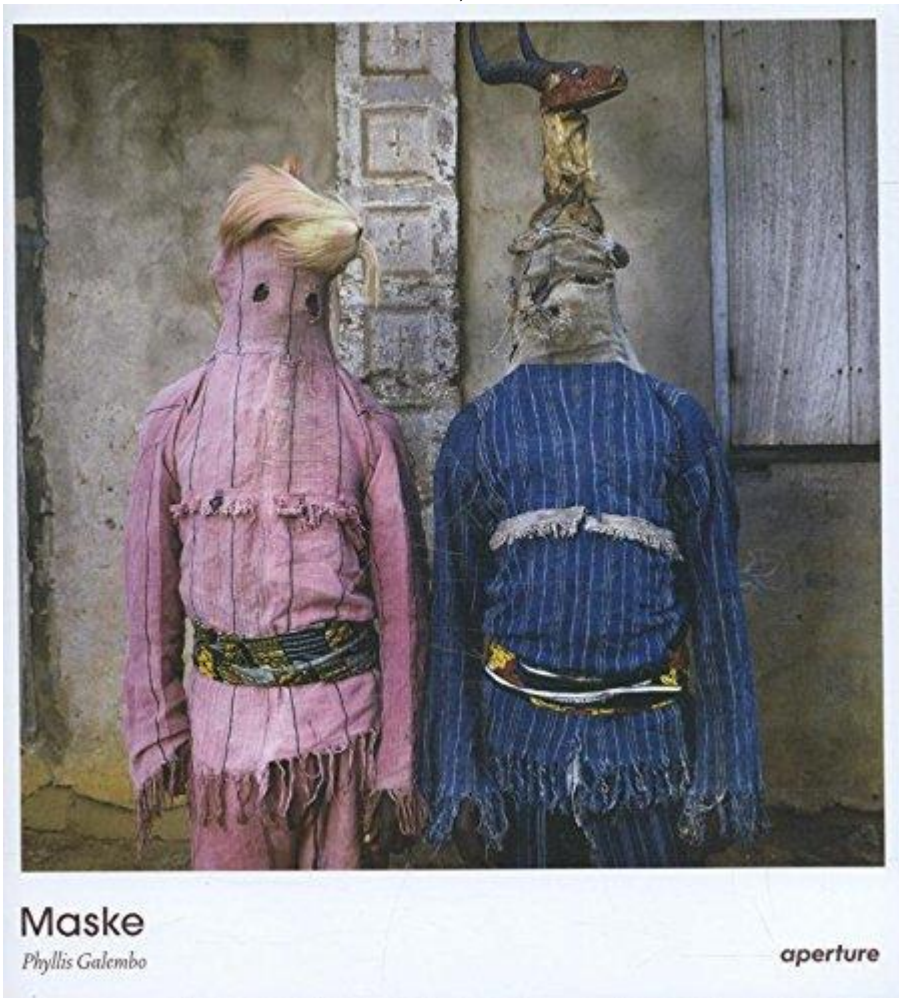


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# Sunday Times

NO JOKES: RIKY RICK'S 'FACELESS' SAMAS OUTFIT CAME STRAIGHT  
OFF THE CATWALK

June 5, 2018



Maske  
Phyllis Galemba

aperture

While Twitter was poking fun at the outfit Riky Rick wore to the 24th South African Music Awards (Samas), serious fashionistas were frowning at their antics. Why? Because Rick's look came straight off the runway at this year's SA Menswear Week.

Rick was dressed by acclaimed local designer Chu Suwannapha of CHULAAP, who sent 'faceless' models in knitted masks down the catwalk when showing his Autumn/Winter 2018 collection.

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Suwannapha, who is known as the Prince of Prints, is a favourite of local fashion editors; his latest collection was also lauded by Italian Vogue. Inspired in part by Mapantsula dancers, it featured a riot of patterns ranging from African prints to traditional tartans.

The concept behind the masks, Suwannapha told the Sunday Times, was to draw attention to the "prints and the outfits instead of the models' expressions". He added that the styling was a nod to photographer Phyllis Galembo's book Maske, which features portraits of people in African cultural dress.

Fashion shows often feature theatrical touches, like CHULAAP's masks, which are not necessarily meant to transcend the runway and be worn in real life. But let's not forget that the Samas is a music awards show and, at these industry events, many artists push the boundaries with their wardrobe choices (think Lady Gaga and Nicki Minaj). So if there ever was a time to rock a knitted face covering on the red carpet, this was it.

When Rick was asked about the mask, he said: "Riky Rick is starting to fade away and starting to disappear so you might as well not see my face anymore". So it seems this quirky accessory symbolises Rick's transition from being one of the defining faces of SA music to going behind the scenes as a producer.

Whatever the reason Rick wore it, we've got to applaud him for donning a look by a local label to a high-profile event. South Africa's home to some incredibly talented fashion designers, and their work deserves to be in the spotlight more often.