**Laughter Isn’t Always The Best Medicine**

*Local comedic acts weigh in on the comedy landscape in Malaysia*

**CYBERJAYA, 15 JAN 2023** - The art of stand-up comedy is no easy feat. From the countless nuances that comedians have to take into account when writing their scripts to the messages they try to convey to the audience, there is a lot of thought that goes into a performance. It’s not merely all laughter, as most might think.

Striking up a conversation about stand-up comedy in Malaysia, the Communications Multimedia and Content Forum of Malaysia (Content Forum) hosted a Twitter Space earlier this month titled “Let’s Talk Content: Of Hahas And Brouhahas."

Dato' Afdlin Shauki, Rizal Van Geyzel, and Shamaine Othman, all talented comedians with their own flair, were among the featured panellists.

**Context Is Everything**

In the age of social media, comedy performances being taken out of context is a thorn in any comedian’s side. Dato’ Afdlin Shauki, a veteran performer, lamented the dangers of cutting a part of a comedian’s set and spreading it on social media. Without context, it can fuel netizens’ rage and make everyone turn against a performer, affecting their rice bowl.

“To experience comedy well, you have to have the context for what the comedians are saying,” he stressed.

Co-owner of Crackhouse Comedy Club Rizal van Geyzel chimed in, likening the idea of stand-up to going on a journey with someone you have never met.

“You have to take everything into context,” he said. “Know the performer and where they are coming from, and then they’ll take you on a journey.”

**Urban Comedy Versus Mass Comedy**

Dato’ Afdlin also highlighted the disparity he notices between urbanites who enjoy listening to the issues raised by stand-up comedians and those who prefer light humour on television.

“The audience sometimes has a problem separating reality from what we comedians bring to the stage. But, people are willing to try and watch shows, so it’s good that we slowly push these things,” he mused.

Shamaine Othman, a writer, producer, and comedian, said the same thing, saying that different groups of people in Malaysia have varied reactions to different types and styles of comedy, which is why it is good to know your audience.

Echoing her sentiments, Dato’ Afdlin concurred, citing how some people might have felt that the hit comedy TV series “Scenario” was full of silly jokes. However, it was aimed at a younger audience, which is why some adults may have felt this way.

“Everybody does comedy targeting somebody,” he continued.

Both Dato’ Afdlin and Samaine were very enthusiastic about starting a comedy club in schools, as it helps train children from a very young age. “Improv helps young people with their confidence and knowledge of current issues, as well as story-telling and self-expression,” Dato’ Afdlin opined.

Missed out on the Twitter Space session? Catch up on who said what on the [Content Forum’s Spotify channel](https://open.spotify.com/episode/7Kcoe7afkoTD96ouEsrwyb?si=lt6JJBs1RjebE99K8Xpt0w&utm_source=copy-link)!