

Laughter's good for your soul



By [Brendan Seery](#)

28 Jul 2020

I've said this before, but it bears repeating: Nando's, your crown as South Africa's funniest brand is not only slipping, it's in danger of being stolen altogether - and by one of your fast-food rivals.

Chicken Licken's ads – put together by Joe Public – are well on their way to cornering the market in off-the-wall, uniquely South Africa humour.

The latest, shot in lockdown clearly, is no different.

The narrator is a dude with an American accent observing the foibles of South Africans with the outsider's eye.

And foibles there are – perhaps we've just not noticed them.

The gags are all bang up to date, with the lockdown and its associated dramas playing front and centre.

So, we see the clock strike 8pm and hear a siren while a woman is walking down the street.

It's curfew time, folks, (that was the home-time in the first lockdown, although it's now 9pm – thanks, Cyril) and the woman grabs a plastic rubbish bag, throws it over herself and pretends to be waiting for collection by Pikitup.

Next, we see cops stopping and searching a car and finding, curled up in the boot, an attractive woman.

That actually happened when some desperate Romeo tried, in the early days of the restrictions, to smuggle his Juliet across provincial lines for what was, in the eyes of the regulations enforcers anyway, “immoral purposes”.

Next up is a quintessentially South African gag. A car guard comes running up to a man pulling away, his hands outstretched.

The motorist rewards him with ... a couple of squirts of hand sanitiser.

Another little blink-and-you'll-miss-it moment is when the narrator, having collected his takeout of Chicken Licken, tries to get his face mask back on ... and looks remarkably like the famously fumbling President Cyril Ramaphosa, who struggled on national TV to get his recalcitrant covering in place.

The ad is funny and shows that, no matter how dark the times, South Africans share this ability to laugh.

At the same time – through showcasing the various “burnt offering” fried chicken pieces people tried to make while behind closed doors at home – it reminds people that Chicken Licken outlets are back in business.

So, another Orchid for Chicken Licken and Joe Public. One more and I will officially dethrone you, Nando's, illustrious history or not...

I've been involved in a bit of a spat on Twitter (my wife wonders why I bother) with a Covid-19 denialist, who goes by the handle “Intriguing Creative Director” and who believes the misleading media should be investigating whether diseases like this are “really naturally occurring or are they patented and by who?”

He is, no doubt, singing in the “it’s-just-a-flu” choir, merrily running or cycling around without a mask, perhaps infecting the vulnerable, all in the name of his human rights and the fact that he isn’t taken in by the huge media scam.

He sounds like a South African, judging from how the conversation came about ... but maybe he should get a red Maga (Make America Great Again) cap and move to Hicksville, US...

Still, while I think the government has handled many aspects of this crisis badly, I do think that people need to do their part, not only in ensuring they are safe, but those around them are, too.

My cousin spent 39 days in an intensive care unit in London with Covid-19.

He’s been in a rehab facility for six weeks and still can’t stand on his own, never mind walk. So, no, it’s not “just a flu”. And people needed to be reminded about what their reckless behaviour means.

So, I will give an Orchid to a print ad done by the Gauteng government, which shows, graphically, the dangers of attending parties, as many have been doing.

The man, conversing with a woman on the phone, admits being at a party where he may have contracted Covid-19.

She initially says don’t stress but, days later, his test comes back positive and he realises his granny is now coughing and having trouble breathing.

She gets hospitalised and dies.

All in the name of a young, strong person enjoying himself.

It’s stark but it’s a clear warning.

Good use of government communication.

ABOUT BRENDAN SEERY

Brendan Seery has been in the news business for most of his life, covering coups, wars, famines - and some funny stories - across Africa. Brendan Seery's *Orchids and Onions* column ran each week in the *Saturday Star* in Johannesburg and the *Weekend Argus* in Cape Town.

- #OrchidsandOnions: DA crosses line in political persuasion - 27 May 2024
- #OrchidsandOnions: Scientists sail across the seas to satisfy their KFC craving - 17 Apr 2024
- #OrchidsandOnions: Auto and General sets the standard in insurance claims - 11 Apr 2024
- #OrchidsandOnions: Checkers pranks commuters over holiday weekend, Curro Holdings faces backlash - 4 Apr 2024
- #OrchidsandOnions: The Boswell family's multi-generational journey with Ford SA - 25 Mar 2024

View my profile and articles...



@GautengProvince on [Twitter](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>