



The 2019 Funny Women Awards:

(l-r): Teresa Burns, Samantha Lyden (both Comedy Shorts Award Winners); Lydia Rynne (Comedy Writing Award Winner) Sian Davies (Stage Award 2nd Place); Katy Brand (MC); Funny Women founder, Lynne Parker; Laura Smyth (Stage Award Winner); Charlie George (Stage Award 3rd Place); Hannah Brackenbury (Best Show Winner)

Images available

here: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/kvg245dmjwkekby/AAB5gdkWnyaU4HGQeXEGQjYHa?dl=0>

2019 Funny Women Awards: Winners Announced!

And...Jo Brand named as Funny Women patron on a fantastic night for female comedy.

The leading showcase for female comedy talent in the UK and Ireland, the **Funny Women Awards**, - in association with charity partner **The Fawcett Society** - are delighted to announce the 2019 winners of the **Stage Award**, **Comedy Shorts Award**, the **Comedy Writing Award**, the **Best Show Award** and **Best Comedy Web Series**.

Now in their 16th year, previous winners and finalists of the Funny Women Stage Award include **Katherine Ryan**, **Zoe Lyons**, **Jayde Adams**, **Desiree Burch**, **Harriet Braine**, **Sara Pascoe**, **Sarah Millican**, **Susan Calman**, **Rachel Parris**, **Bridget Christie**, **Kerry Godliman** and **Roisin Conaty**, with **Thanyia Moore** as the current title holder.

There is an extra special reason to celebrate this year as **Funny Women** announces its newly appointed patron, or as she prefers to call herself 'matron', **Jo Brand**. Jo has kindly agreed to lend her support to Funny Women, which she describes as "a brilliant organisation put together to encourage women to go into comedy and support them on their journey. It's really important because potential women comics really need their own space and help to set the agenda themselves."

Jo's first role as Patron is to mentor the winner of this year's Stage Award as part of an incredible

money-can't-buy prize package.

Commenting on Jo Brand's involvement and what this means to **Funny Women**, founder **Lynne Parker** said:

"Having the support of Jo means the world to us with her wealth of knowledge and experience of the industry. She tops the list of favourite female comedians and will help to bring attention to the work we do to give women a voice, in comedy and beyond.

"As a not for profit community organisation we offer support to women who want to perform, write, make films or produce shows through our outreach events and services. This is reflected in the breadth of our Awards and the hundreds of women who have taken part this year.

"Well done to all our finalists who we expect to be seeing a lot more of in the years to come."

The Winners

Stage Award

This year's Stage Award winner – who, along with the other finalists fought their way through 433 entrants and across a video entry stage, heats and semi-finals - is:

Laura Smyth
@pinchytweets



English Teacher and mother of three, Laura Smyth from Forest Gate, East London was encouraged to get into stand up by her husband who was concerned about the amount of time she spent sitting down. She has only been performing stand up for a few months and describes her style as 'daft' and 'autobiographical' having imagined actual stand-up routines in her head throughout her adult life.

Runners up:

2nd - Sian Davies - @morriseysquiff
3rd - Charlie George - @CGdoescomedy

The final took place on Thursday 19 September at the Bloomsbury Theatre, hosted by **Katy Brand**.

Judges:

The judging panel for the Stage Award was chaired by Funny Women founder, **Lynne Parker**, and comprised of: **Steve Bennett** – Chortle; **Hannah Chambers** – Chambers Management; **Angela Ferreira** – Managing Editor, Douglas Road Productions; **Tilusha Ghelani** - Commissioning Editor (Comedy) Sky; **Lee Griffiths** – Comedy Associate, Soho Theatre; **Morwenna Gordon** - Commissioning Editor (Comedy) for Sky; **Fiona McDermott** – Head of Comedy, Channel 4; **Laura Jordan-Bambach** – Founder + Chief Creative Officer, Mr President; **Mick Perrin** – Mick Perrin Worldwide; **Alex Smith** - BBC Radio Comedy Editor & Executive producer of the BBC New Comedy Awards

Prize: Mentoring session with Jo Brand; custom made 'funny woman' necklace from Tatty Devine; touring dates for 2020.

Comedy Shorts Award

Entry requires a film of 1-6 minutes that can utilise any comedic discipline as long as it makes sense as a cohesive film.

Winner:

'Neil's Yard' by **Teresa Burns and Samantha Lyden**
@teresa_burns & @SamanthaLyden



Friends for over 10 years, Samantha and Teresa bonded over their similar backgrounds and being daughters of builders! They're passionate about bringing working-class stories to the screen and championing feminist issues through both female and male protagonists.

Runners up:

'Paper Trail' by **Emily Brown**
@catnipfilm

'Wives of The Landed Gentry' by **Ziggy Luz**
@ZiggyLuz

Judges:

BBC Comedy Commissioning Editor, **Sarah Asante**; BBC Head Of Comedy, **Kate Daughton**; Sky Comedy Commissioning Editor, **Tilusha Ghelani**, SheSays co-founder, **Laura Jordan-Bambach** and Channel 4 Head Of Comedy, **Fiona McDermott** and Funny Women Awards director, **Becky Singh**.

Prize:

The winner will be mentored in comedy script development, production and marketing by the incredible Comedy Central Team and receive a year's membership to Women in Film and TV, the UK's leading membership organisation for women working in creative media and an invaluable resource for networking, education and support.

View entries here: <https://www.funnywomenawards.com/finalists/shfinalists19/>

Comedy Writing Award

Entrants supply a treatment (of one or two sides of A4) and three sample scenes of a comedy script for television or radio.

Winner:

Lydia Rynne for 'Living Wild'



Lydia is a Royal Court Young Writer and one of five screenwriters selected for the BAFTA Mentorship Scheme. Her acclaimed play 'Hear Me Howl' was described by The Stage as 'brutally funny and refreshing' - two things Lydia tries to be on a daily basis, much to her housemates' annoyance.

Runners up:

Lorna Woolfson for 'Tudor Roses'

@lolcov

Alice Etches for 'The Wayward'

@aliceetches

Judges:

Bafta Roccliffe founder and producer, **Farah Abushwasha**; Writing Awards producer **Janet Awe**; Agent at Casarotto Ramsay & Associates, **Ellen Gallagher**; comedian and former Funny Women finalist **Rosie Jones**; award-winning comedy actor, **Shobu Kapoor**; Writing Awards producer, **Dan Page**; Editor & Writing Awards producer **Kate Stone**; and writer of Channel 4's *Pure*, **Kirstie Swain**.

Prize:

The winner will be mentored by **Katy Brand** whose many credits include: *Katy Brand's Big Ass Show*, *Peep Show* and *Psychobitches*.

Comedy Web Series

Now in its second year, the Best Comedy Web Series Award was created to recognise the wealth of screen comedy productions that start and exist solely online. Our group of comedy industry experts have trawled the web to find the most promising and funny female-created comedy web series of 2018/19.

Winner:

Laura Seixas

@laurimucas [Instagram]



Laura Seixas is an award-winning Portuguese film director and co-founder of the company 4Quarter Films where she is Head of Development. She has directed several award-winning short-films including *Belonging* and *Let There Be Light*. All her shorts have been selected to play at major festivals, such as Festival de Cannes, Rhode Island International, NYC Indie and Sharjah International Children Film Festival.

Dreaming Whilst Black is a 9-part comedy series that follows a young but naive British Jamaican filmmaker, Kwabena, as he struggles to navigate between his dreams and reality. The show explores the day-to-day struggles of being an independent creative trying to survive in London. It also highlights the nuances of how one's race impacts this struggle.

Runner up:

Annie McGrath
@AnnieMcTweet

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Best Show

This is the award where comedy-going audiences have their say about the great female led shows seen during 2019 across a mix of festivals and venues. To qualify, the show must be: comical (obviously); be performed between 1st January and 31st August 2019 be a full show of at least 45 minutes; be created by a woman, but can contain male cast members, and be created by a resident of the United Kingdom.

Winner:

Victorious – Hannah Brackenbury
@hhbrighton



Hannah is Brighton-based musical comedian who writes and performs original comedy songs and hilariously clever parodies. She reached the Musical Comedy Awards final in 2016 and scooped the 'Best of the Festival' at Brighton Fringe 2018 with 'Victorious' – hey joyful and poignant to the late, great Victoria Wood. Hannah reprised her success to sell-out audiences at Camden Fringe this summer.

Runners up:

Off the Scale – Melinda Hughes
@melhugsopera

Westdal & Hayward ...Need Work
@Westdal_Hayward

Prize:

The winner of the 2019 Funny Women Awards Best Show will receive a mentorship from Soho Theatre, London's most vibrant venue for new theatre, comedy and cabaret.

Soho Theatre's Comedy Associate Lee Griffiths said: "Funny Women have consistently worked with brilliant artists and shows over the years and it is with great excitement that we at Soho Theatre will be able to continue our relationship with them by offering mentorship to the winner of the Best Show Award including the opportunity to sit down and talk about how we curate our programme and what we look for in a production."

Notes to editors:

The Funny Women Stage Award is run in partnership with Sky.



Charity Partner - The Fawcett Society

The Fawcett Society is the charity partner of the 2019 Funny Women Awards. Funds raised from ticket sales on the night of the Grand Final will go towards a joint campaign aimed at giving women their voice in public life. The campaign will focus on a feminist roadshow around the UK during 2020 and will be based on performances and workshops.

Fawcett's vision is a society in which women and girls in all their diversity are equal and truly free to fulfil their potential.





Jo Brand pictured with Lynne Parker, founder of Funny Women.

You can see the message from our new patron, **Jo Brand** here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1R1tlxngC9Yw1HI8hu5_XQ7Mv2_LLj6HM/view?ts=5d823038



Other useful links:

Previous winners and finalists of the Funny Women

Awards: <http://funnywomen.com/2012/10/01/funny-women-awards-all-the-winners-and-finalists-ever/>

Images: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/1z118perbcj08kg/AABAYBiNOWfqZwmHvxYcP5Y5a?dl=0>
Images for 2019

final: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/kvg245dmjwkekby/AAB5gdkWnyaU4HGQeXEGQjYHa?dl=0>

Website: www.funnywomen.com

Awards: www.funnywomenawards.com

Twitter: @funnywomen

Facebook: @wearefunnywomen

Instagram: @funny_women

Hashtag: #FWAwards2019

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