

DANCESCAPE SOUTH AFRICA



Monthly Report

The Dancescape South Africa Report for January 2026

Dancescape South Africa (DSA) continues to facilitate daily dance classes every afternoon of the school term time, (2.00pm – 6.00pm at the Zolani Hope Centre – Mantlane Road Zolani Ashton) engaging children in beginner and senior dance sessions.

We currently employ the services of a resident teacher, an assistant teacher, a general assistant and a Director. Furthermore we recently recruited an Assistant Administrative Director. Thanks to the support of all those who have donated to our project we are able to preserve the Fiona Sargeant legacy. Our top priority is to facilitate classes in a safe environment for both teacher and learners and to provide an extramural activity which is good for both mind and body.

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The Directors Report:

The public school officially opened for the new year on January the 14th 2026, however, Dancescape South Africa began the year on the 5th of January. Selected pupils attended a dance intensive that week in McGregor. Kristine Elliott and her team taught daily classes and repertoire sessions throughout the week including Saturday the 10th. That afternoon there was an informal performance showcasing the week's work for those members of the McGregor community and parents who were interested. Several attended in support of Ms. Mary, the director of The First Step Ballet and with whom DSA collaborated for that week. Ciara Baldwin was part of the team but this time without her partner Nathan Bartman who is starring in The Magic Flute currently performed in Europe. Ciara delivered some amazing contemporary classes and repertoire. This year Kristine was joined by Harriet Clark formally from American Ballet Theatre. It was amazing to watch Harriet teach. She was able to retain the attention of her pupils and teach them intricate steps and movements whilst keeping delightfully calm. What a talented teacher and what amazing results achieved!



Above: Dancescape dancers in collaboration with The First Step Ballet doing ballet class at the Kristine Elliott summer dance intensive in McGregor



Above: Christine Fleming hosts an arts skill class in McGregor

It was a very productive week in McGregor and DSA has accumulated many new pieces to add to the repertoire. Some are beautiful ballet pieces with music from a ballet called *Raymonda* which was rehearsed by Harriet Clark. A few delightful contemporary pieces coming from Ciara. We hope to perform many of these pieces at the Montagu Eisteddfod, later in the year.



Above: Ciara Baldwin teaches contemporary class in McGregor

Just before the start of the new term and on the 12th and 13th of January, Kristine's dance intensive continued but this time only for our students at the Zolani studio. They once again didn't hold anything back and managed to teach even more repertoire in only 2 days. It was a privilege to have them teach in our studio. We would like to say a big thank you to Kristine and her team. Kristine at that time also singled out one of our young male dancers, Laksiwe Salman. She has asked me to apply for a passport and visa so that he can travel to the USA in June of this year. I didn't waste any time and later that week applied at the Department of Home Affairs in Robertson.



Above: Ciara Baldwin and Harriet Clark with some of the junior dancers at the Zolani Studio, Below: Laksiwe's mum, Gloria, hold her son's passport application just outside The Department of Home Affairs in Robertson.





Above: Harriet Clark teaches classical ballet repertoire at the Zolani Studio.

The third member of the Kristine Elliott team was Christine Fleming who is a private school tutor. The plan was for Christine to work with the juniors and anyone who would like some academic tutoring. I was initially a little skeptical as to what Christine could do for our students, but they all took to her comfortably and were absorbed by her classes where she used puzzles and painting pictures to the class.



On the 14th of January the studio was once again open to all learners who want to participate in our program. Nqaba and Aviwe have settled back into the routine as another year of facilitating dance classes begins.

On the 28th the DSA board of trustees had its final meeting for the 2026 Financial year. A lot of issues were discussed, and it looks like the next financial year is going to be an exciting one. We are going to move office. Final negotiations are underway to use space at the Montagu KVV Building. I would like to thank Francois Tredoux and our chairperson Sandra Reichert for taking the initiative on this one. Sandra has spent additional time preparing the venue, thank you so much. We will also be moving the DSA wardrobe to this venue. What really nice about the centrally placed KVV building is that Dancescape is going to be much more accessible to the general public. Here we can showcase what DSA is all about, we can

host function and even fund raisers and hope to have a grand opening of our project in June of this year.



Above: The walls being painted at our new office space in the KWV Building, Montagu.

Once again, selected senior students travelled to McGregor to attend the Saturday dance classes. This month's classes were held on the 31st of January. We hope that this collaboration continues throughout the year ahead. There is no doubt that these classes have made a big difference to the students attending and I would like to see them continue for the longest time.

Written by Mitya Sargeant

Our Resident Teacher Report:

We started this year early and in a positive way, we had 17 Dancescape students taking a workshop with Kristine Elliott, Harriet Clarke, Chrissie and Ciara on the 5th till 10th in McGregor and a special planned workshop on the 12th and the 13th at Dancescape studio in Zolani.

Our students worked very well throughout the week and were there early each day which showed that they were committed to learning as much as they could in these workshops. They had a ballet class, contemporary class, art skills class and repertoire and they seemed to love every moment. Then on the 10th and 14th we had to invite parents and friends to watch what the kids have learnt throughout the workshop, which is so nice to see parents coming to support!

The other overall outcome of this was Solima and Lakhiwe being noticed for their talent and got a full bursary each to dance in Houston, US this year in June. They both deserve this as they have both proved to be working hard.



Above: Top: Nqaba Mafilika with Kristine Elliott during McGregor dance incentive. Below: Senior dancers doing class in Zolani.

It was then on the 14th back to school and back to our daily dance classes at Dancescape for this year and we have a plus, minus 50 kids coming in for classes and working with them to sharpen their technique and revisiting last year's repertoire which hasn't been performed this year and on the other side of things there has been a lack of our senior students coming in for classes because I believe they failed their final exams at school. This comes as a shock because all the years I have been teaching none of the students have experienced such and I think at Dancescape we need to do a bit of a follow-up. Aviwe and I were happy to be visited by one former Fiona student who is into pharmacy now and we also had Phelo Ngxukuma giving a class to the students.

Lots of donations like dance togs to school stationary were received this month from individual donors from Germany, Canada, the US and here in Cape Town, South Africa.



Above: The DSA dancers wearing some of the donations received. This batch was from Canada and a big thank you to Christa Prins who lives in Canada.

And to conclude we are in need of such support as some of the kids who come in wearing jeans and dresses and seeking help with school equipment.

Written by Nqaba Mafilika



Above: Junior dancers taking class.

We thank you for taking the time to read this report. Please visit our website at: <http://dancescapesouthafrica.org.za/> and follow us on social media. Mitya Sargeant (CEO, and Director – Dancescape South Africa)