

Solo Studios 2024 returns to Riebeek Kasteel

Now in its eighth year, Solo Studios, the annual intimate art encounter with a big draw to the picturesque Riebeek Valley (just 80km from Cape Town) will serve up even more of a feast for the senses: with sociable gourmet long table events and live music, theatre and poetry, along with the valley's wealth and diversity of fine art.



Image supplied

"The greatest attraction to Solo Studios, besides the magnificent valley itself, is the intimate nature of the event," says Ashley Stone, co-owner and co-project manager of Solo Studios.

"By opening up artists' studios, visitors can have an intimate art encounter with the artworks and the artists themselves in their own creative workspaces, and simply enjoy these inspiring connections or even return home with art investments at great prices that feel truly personal. It's also a peek into the bottomless well of natural beauty, cultural heritage and creativity of this valley, along with the friendly community that is so supportive of the arts."

The 33 featured solo artists reflect the diversity of talent in the Riebeek Valley, from painters to mixed media artists to ceramicists and more. Some of this year's participants include Sharon Bischoff, Wiehan de Jager, Ade Kipades, Solly Smook, André François van Vuuren, Riaan van Zyl and Emma Willemse.

Art and food collide

This year's Solo Studios will see a number and range of culturally vibrant peripheral activities alongside the core art offering.

For foodies and conversationalists alike, The Night of Long Tables will feature a number of long table food events curated by well-known Riebeek Kasteel residents: artist and culinary maestro Louis Jaanse Van Vuuren (who divides his time between South Africa and France) and chef and stylist Isabella Niehaus.

Enhanced with wine pairings from Swartland producers including Women in Wine on the Friday, the dinners will be a celebration, marrying the wealth of local farm-fresh produce, the beauty of an exquisitely laid table, and the convivial act of community-building that takes place when sharing food over a long table.

Fresh off the heels of a successful run on the London stage, multidisciplinary artist, writer and performer Aldo Brincat will give two performances of his solo theatre smash hit *The Moon Looks Delicious Here*, which recently garnered a Special Jury Award at the Bitesize Theatre Festival in London.

The one-man show is a dynamic semi-biographical retelling of a relationship between a loving father and son, against the backdrop of South Africa's ever-changing political landscape.

Along with his participation as an exhibiting artist at Pictorex, performer, observational photographer, poet and producer Rudolph Willemse will perform *Swartland*, featuring his Afrikaans poetry.

His previous volume of poetry received acclaim in past Solo Studio events, and *Swartland* promises to be a continuation of this artistic journey, in collaboration with seasoned talents such as actor Marcel van Heerden, drummer David Wickham, and sound artist Warrick Swinney.

Other performers include The Winelands Philharmonic Orchestra and singer songwriter Wren Hinds, a Cape Town-based artist who recently signed a full record deal with the iconic UK-based record label Bella Union.

"Due to the overwhelming response at last year's Solo Studios, which attracted over 1200 visitors, we are already seeing great interest in this year's event, with local hotels and guesthouses booking up, particularly as it is a public holiday weekend," says Stone.

"What better time to do a weekend or a day-trip to our beautiful valley of arts and culture, wine and olives, and tranquil vistas."

Adds Brent Geddes, Co-Founder and CEO of event partner and headline sponsor Geddes: "Our association with Solo Studios reaffirms our view that by investing in the art and artists of the Swartland, we are not only nurturing the seeds of tomorrow's masterpieces but also affirming our belief in the transformative power that creativity has to enrich our community and inspire change. Geddes believes that a small change in one community can have a large impact on the greater Western Cape and South Africa."

For more, go to www.solostudios.co.za