates and showcases the artistic contributions of our youth, connecting them with the broader cultural landscape of South Africa and beyond. The Clarens Arts Festival is a catalyst for drawing discerning artists and art lovers from all over the country to savour this beautiful arts village.



2025 - The Year That Was

This year's Clarens Arts Festival delivered an extraordinary celebration of creativity and culture, featuring an impressive array of high-quality art exhibitions that captivated attendees. The programme was designed to engage and inspire, with interactive literature talks and interviews that provided insight into the creative process and fostered meaningful dialogue among participants.

Festival goers enjoyed a variety of fun-filled workshops, offering hands-on opportunities to learn new artistic skills and techniques, while poetry sessions created space for emotional expression and connection. Dance performances brought energy and vibrancy to the festival, and music and theatre events filled the village with dynamic rhythms and compelling stories. Throughout the festival, Clarens was truly alive, pulsating with the excitement and spirit of artistic exploration.



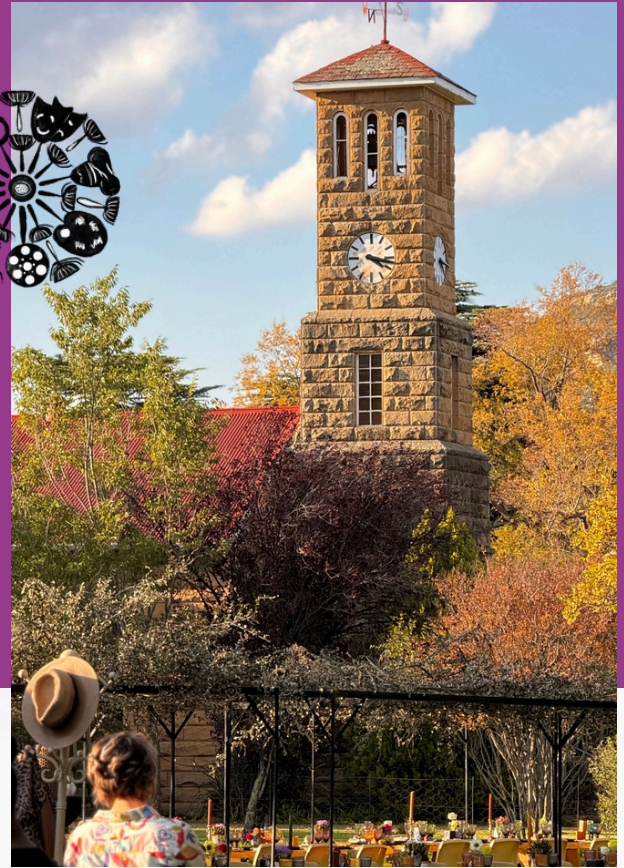
Year on Year Growth: Facts & Figures

	2024	2025
No. of Workshops	6	16
No. of Music & Theatre Events	5	12
No. of Book Talks	6	15
Increase in Art Sales		126%



Partnerships & Collaborations

The Clarens Arts Festival has thrived because of valuable partnerships, most notably with Richard and Oonagh Wohanka, Quillets, Adrian Durham, Afrikaans 100, ATKV, Protea Hotel by Marriott, Clarens, ABSA, JN de Witt, Fine & Country, Mohope, Timber Express, Roots Academy, 360 Country Hotel, The Witness, Titanic View Guesthouse, Tentco, SCO Tech / Bethnet, The Makery and LekkerSoul. These collaborations have played a significant role in the festival's growth and ongoing success, reaffirming Clarens' position as a hub for artistic and cultural development. Central to the festival's achievements is the unwavering support from the Clarens community. The past four years have demonstrated that community involvement is fundamental to the event's continued prosperity, driving both participation and innovation.



A heartfelt thank you is extended to the entire Clarens community, whose ongoing support and active participation have been instrumental in the festival's enduring success. To the accommodation establishments and restaurants who sponsored beds and meals for our participants; and the venues who played host to our events -

THANK YOU for your support and sponsorships.

With the recent addition of the Cape2Clarens Wine Festival, Clarens now hosts three annual "By Clarens for Clarens" events, each contributing to the village's reputation as a vibrant and collaborative community. These events—the Clarens Arts Festival, the Titanic Challenge Trail Run, and the Cape2Clarens Wine Festival—collectively enhance the local calendar, attracting discerning visitors and further establishing Clarens as a premier destination for festivals of this nature. While not all these events are culturally focused, each one plays a pivotal role in elevating the profile of Clarens and its collaborative spirit.





Giving Back



The Clarens Arts Festival remains committed to making a positive impact on the local community through a variety of giving-back initiatives. During the 2025 festival, a total of 100 blankets, which were used at the opening Long Table event and various other outdoor events, were donated to local creches as part of the national Project Winterhope, demonstrating the festival's dedication to supporting vulnerable members of the community.

Looking ahead, the ArtStart Clarens programme is set to launch in 2026 with the support of ATKV, Tshwane University of Technology and other key partners and local schools. This initiative will focus on year-round engagement through a series of free/low-cost workshops/masterclasses designed to nurture creativity and provide valuable learning opportunities for young people in the Greater Clarens area. The programme will provide exposure to professional artists across multiple disciplines and create mentorship opportunities between professionals and aspiring artists.

In addition to these educational efforts, the Clarens Arts Festival will be supporting the Tshepong Christmas Party by sponsoring a performance artist to entertain the 180 children, ensuring an enjoyable and memorable experience for the youth.

The Clarens Arts Festival also proudly endorses and supports the annual Festival of Flavours, an event that celebrates the diverse heritage of Clarens and brings together residents in a shared appreciation of local talent.

Furthermore, the Festival extends its support to educational and youth-focused activities, such as the Spelling Bee competition organised by the Tshireletsa Bana Foundation earlier this year in which 60 children participated.



To further invest in the future of local talent, the Clarens Arts Festival aims to establish a Bursary Fund to support identified individuals with exceptional artistic promise. This fund aims to provide financial assistance and encourage continued growth and development within the arts.

Looking Forward: The Year Ahead

Preparations for the 2026 Clarens Arts Festival are already in progress, with organisers working diligently to ensure another memorable year. Building on the festival's legacy, the upcoming programme promises a diverse and engaging line-up across various artistic disciplines.



Book Talks & Performing Arts

Audiences can look forward to a dynamic selection of events in both the Literature and Performing Arts sectors. These segments are being thoughtfully curated to highlight a range of voices and talents, ensuring enriching experiences for both participants and attendees.

Visual Arts & Workshops

The Visual Arts component of the festival will showcase carefully selected works, reflecting the creativity and innovation that have become hallmarks of the festival. Artists and art lovers alike will have the opportunity to engage with inspiring exhibitions and installations. As in previous years, the festival will again offer creative and engaging workshops that allow participants to explore new artistic methods and concepts.



Children's Programme

For the first time, the Clarens Arts Festival will introduce a dedicated children's programme, designed to engage and inspire young attendees. This exciting addition underscores the festival's commitment to fostering creativity among the next generation and ensuring that the festival experience is inclusive and accessible to families.



In Conclusion

The Clarens Arts Festival serves as a catalyst for attracting discerning artists and art lovers from across the country. It invites them to experience the unique charm of the arts village, further enriching the local artistic community and providing inspiration for all who participate.