

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Clarens Festival of Lights 2026: Where Magic Comes to Light

A bold new annual celebration of light art, music, sport and community lands in South Africa's Free State this Heritage Day weekend.

Clarens, Free State - June 2026

This Heritage Day long weekend, the mountain town of Clarens will be transformed into a glowing open-air canvas as the **Clarens Festival of Lights (CFoL)** launches its inaugural edition, a three-day celebration designed to become one of South Africa's most anticipated annual cultural destinations.

Under the theme **Reflections**, illuminated installations will weave through Clarens' streets, landmarks and mountain landscapes, inviting visitors into a world where art, nature and community come alive after dark. Thousands of visitors are expected for this first edition, with strong national media interest already building.

A Programme Like Nothing Else in South Africa

From the moment the sun sets, Clarens becomes a living experience:

- **The House of Lights:** a glowing central gathering space hosting talks, performances, exhibitions and nightly encounters with artists and thinkers.
- **Ride the Light:** a night-time cycling procession through Kgubetswana led by South African cycling champion **Carla Oberholzer**.
- **CFoL Cup Final:** football reimaged under UV light with glowing pitch markings and a stadium atmosphere.
- **Clarens Stargazing:** guided journeys into the cosmos under the Free State's famously dark skies.
- **Church Illumination, nocturnal nature walks, light art installations and live music** throughout the town.

Artistic Vision

The festival proudly welcomes two Associate Artists shaping its inaugural edition: beloved South African singer-songwriter **Jannie du Toit**, and internationally acclaimed visual artist **Sam Nhlengethwa**, whose work explores memory, identity and social reflection.

More Than a Festival: A Catalyst for the Region

CFoL is built to leave something behind. The festival will present a **Youth Arts and Skills Development Programme** that opens doors for young creatives, while the **Light Up the Town** initiative invites local entrepreneurs to share in the festival's success. The event is powered by sustainable production practices and creative reuse of materials, positioning Clarens as a model destination for responsible cultural tourism.

A New Anchor on South Africa's Cultural Calendar

Timed perfectly with Heritage Day weekend, one of the country's biggest travel moments, CFoL is positioned to draw visitors from across South Africa and beyond, delivering meaningful impact for hospitality, tourism and creative businesses across the Free State.

*The **Clarens Festival of Lights** is an initiative of **Worldvisuals South Africa**, created with the ambition of establishing a landmark cultural festival that combines artistic excellence, tourism, and social impact in one of South Africa's most beloved destinations.*

Clarens Festival of Lights 24–26 September 2026 | Heritage Day Long Weekend Clarens, Free State, South Africa

Tickets via official partner **TIXSA** tixsa.co.za and website clarensfestivaloflights.co.za