



SYDNEY THEATRE AND FILM REVIEWS

SHORT + SWEET - Gala Opening 2021

May 17, 2021

Short+Sweet Sydney opened its 20th year on Sunday with two spectacular gala performances celebrating the best of last year's Covid-curtailed festival.



With a slew of celebrity judges - including Luke Jacobz, Martin Crewes, Rachael Beck, Jessica Rowe and Tony Bonner (pictured above with festival director Nick Hardcastle) – the nine top 10 minute plays from 2020 showcased the imagination, talent and resilience of the Short+Sweet community to a sell-out crowd at the 2pm matinee. Then, later that evening, the 'encore' performance was followed by a glittering awards ceremony.

Two contrasting plays swept the pool of rich prizes on offer. Winning Best Play, Best Script and Best Director was the witty, mind-bending absurdist "Trapped" by Barry Wood, directed by Lachlan McWilliams and featuring Gemma-May Bowles and Yvonne Dallman (with a cameo from Don Ferguson as a very scary zombie!). Picking up the audience vote People's Choice award was the very moving "Rentals" by Gregory Hardigan, directed by Short+Sweet veteran Frank Leggett and starring Chris Price, Clayton Moss and Danny Barton as three fathers from different backgrounds, united by a single, shocking tragedy. The winners of the Judges Choice awards were Gemma-May Bowles for Best Actress and Clayton Moss for Best Actor.

The other plays featured were:

· **Now We Are Ten** written and directed by Frank Leggett with Miranda Michalowski as 'Abigail' who has decided to save her sister... and to hell with the consequences!

· **Superposition** by Clifford Keen and performed by Andrew Ramage & Lana Jean Hill.

· **The End is Nighy** by Frances Bowick, directed by Gina Cohen starring Steven Tait and Edric Hong.

· **Love Me Tinder** by Melinda Jensen, directed by Stephanie Reeves for Act IV Theatre Co: Jensen's real tell-all, behind-the-scenes story of her digital dating life – complete with verbatim Tinder conversations! Featuring Jensen herself with David Hodgkins, Steve Stojcevski and Mark J Wilson.

· **The Tea Party for Sad People** by Cathy Friend directed by Jeremy Lawrence for Ūmbr Productions, with Zoe Arden, Tihana Vulcic, Julia Pennisi and Joss Chalmers.

· **Mum's the Word** By John & Kay Longhurst, directed by Steven Tait with Ally O'Brien and Nathan Moss.

· **Antisocial Media** by Julie Barnett (UK), directed by Peter Gizariotis with David Loney & Cris Bocchi.

Short+Sweet 2021 week 1 opens this week with 9 all new short plays, then continues next week and beyond with two parallel streams - each named for an iconic Sydney beach! See more at the Short + Sweet website [here](#).



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