

Media Release



Animated dark comedy wins State Library's inaugural short film prize

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Western Sydney-based animator Jayce White was crowned the winner of the inaugural Shortstacks Short Film Prize for his stand-out animated film 'Comeback', the State Library of NSW announced tonight.

The darkly humorous black & white film won the praise of judges for its "creative innovation, exemplary technical skills, engagement with the audience and relevance to the Library's signature collection item."

In Jayce White's 'Comeback', a rogue boomerang takes a grim turn, in reference to Don McPhedran's 1959 image of boomerang makers in La Perouse.

The short film was selected by a panel of esteemed judges: Australian film icon Margaret Pomeranz AM, award-winning filmmaker Michael Caulfield, film and TV critic Jason Di Rosso, and Tropfest's youngest finalist, Nick Ward.

Margaret Pomeranz declared 'Comeback' a "stand-out film" before presenting Jayce White with \$15,000 prize money, following the screening of finalists at the State Library tonight.

The judges were unanimous in their decision to award a runner-up prize of \$5,000 to a team of young filmmakers and AFTRS alumni — Nick Harriott, Nick Spellicy and Ryan Stubbs — for their dramatisation of Herbert Badham's painting *Domesticity* (1959).

In the film, 'Domestic', a young couple is put to the test when they hear sounds through the window that might prove difficult to ignore.

"Shortstacks was established to give filmmakers, including those just starting out, an opportunity to say something new and interesting using the Library's collection — our finalists did not disappoint," said State Librarian John Vallance.

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

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Films by the Shortstacks prize-winners and finalists are now available to view on the Library's website: www.sl.nsw.gov.au/shortstacks-film-festival

About the prize-winning filmmakers:

Jayce White is a director and animator. His claymation short 'The Validation of Violet Worth' won Best VFX/Animation at Tropfest 2019 and his films have screened at the Commonwealth Film Festival and the Australian Effects and Animation Festival.

Nick Harriott, Nick Spellicy and Ryan Stubbs are a team of young filmmakers who met while studying at the Australian Film Television & Radio School. Their eclectic catalogue of work covers comedy, horror and everything in between — but is always bound by their signature madcap spirit.

* The judges decided not to award the youth prize this year.

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