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Finalists for State Library's new short film prize announced

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The State Library of NSW has today announced the best short films to premiere at the inaugural Shortstacks Short Film Festival on Wednesday 12 June 2019.

"It was a joy for all of us on the jury to view the talent on display and select the overall winner," said Margaret Pomeranz AM, Shortstacks judge and celebrated Australian film critic, writer, producer and TV personality.

The State Library's new short film competition invited established and emerging filmmakers to create a film (of no more than six minutes) on any device, and across any genre – fictional, documentary, animation or experimental.

But there was a catch! Each film had to reference one or more items from the State Library of NSW's extraordinary collection.

"The filmmakers responded creatively, with imagination and relevance to our contemporary world, and I might add, with great respect for the source material," said Margaret.

"Congratulations to the finalists and also to all those who submitted their work. It must have been a labour of love."

State Librarian Dr John Vallance added: "Each filmmaker offered a new and interesting take on the Library's collection items, revisiting them to create something fresh. I can't wait for people to see the finalists for the first time on the big screen."

Dorothea Mackellar's handwritten poem *Core of My Heart* (known as *My Country*) inspired three of the seven finalists including 'All You Who Have Not Loved Her', a timely film that looks at violence against women and questions how society chooses to respond.

'Core of My Heart' offers up a child's view of Australia's changing landscape utilising the context of Mackellar's famous poem. 'The Cost of Not Following Your Heart' questions what it means to be a human being in 2019 and how we connect with others.

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The search for a rogue boomerang takes a grim turn in the animation, 'Comeback', which references Don McPhedran's 1959 image of boomerang makers in La Perouse.

Domesticity (1959) by Australian realist painter Herbert Badham was also a popular item with filmmakers, with three finalists responding to this work. 'Hmmm's' minimalist narrative style attempts to stay true to the sense of mundane suburban existence captured by Badham.

In 'Domestic' a young couple is put to the test when they hear something that might prove difficult to ignore. Twelve of Herbert Badham's Sydney-based paintings come to life in 'Domesticity 2019', a 21st century adaptation of the images which highlights the shift in gender stereotypes since the 1950s.

The seven finalists were selected by Margaret Pomeranz; award-winning filmmaker Michael Caulfield; film and TV critic Jason Di Rosso; and Tropfest's youngest finalist, Nick Ward.

The winner of Shortstacks 2019 will receive \$15,000. The judges decided not to award the youth prize this year.

Shortstacks has been made possible thanks to the support of the State Library Foundation which, through the generosity of private donors, supports an extensive program of creative awards and research fellowships at the Library.

Tickets to the Shortstacks Short Film Festival are available here:
www.sl.nsw.gov.au/shortstacksfestival

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