Cape Town Baroque Orchestra

May 2026

2025 Artistic Report

Introduction
During 2025, the multifaceted artistic programme of the Cape Town Baroque Orchestra (CTBO) adhered to our artistic vision to be South Africa's premier baroque orchestra on period instruments by creating a local, national and international platform that follows an Historically Informed Performance (HIP) approach at the highest level of performance.

In addition to our two regular concert seasons in Cape Town and further afield, we presented the annual Cape Town Baroque Festival, co-presented the 19th Annual Recorder Symposium, presented an upskilling event for the regular period instrumentalists of the Cape Town Baroque Orchestra, and presented two series of outreach concerts for people who do not have the physical ability or resources to travel to concerts.

In keeping with the goal we set during the 2021 name change from 'Camerata Tinta Barocca' to the 'Cape Town Baroque Orchestra', we keep a strong focus on larger-scale orchestral forces, which expands our employment reach and strengthens our brand as the only baroque orchestra on the African continent. At the same time, we also maintain an active chamber music component. Consistent with one of our main artistic goals, all our concerts throughout 2025 were performed on period-appropriate instruments, with the Cape Town Baroque Orchestra playing an increasingly important role in training a growing number of local musicians in Historically Informed Performance (HIP) on period instruments.

Whilst our main priority is to empower and employ local musicians specialising in HIP, we do, however, find great inspiration in collaborating with international specialists and facilitating creative exchange. In this vein, we have worked with the following international musicians during 2025: Julia Wedman (baroque violin/Guest Director) and Cristina Prats-Costa (baroque violin), Clint van der Linde (countertenor), Sarah Cunningham (viola da gamba), Leon Schelhase (harpsichord), Erik Bosgraaf (recorder, chalumeau, Guest Director) and Matthias Maute (recorder, baroque flute, Guest Director).

All of the activities of the Cape Town Baroque Orchestra are driven by our mission:

1) to perform Baroque music on period instruments for Cape Town and broader South African audiences at a competitive international standard;
2) to bring together practitioners of an HIP approach from across South Africa to facilitate the building of a tightly knit national HIP community;
3) to pursue continuous collaborations with international leaders in the field of HIP to give Cape Town audiences the opportunity to hear artists from further afield, and also to create an opportunity for creative exchange amongst local and international artists;
4) to provide the platform for South African musicians who work in the HIP field, and especially that of Baroque performance, abroad, to return to SA and work on a project basis to share their skills and knowledge with our local musicians;
5) to engage with communities beyond our regular audiences through education and outreach programmes;
6) to provide the appropriate training to develop the highest level of excellence amongst young South African practitioners of HIP.

Governance

All operations of the 'Cape Town Baroque Orchestra' and the 'Cape Town Baroque Festival' are overseen by The Camerata Tinta Barocca Music Charitable Trust, which is a registered NPO. Trust registration number: IT2889/2006. NPO number: 057-166 NPO. Trustees: Dr Erik Dippenaar, Prof Philippa Tumubweinee and Dr Wayne Muller.

Funding

The Trustees of The Camerata Tinta Barocca Music Charitable Trust and the musicians of the Cape Town Baroque Orchestra would like to express their deepest appreciation and gratitude to the following donors who make it possible to do the work we care about:

- the Rupert Musiekstigting (annual Concert Series and Cape Town Baroque Festival),
- Bill van Rensburg (Cape Town Baroque Festival),
- the RHL Foundation (Cape Town Baroque Festival),
- the Mzansi National Philharmonic Orchestra (Summer Baroque Season),
- the Cape Town Theatre Trust (Cape Town Baroque Festival),
- Friends of Orchestral Music (HIPP upskilling events for CTBO players during the Summer Baroque Season),
- and the Raimondo Trust (community engagement: Sunshine Concerts).

The Cape Town Baroque Orchestra in numbers

Number of instrumentalists regularly employed during 2025: **26**
Number of professional singers regularly employed during 2025: **10**
Number of volunteer singers participating in the 2025 Cape Town Baroque Festival: **34**
Number of international musicians collaborated with in 2025: **7**
Number of public concerts during 2025: **14**
Number of outreach concerts during 2025: **11**
Number of education events during 2025: **2**
Number of CTBO players who took part in upskilling events: **14**
Number of public venues used during 2025: **6**

Public concert	Venue	Audience numbers
Summer Baroque Season		
Variations, 1 February, 11:00	Weltevreden, Noordhoek	**40 (sold out)**
Variations, 1 February, 13:00	Weltevreden, Noordhoek	**40 (sold out)**
String concerti, 12 February	St Andrew's, Cape Town	**222**
Queens and Kings, 15 February	St Andrew's, Cape Town	**139**
Autumn Baroque Season		
John Coulter solo recital, 9 April	St Andrew's, Cape Town	**44**
Alone and Together, 11 May	DRC, Greyton	**80**
Enlightened France, 21 May	St Andrew's, Cape Town	**95**
Cape Town Baroque Festival		
Event 1 - 19th Recorder Symposium	St Andrew's, Cape Town	**57**
Event 2 - Fantasias and Affects	Rust en Vreugd (Iziko)	**50 (sold out)**
Event 3 - Spem in alium	St Andrew's, Cape Town	**303**
Event 4 - Mrs Philarmonica	UCT Irma Stern Museum	**40 (sold out)**
Event 5 - A Tribute to Telemann	St Andrew's, Cape Town	**209**
2025 Closing Concert		
Salsa Baroque, 20 November	Baxter Concert Hall, Rosebank	**350**

Publicity and audience base

We continually aim to expand our audiences and reach as many people as possible through various publicity media. We currently have a mailing list with 997 subscribers, a Facebook page with 2,259 followers and an active Instagram account with 1,535 followers. Our YouTube channel has 1,109 subscribers.

Collaborators

The Cape Town Baroque Orchestra acknowledges the importance of collaboration in achieving a worthwhile artistic output. We are grateful to the following collaborators during the course of 2025: Lutesong Consort, True Voices, Cape Town Baroque Trio, William Selway Robson, Anna Stoddard, Fine Music Radio, The Greyton Genadendal Classics for All Festival, The 19th annual Recorder Symposium, Stellenbosch University Department of Music, Iziko Museums of South Africa - an Agency of the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, The UCT Irma Stern Museum, the Cape Town Concert Series, and our home venue in Cape Town, St Andrew's Presbyterian Church in De Waterkant.

2025 CONCERT SERIES

Summer Baroque Season: 1 - 15 February 2025

The Cape Town Baroque Orchestra (CTBO) presented a Summer Baroque Season of four concerts during February 2025 in various venues across Cape Town. The season included a variety of baroque

repertoire, including chamber, orchestral and vocal music, all played and sung by an exciting line-up of local and international artists.

Event 1 – *Variations*
Saturday, 1 February, 11:00 and 13:00, Weltevreden Chapel, Noordhoek
These two performances were repeats of our award-winning and previously sold-out *Variations* programme. A popular genre during the baroque period was so-called 'sets of variations' or 'divisions': Composers often wrote variations and embellishments on songs, folk melodies or hymns. Members of the Cape Town Baroque Orchestra, Ralitza Macheva (baroque violin), Erik Dippenaar (harpsichord) and Lynelle Kenned (soprano) presented a programme of expressive sets of variations from the baroque, including music by Corelli, Caccini, Byrd, Philips and Handel. The programme also included newly composed sets of variations for solo violin by Montreal-based composer and early music specialist Matthias Maute, as well as a piece by South African composer Arthur Feder.

Two performances were held on 1 February to accommodate more concertgoers. The performances took place at the intimate and atmospheric Weltevreden chapel, originally a farmhouse dating from 1790 and restored by local harpsichord maker William Selway (Bill) Robson during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

Event 2 – String concerti, plus a suite or two!
Wednesday, 12 February, 19:30, St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, De Waterkant
The Cape Town Baroque Orchestra was joined by visiting baroque violin specialists Julia Wedman and Cristina Prats-Costa, from Toronto, Canada. Julia is a member of the renowned Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra. They lead the orchestra through a diverse variety of repertoire, including string concerti and concerti grossi by Handel, Vivaldi, Corelli, and Muffat, as well as suites by Elisabeth-Claude Jacquet de la Guerre and Purcell.

Event 3 – Queens & Kings
Saturday, 15 February, 19:00, St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, De Waterkant
South African-born countertenor Clint van der Linde has enjoyed a long and successful international career as an opera and concert singer. He is no stranger to some of the most prestigious stages in the world, including the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Carnegie Hall, Wigmore Hall and the Royal Albert Hall. *Lutesong Consort*, along with players from the Cape Town Baroque Orchestra, were delighted to collaborate with him in a one-night-only performance of some of his favourite repertoire, including works by Hasse, Handel, Bach, Purcell and Dowland.

Autumn Baroque Concerts: April and May 2025

John Reid Coulter harpsichord solo recital
Wednesday, 9 April, 19:00, St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, De Waterkant
John Reid Coulter presented a solo harpsichord recital with works by the Couperin family, Jean-Philippe Rameau, Jacques Duphly, Louis Marchant and Claude Balbastre, ranging from expressive free-form preludes to quirky social commentary pieces offering us glimpses into the sophisticated humour and social complexities at the French court. He also sojourned into the Iberian Peninsula for works by seldom-heard Portuguese and Spanish composers Carlos Seixas, João de Sousa Carvalhos and Antonio Soler, as well as works by Domenico Scarlatti, who was employed at the Spanish court.

The concert was narrated by Anna Stoddard, well-known presenter of 'Anna's Baroque Bon Bons' on Fine Music Radio.

Alone and Together – The Joy of Polyphony
Sunday, 11 May, 09:30, Dutch Reformed Church, Greyton
In *Alone and Together,* the Cape Town Baroque trio, which consists of three of the Cape Town Baroque Orchestra's section leaders, explored the evolution of polyphony through the baroque era and earlier, highlighting the equal importance of every voice in the ensemble. Annien Shaw (baroque violin, baroque viola), Ralitza Macheva (baroque violin) and Rosamund Roth (baroque cello, viola da gamba) brought audiences into the intimate, interconnected world of polyphonic music while celebrating the individual voices that make it possible.

This concert was part of the Greyton Genadendal Classics for All Festival.

Enlightened France
Wednesday, 21 May, 19:00, St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, De Waterkant, Cape Town
Annien Shaw (baroque violin), Sarah Cunningham (viola da gamba), and Leon Schelhase (harpsichord) presented *Enlightened France*, a chamber music programme that highlighted the grace and brilliance of 18th-century French chamber music. The Enlightenment era birthed some of the most expressive and innovative compositions for the harpsichord, violin, and viola da gamba. This concert featured works by Rameau, Couperin, Marais, and Forqueray.

2025 Closing Concert - November 2025

Salsa Baroque with Matthias Maute (recorder/baroque flute/Director)
Thursday, 20 November, 19:00, Baxter Concert Hall, Rosebank, Cape Town
The Cape Town Baroque Orchestra, in collaboration with the Cape Town Concert Series and singers of Lutesong Consort, presented a concert where baroque music from the Old World met the vibrant rhythms of the New World. *Salsa Baroque* celebrated the fusion of European polyphony with the infectious dances of Latin America, born from the meeting of Spanish, African, and indigenous traditions. The programme was directed by Canadian recorder and baroque flute virtuoso, Matthias Maute, and it also featured the African premiere of his newly created recorder concerto, using material by Padre Antonio Soler (1729-1783), with Maute as soloist.

2025 Cape Town Baroque Festival

The annual Cape Town Baroque Festival (CTBF), presented by the Cape Town Baroque Orchestra, took place from 20 to 27 September 2025. The theme of the 2025 instalment, 'The Miniature and the Monumental', featured various programmes that juxtaposed works for large-scale forces with smaller, and often domestic, genres while exploring the spaces in between. The exciting line-up of ensembles included the Cape Town Baroque Orchestra, the Cape Town Baroque Trio, Lutesong Consort, and True Voices, as well as visiting international baroque specialist Erik Bosgraaf (recorder and chalumeau) from Germany.

In the programming there was a strong focus on the expressive music of Georg Philipp Telemann (1681– 1767), with both a small-scale duo programme and a large-scale orchestral programme dedicated to his output. In addition to performing works of such a well-known composer, we also celebrated the work of an anonymous 18th-century English woman composer who published under the pseudonym Mrs Philarmonica. Although difficult to determine with certainty, this might potentially be the South African premiere of her work.

After the success of the very moving performances of Thomas Tallis' monumental *Spem in alium* for 40 individual voices during the 2022 Cape Town Baroque Festival, we included four performances of *Spem in alium* (two concerts with two hearings of the work per concert) in this year's festival, this time with the added luxury of *Lutesong Consort* creating a context for this work by presenting contemporary vocal works for smaller scale forces.

As always, we greatly value the training of young baroquers. This year, we collaborated with the 19th Annual Recorder Symposium in presenting a workshop day of masterclasses and lectures, with Erik Bosgraaf as the guest speaker. Bosgraaf commenced the Symposium with a lecture presentation focusing on Adriana van den Bergh, the 17th-century recorder prodigy.

In curating the festival programme, CTBF Artistic Director Erik Dippenaar has carefully paired the repertoire of each concert with the venue, ensuring that the acoustic properties and general atmosphere serve the music best, thereby contributing to the audience's experience of the concert.

FESTIVAL PROGRAMME

Event 1 - 19th Annual Recorder Symposium
Saturday, 20 September, 09:00-13:15, St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, De Waterkant, Cape Town
(see 'Education' section below)

Event 2 - Fantasias and Affects - Celebrity duo recital
Sunday, 21 September, 16:00-17:30, Rust en Vreugd (Iziko Museum), 78 Buitenkant Street, Cape Town
Erik Bosgraaf (recorder) and Erik Dippenaar (harpsichord) presented works for two instruments in the intimate and historic setting of Rust en Vreugd. The programme consisted of music by Telemann, Buxtehude and Bosgraaf.
*Note: due to unforeseen circumstances, Zefira Valova (baroque violin), planned international guest artist, could not travel to South Africa to take part in this concert as publicised. She was replaced by Erik Dippenaar.

Event 3 - Spem in allium: From the Miniature to the Monumental
Wednesday, 24 September, St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, De Waterkant
Performance 1: 11:00-12:00
Performance 2: 13:00-14:00
A programme focusing on Tudor vocal music, ranging from miniature works for two voices up to the monumental 40-voiced motet *Spem in alium* by Thomas Tallis (1505–1585), presented by Lutesong Consort (Artistic Director: Lente Louw) and True Voices, and conducted by Patrick Cordery. Apart from Tallis's *Spem in alium*, this concert also featured contemporary works for two and five voices by Orlando di Lasso (1532–1594) and John Taverner (1490–1545).

*****Note: Both performances were exactly the same. However, due to the special nature of this work, audience members had the opportunity to attend both performances to experience the work from different spatial vantage points by sitting in different seats for each performance.

Event 4 - Mrs Philarmonica: A South African Premiere
Saturday, 27 September, 11:00-12:00, UCT Irma Stern Museum, Rosebank
The Cape Town Baroque Trio, Annien Shaw (baroque violin), Ralitza Macheva (baroque violin) and Rosamund Roth (baroque cello), presented a programme of music by the early 18th-century English woman composer Mrs Philarmonica, whose actual identity remains unknown to this day. There are

only two extant collections of music composed by her, both published under the pseudonym 'Mrs Philarmonica'. In this programme, compiled by Annien Shaw and consisting of trio sonatas by the ever-elusive Mrs Philarmonica, we celebrated women composers of the Baroque by bringing to light the work of a composer of very expressive and complex music who had been forgotten by history for a long time.

This concert was presented at, and in collaboration with, the Irma Stern Museum on the University of Cape Town campus, thereby emphasising the important contribution, from the 18th to the 20th century, of women artists and composers.

Event 5 - A Tribute to Telemann
Saturday, 27 September, 19:00-20:30 (pre-concert talk at 18:00), St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, De Waterkant
In this programme, we celebrated the great skill and diversity of the expressive styles found in the orchestral works of Georg Telemann. The 2025 Cape Town Baroque Festival's international visiting baroque specialist, Erik Bosgraaf (recorder, chalumeau, harpsichord), performed as soloist in this concert alongside local players Ralitza Macheva and Annien Shaw (baroque violins) and David Cyster (chalumeau). A high point in the programme was the young South African clarinettist David Cyster, who recently started learning the chalumeau (the historical version of the modern clarinet), performing in a double concerto for two chalumeaux with Erik Bosgraaf, who directed the Cape Town Baroque Orchestra in this programme of double concerti and orchestral works by Georg Philipp Telemann (1681–1767).

Anna Stoddard of 'Anna's Baroque Bon Bons' on Fine Music radio presented a pre-concert at 18:00.

Education

Upskilling event for CTBO string players
During February 2025, two visiting baroque violin specialists, Julia Wedman of the *Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra* (Toronto) and Cristina Prats-Costa, presented an upskilling event for the period string players of the Cape Town Baroque Orchestra, consisting of a week of lessons and masterclasses. As a gesture of appreciation to the members of CTBO, and with financial support from Friends of Orchestral Music (FOM), we offered this upskilling opportunity free of charge to the CTBO musicians.

This training event had the following focus points:
1) Individual lessons: specific technical development through advanced repertoire choices and attention to detail within individual players' capacity and comfortability with the instruments
2) Sectional sessions: blending and articulated bow techniques to ensure uniform sound and intonation within the sections
3) CTB orchestral blending workshops: understanding voice leading within the group as a whole and learning to incorporate melodic and bass line blending according to the harmonic progressions

A highlight during this period was an online BOGA (Bow Yoga) class presented by Rachel Podger to the string players of the CTBO.

Julia Wedman and Cristina Prats-Costa also visited Muzukidz (a non-profit music education initiative based in Cape Town) and worked on baroque repertoire with the students.

19th Annual Recorder Symposium, Saturday, 20 September, 09:00-13:15, St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, De Waterkant, Cape Town
As Event 1 of the annual Cape Town Baroque Festival, we hosted the 19th annual Recorder Symposium and facilitated the participation of visiting recorder virtuoso Erik Bosgraaf, who presented recorder masterclasses and workshops. Bosgraaf commenced the Symposium with a lecture presentation titled *Adriana van den Bergh – a 17th-century recorder prodigy*. The 19th annual Recorder Symposium was proudly presented in collaboration with the Cape Town Baroque Orchestra, Stellenbosch University Department of Music and the annual Cape Town Recorder Symposium administrators.

Outreach

During January and December 2025, the Cape Town Baroque Orchestra presented two sets of 'Sunshine Concerts': an outreach programme for people unable to attend concerts because they are elderly, indigent or disabled. We presented 11 concerts at eight institutions:

Tuesday, 28 January, 14:30, and Wednesday, 3 December, 14:30, Woodside Care Centre, 29 Lawson Road, Rondebosch East.
Home for profoundly intellectually disabled children and young adults. All its residents require specialised care and are unable to remain within their family units.

Wednesday, 29 January, 15:00, and Friday, 5 December, 11:00, Douglas Murray Home for the Aged, 53 Gordon Searle St, Cafda Village, Retreat, provides safe, dignified care for individuals from under-served communities and enables residents to enjoy their last moments in a space filled with respect, compassion and dignity.

Thursday, 30 January, 10:30, Lilac Residence, Aged Care, 43 La Provence Rd, Welgelegen 2, Cape Town. This Home combines care, medical assistance and companionship for the aged and frail.

Thursday, 30 January, 14:00, Nazareth House, Assisted Living and Frail Care for the elderly, 1 Derry St, Vredehoek, Cape Town, is a home that cares for the sick, destitute, aged and underprivileged.

Friday, 31 January, 10:30, Lilac Residence SeaPark, Aged Care, Otto du Plessis Drive, Melkbosstrand, Cape Town This Home combines care, medical assistance and companionship for the aged and frail.

Friday, 31 January, 14:00, and Wednesday, 10 December, 10:00, Murambi House, Frail Care, Corner of Wellington Avenue and Langley Rd, Wynberg, Cape Town
A geriatric home for dementia/Alzheimers patients, as well as those who are bedridden or terminally ill.

Tuesday, 9 December, 10:30, Rosedon House, 11 Rosedon Rd, Rondebosch East, is a residential home for adults with Cerebral Palsy who are no longer able to live in their parental homes.

Thursday, 11 December, 14:30, Adams Farm, Plumstead, is a long-term residential care facility for women with intellectual disabilities. Founded in 1917 with just six residents, the Home now provides full-time care for 50 women.

Musicians involved: Elina Koytcheva, Craig Williams (violin), Janna Khweis, Remi Ludick, Emile de Roubaix (viola), Erik Dippenaar (spinetto) and Cheryl de Havilland (cello, Outreach Coordinator).

In gratitude

On behalf of the Trustees of the Camerata Tinta Barocca Music Charitable Trust and the musicians of the Cape Town Baroque Orchestra, I would like to express my deepest appreciation and gratitude to our donors, collaborators and audience members, who make it possible for us to do the work we care about.

We very much look forward to resuming our live concert activities in the 2026 season.



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