

The beginning and end of a generation

 By [Johann Smith](#)

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On 27 April post-apartheid became 18 and South Africa celebrated with a noticeable lack of events recognising the importance of this date. Starting at the long weekend, the patriotic punter had the option of seeing The Wailers at a concert supporting rhinos; a Simon and Garfunkel tribute at Dorpstraat; or indulging in some ankle shaking at Assembly's Discoteque. No doubt, many would agree, if you were so inclined, it would have to have been Vanfokkingtasties at Hillcrest Winefarm on 26 April.

A desolate gravel road on the side of the M12 wine route led to a spectacle of lights in the mountainous pits of Durbanville; perfect for sound and a good time, far from any madding crowd that could match tonight's audience. The unusual venture is, perhaps, a clear insight of what the bank account of VFFT can afford and a definite suggestion that its members' good taste has matured.









An air of loyalty

Tonight is the start of a new tour launching the new VFFT acoustic album, a compilation of 12 new and classic tracks by the four bands that make VFFT - in order of live appearance: Die Heuwels Fantasties, Van Coke Kartel, aKing and Fokofpolisiekar. The overall vibe is very much "familie braai", with the obvious lack of an actual braai, substituted by a Spur stand (believe it), and the addition of good music and ungracefully growing pot-bellies on certain members starting to resemble "oomies" not rowdy rockers.

Bassist and stoical father figure Wynand Myburg, coarsely, and rightly so, shouted in Afrikaans: "We want you to move! We paid a lot for the sound! So you better!" The shivering crowd huddle closer, seeming keener to do so after moving to the bleeps and emo guitar bits of Die Heuwels Fantasties, who opened to a nail-biting chill.

It's been five months since Van Coke Kartel released their latest album, "Wie's Bang", and the united singalongs to the new tracks is a pure reflection of its success, and the children present riding their parents' shoulders a clear indication that the early fans are growing up and a testament of the overall loyalty hanging in the air.

During the sets various members are proudly invited to join on guitar and mike. At times the years of friendship and loving fans, granted them the luxury of randomly and hilariously walking onstage unplanned, taking a sip of Klippies, nodding to the crowd, and walking back off. Nouveau major-celebrity Pierre Greeff, who sported a green hoodie giving him the appearance of a taller Jack Parow, clearly thought so - receiving audience approval each time with a loud "Yay!" and "Pierre!"



Polar Opposites

With aKing came aKing-seriousness. The crowd divided into two, those who consider them "Prime Circle for Hipsters" and those who think "they sound like a lekker local alternative of The National". But, as always, they're best experienced sitting down, not moshing, and good when you're meditating the lyrics, not shouting them. If anything, these suggestions, and the fact that they're the second last, are for everyone's benefit, because Fokof are always last.

And what can I say about Fokof? Music journalists all over have exhausted the English language over the years to explain what they're like live. Some might feel there's still something that can define it better, but that's only because it can't ever be properly done. It is everything you imagine it was. And if by some chance you can't, let the recently mentioned facts serve as the only validation you'll ever need from the written word.

Politics and music have always been at polar opposites of the same argument and throughout history both have attempted to change the world. Ironically, rock 'n' roll has always seemed more hard core about it. To recall the words of Greil Marcus in his book *Lipstick Traces* on the subject of punk rock: "To denounce the old world is to kill it and to prophesy a new world and call it into being." And that possibility has rarely felt alive as it does during a chorus of Fokofpolisiekar. Especially Skyn (Heilig).





Bellville rock turns 10

Next year holds another important date: a decade of the infamous five-piece Afrikaans rockers from Bellville, who have since started an empire of followers, successful side projects and collection of many great nights. Nights collected, stored and lost among scattered beer bottles and cigarette-strewn dance floors in clubs across South Africa and the smoky ether of memory. During times when we witnessed first-hand, for the first time, a bunch of young white kids not having a good time because they were on the right side of the physical or modern-day imaginary apartheid fence, but rather, because it felt like the world was at stake. And instead, could teach you a thing or two about ubuntu.

Is it too early to say "congratulations you guys have survived rock 'n' roll" and "the revolution is over"? A lot has happened in the world. Perhaps the most important of which (a matter we're still arguing, despite the possibility of it being untrue becoming dimmer each day) rock 'n' roll being pronounced dead. What does it matter? All that this means is that one day our kids might not irritate us with the devil's music, but with Skrillex instead. If all else fails, there's always Die Heuwels Fantasties.

Until then, the story has a sweet ending. A certain five-year-old girl confirmed it. As the cymbals rang from the final drum beat, the young fan managed to get on stage and experience the fortune of being raised up by Francois van Coke. And the 30-something husband appeared quite broody.



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