

## Local creatives design masks in collaboration with African Smiles

With a vision to uplift, African Smiles has launched a collection of 16 fabric face masks created by talented local designers. The masks celebrate South African creativity and each one holds a unique message of hope and happiness, while expressing the beauty and friendliness of the hidden smile behind the mask.



Credit: [Lulasclan via Instagram](#)

A percentage of the proceeds from the sale of the masks will go to the Smile Foundation. For the past 20 years, this NPO has provided reconstructive surgery to children living with abnormalities such as cleft lip and palate, burns, craniofacial conditions and facial paralysis.

In order to bring this collection of face masks to life, under the curation of design specialists Platform Creative Agency, African Smiles collaborated with four South African artists and graphic designers: Bonolo Helen Chepape of textile company Lulasclan, Skinny laMinx founder and creative director Heather Moore, furniture and pattern designer Glorinah Khutso Mabaso of Renaissance Design, and fine artist Michael Chandler of Chandler House.



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Each of the collaborators has designed a set of four masks. Chepape has loaded her African Pop Art designs with vibrant colours and bold patterns, and huge, graphic smiles that portray four fun, quirky personas. Mabaso has taken inspiration from across Africa, paying tribute to Kenya's Kikuyu people, Ethiopia's Karo tribe, South Africa's Venda culture and Ghana's Fra-Fra group. Her designs translate these historical cultures into contemporary pattern compositions.



Designer Glorinah Mabaso showcasing the back of one of her masks.

Chandler's hand-drawn ocean and street scenes reference riding the storm together, and protecting our streets by wearing masks. His floral and lattice images, drawn with the finest blue ink and gouache, are a reassurance of ever-present beauty in our midst. Moore's masks are playful, with a special message printed on the inside of each one, reminding people to smile, wink and spread their joy.

Both Chepape and Mabaso are among the stars of the Nando's Design Programme. Mabaso was chosen from a shortlist of 26 designers to become one of the four winners of the first Clout Designers' Industry Days Fired Up By Nando's, held in August 2019. Chepape, on the other hand, was one of the Top 10 Finalists in the 2018 Nando's Hot Young Designer talent search. This competition is currently in its 2020 [call-to-entry phase](#).



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## Spreading smiles around the country

"It seems inevitable that we'll be wearing masks for the foreseeable future, so we wanted to create ones that are filled with positivity. By working with local creatives, through Platform Creative Agency, we've designed a collection that will spread more smiles around the country, while helping children in need of reconstructive surgery, and bringing smiles to their faces, too," says Nicholas Markowitz, director of Creative Brands and Brand Name Marketing, the companies behind African Smiles.

African Smiles masks are made with polycotton, according to health and safety regulations. They are available [through Takealot.com](#) at R209 for the set of four masks designed by that particular designer.

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