



(Back, l-r): Cam Spence; Naomi Sheldon; Funny Women founder, Lynne Parker; Thanyia Moore; Susan Riddell; Alex Hardy;  
(Front l-r): Chloe Petts, Gabby Killick and awards host Jan Ravens]  
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# Funny Women Awards: Winners Announced!

The awards that definitively answered the question 'are women funny?', the **Funny Women Awards** - in association with charity sponsor **UN Women** - are delighted to announce the winners of the **Stage Award**, **Comedy Shorts Award**, the **Comedy Writing Award** and the **Best Show Award**.

Previous Stage Award winners and finalists have included **Katherine Ryan**, **Zoe Lyons**, **Jayde Adams**, **Desiree Burch**, **Harriet Braine**, **Sara Pascoe**, **Sarah Millican** and **Susan Calman**.

Explaining the level of achievement reached by this year's finalists and winners, **awards founder Lynne Parker** said:

"This year has been incredible in terms of the talent we've seen across the four Awards. With a record number of entries for the Stage Award it was difficult to select the top acts to showcase at the charity final, which is why we decided on 10 rather than eight. There's a new energy for live comedy performance and this is reflected in the numbers and variety of acts we've seen.

"Along with some amazing films in our Comedy Shorts Award, brilliant scripts submitted for the Comedy Writing Award and a broad array of Best Show nominations, the future of female comedy has never looked brighter!"

## Stage Award

The Stage Award this year took place over 25 heats and broke all previous records for the competition, with over 400 entrants.

Each finalist was mentored by a celebrity mentor in the run up to the final. The mentors were: **Gemma Whelan** (*Game of Thrones*), **Sindhu Vee** (*As Yet Untitled*), **Phil Nichol** (*Never Mind The Buzzcocks*), **Patrick Monahan** (*Celebrity Squares*, *The One Show Edinburgh Festival*) and **Arnab Chanda** (*Russell Howard's Good News*, *Hunderby*). The mix of male and female comedians was decided upon to reflect the HeForShe solidarity movement pioneered by the awards' charity sponsor, [UN Women](#) National Committee UK.

The final took place on Monday 12 March at the Duchess Theatre, hosted by **Jan Ravens** (*Dead Ringers*, *Spitting Image*), with a special guest appearance from **Harriet Braine**, the 2016 Funny Women Stage Award winner.

## Stage Award Winner:



## Thanyia Moore

[@ThanyiaMoore](#)

Thanyia, 35, is a receptionist from South East London. She has always held a love for comedy, but despite a background in acting, dance and event hosting, her confidence to tell jokes on stage came much later in life.

**Fun fact about Thanyia:** "When I was 10, I was in *Games Master* on Sky One. I didn't like games, I liked annoying my big brother by copying him!"

**Funny Women Q&A:** <https://tinyurl.com/ybhf7acf>

**Runners up:** Chloe Petts ([@Chloepetts](#)) and Susan Riddell ([@Lazy\\_Susan](#))

## Judges:

The judging panel for the Stage Award was chaired by Funny Women founder, Lynne Parker, and comprised of:

**Richard Bucknall**, RBM; **James Farrell**, Head of Comedy Development, BBC Studios; **Harriet Gibsone**, Deputy Editor, Guardian Guide; **Morwenna Gordon**, Commissioning Editor Comedy, Sky; **Lee Griffiths**, Associate Producer, Soho Theatre; **Ayesha Hazarika**, Writer and Performer; **Sharon Lougher**, Head of Features, Metro; **Ade Rawcliffe**, Head of Diversity - ITV Commissioning; **Rachel Springett**, Commissioning Editor, Channel 4 Comedy.

**Prize:** £500 Oliver Bonas voucher and styling session; mentoring session from Soho Theatre.

### 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.

### Comedy Shorts Winner:



### Polly, by Cam Spence

[@CamGurrrl](#)

Cam Spence is a character comedian and actress. She has performed alongside Harry Hill, Tim Key and Daniel Kitson and her first work-in-progress character comedy show, *The Matriarchy Experience*, had a sold out run at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2017, \*\*\*\*\* 'Comedy genius' (The Mumble). She can currently be heard on Liam Williams's satirical radio sitcom *Capital*. This is Cam's debut short film, she is writing bigger projects for development.

**Runners up:** Roxy Dunn [@RoxanaDunn](#) and Alys Metcalf [@AlysMetcalf](#)

### Judges:

**Roisin Conaty**, actress, comedian, producer and writer; star of Channel Four's *Man Down* and her own hit TV series *GameFace*; **Rob Aslett**, Director of Avalon Entertainment and TV Exec Producer; **Richard Grocock**, TV Comedy and Development Producer at Wicked Little Critter, Baby Cow, Phil McIntyre; **Clelia Mountford**, Merman Co-founder and Executive Producer; **Anna**

**Bogutskaya**, Underwire Film Festival Director; **Kate Daughton**, Commissioning Editor for Comedy at BBC.

#### **Prize:**

Top 10 finalists' films will be: hosted on the Funny Women YouTube channel and social media; hosted on a dedicated Funny Women Comedy Shorts Award page on the Comedy Central UK website, and were shown to comedy industry judges, and to a live audience, at a special screening as part of the Vault Festival, London on the 4th of March 2018.

The overall winner received £100 Oliver Bonas voucher and the potential opportunity to develop web series/presence with Comedy Central.

**View entries here:** <http://www.comedycentral.co.uk/2017-funny-women-awards>

#### **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.

### **Comedy Writing Winner**



#### **Nosh, by Alex Hardy**

[@alexhardywrites](https://twitter.com/alexhardywrites)

Alex is a researcher with experience in studio, chat show, topical comedy and comedy-entertainment environments, and on scripted comedy shorts. Her recent roles include work on Dave Gorman's studio-shot comedy show *Modern Life is Goodish*, on Frank Skinner's iPlayer chat show *Frank Skinner on Demand*, and on the BBC Two live studio show *Too Much TV*. Alex has also produced *Tony Law on Ice* and other live events for the Weirdos Comedy Collective. She recently completed a Diploma in Writing and Producing Comedy at the National Film and Television School, where she was awarded the grade "Very Good" and was mentored by Jason

Hazeley and Joel Morris (who write the Ladybird Books for Grown-Ups and regularly collaborate with Charlie Brooker).

**Runners up:** Hitched by Rhiannon Neads [@Rhi\\_Neads](#) and S&M Kissy and Mistress, by Kiran Benawra [@kiranbenawra](#)

**Final round judges:** **Janet Awe**, comedy development executive at Sky; **Howard Cohen**, comedy writer and producer who has written for TV programmes on ITV2, BBC3 and Channel 4 and worked for major production companies including Warner Brothers, Disney, Objective Productions and Lion Television; **Daniel Page**, freelance writer, script-editor, producer and founder of Why did the Chicken?

**Prize:** Prize: £100 Oliver Bonas voucher and the opportunity to develop their script with the BAFTA and Emmy Award-winning [Lion Television](#), producers of *Horrible Histories* (CBBC), *When Bowie Met Bolan* (Sky Arts), and *Getting Animated* (BBC3), all as part of an industry-led package supported by [Why did the Chicken?](#) and the [Women's Radio Station](#).

### Best Show Award:

This is the award where comedy-going audiences have their say about the great female led shows seen during 2017 across a mix of festivals and venues. To qualify, the show must be: comical (obviously); be performed between the 1st January 2017 and 31st December 2017; 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.

### Best Show Winner:



### Naomi Sheldon: *Good Girl* [@NaomiSheldon1](#)

Naomi is an actress and emerging writer. Her debut play *Good Girl* was in association with the Old Red Lion and premiered there in July 2017 - it can currently be seen at the Trafalgar Studios, London. *Good Girl* received critical acclaim at the Fringe festival winning Voice's Pick of The Fringe and praise from Chortle. Naomi is currently developing *Good Girl* with Clerkenwell Films and recently wrote and starred in her first comedy short, *Recall For Range of Women*. As a comic



improvisor and actress, Naomi was most recently seen in the latest series of *Red Dwarf* for Baby Cow, and her other credits include the Raindance film festival winning short *Cla'am* (BBC), *The Pride* directed by Jamie Lloyd, *Peter Pan Goes Wrong* for Mischief Theatre and a season at the RSC. She works with The Canon: a Literary Sketch Group, and is developing a series for radio 4 with them. *Good Girl* is returning to the Old Red Lion for a run this November (27th Nov-1st Dec).

**Runners up:** *Girlfriend from Hell*, by Gabby Killick [@Gabbykillick](#), *I Love Lou C*, by Lou Conran [@LouConran](#)

**Prize:** £100 Oliver Bonas voucher and mentoring session from Soho Theatre.

## Notes to editors:

## The Funny Women Awards

The Funny Women Awards were started in 2003, and have been the launchpad for numerous talented comedians, writers and short filmmakers including: **Bridget Christie**, **Susan Calman**, **Katherine Ryan**, **Andi Soho**, **Sarah Pascoe**, **Zoe Lyons** and **Sarah Millican**.

"I had just started stand-up comedy when I won the award, and loads has changed since then. Funny Women provided me with lots of friends, advice, and exposure."

**Katherine Ryan**

'I highly recommend it, it's a great place for women to hone their act'

**Miranda Hart**

This year [Funny Women](#) has a new charity partner, [UN Women National Committee UK](#), and, inspired by UN Women's renowned **HeForShe** solidarity movement for gender equality, the ten 2017 Stage Award finalists were mentored by well-known comedians, male and female. This follows 2016's successful pairing of the finalists with celebrity female comedians, including **Sara Pascoe**, **Ellie Taylor**, **Jan Ravens**, **Zoe Lyons**, **Tiffany Stevenson** and **Shazia Mirza**.

**Laura Haynes, Chair, UN Women National Committee UK said:** "We are delighted to confirm the Funny Women Awards as one of our signature events for HeForShe London Arts Week 2018 in support of UN Women. We know that the only way to achieve real change is to influence culture. The arts guide and reflect culture by helping people to re-think established norms and explore challenging topics in a thoughtful way. And laughter, when shared, can help to unite people. As well as making us laugh, the Funny Women Awards will be helping to open minds and encourage action."

## Partners & sponsors:

The 2017 Funny Women Awards have been made possible with the support of a number of partners and sponsors including Comedy Central, Sky, ITV, Why Did the Chicken, Women in Comedy Festival, Soho Theatre, Women's Radio Station, Oliver Bonas, Starling Bank and MOO.

**Useful links:**

**Previous charity work by Funny Women and looking ahead to working with UN Women:**

<http://funnywomen.com/about/charity/>

**Previous winners and finalists of the Funny Women Awards:**

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

**Find out more about Funny Women:**

**Images for 2017 Final:** <https://tinyurl.com/y9759m2y>

Images of former finalists 2003 - 2016: <http://tinyurl.com/zh4mu4e>

**Website:** [www.funnywomen.com](http://www.funnywomen.com)

**Twitter:** [@funnywomen](https://twitter.com/funnywomen)

**Hashtag:** #FWAwards2017

**Find out more about HeForShe and UN Women National Committee UK:**

**Website:** [www.unwomenuk.org](http://www.unwomenuk.org) and [www.heforshe.org](http://www.heforshe.org)

**Twitter:** [@unwomenuk](https://twitter.com/unwomenuk)

**Hashtags:** #ArtsWeekLDN #HeForShe

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