

PRETORIA NEWS  
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The thing that surprised Afrikaans singer Laurika Rauch the most was how much she enjoyed the live process of making her first DVD.

"I am used to recording my videos and albums in a studio but my director Deon de Bruyn persuaded me to go this route." With musical director Louis Britz and Deon fully attuned to her vision, this perfectionist felt in safe hands. "It cannot be a wart and all thing that's out there in the public domain," says Laurika. She loves the way the DVD has the feel of a real show and that this is her music the way she likes it to be heard.

It's a document of all her greatest hits and would have to stand the test of time. "It reads like a show," says Laurika and in essence that's what it was. She performed four nights in a row to an audience which meant the production team had four different options to slice together and tweak to create something as close to perfection as was possible.

But it was live and this is what thrills the liedjies diva. As someone who has been out there performing since the age of five, there's not much she hasn't experienced in this situation but she has always felt that these recordings should be in a controlled environment. Working with people she trusts, she was willing to take the plunge and believes they pulled it off. "It's been one of my best working experiences," she says

Guest artist is her favourite musician, husband Chris Torr who Laurika acknowledges as the person who gave her music a specific identity with the type of songs he wrote.

With years of experience behind her, to my amusement, Laurika believes that documenting her greatest hits will diminish requests for her to perform these songs. Nothing will, but at least now they're there for everyone to access when they want to catch their favourite Rauch song.

She knows that at some point she will probably stop performing live and then fans will have the memories. But music will always be a part of her life and she will keep recording for a long long time. Then she will have to find another way of doing things because she is used to performing her music live before selecting songs for albums. But that's all for the future.

For the moment, Laurika is excited that a year's hard work has been completed. "I loved the process," she says, but she also found it very exhausting. Performing doesn't come easily to this star even though she has spent much of her life on stage. She's too much of a perfectionist to take any performance lightly.

She's in a new phase in her life with her children starting studies or their own careers and for Chris and Laurika, the future brings new challenges. She has always been someone who takes life head-on and through the years, she has kept up with the times and grown her audience.

It is her magnificent voice, the way she interprets her music and finally, the good fit of Chris's songs and Laurika's voice that has been her secret to huge success. That and the fact that she took control of her own career with a very clear head of what she wanted to do and how she wanted to be perceived out there. Yet the stage is a demanding mistress, she maintains.

"It's time for a new generation to take over," says Laurika who was recently presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award at the most recent Huisgenoot Skouspel, one of the Afrikaans music calendar's biggest annual shows.