

TROPFEST NEW ZEALAND

THE WORLD'S LARGEST SHORT FILM FESTIVAL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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'HELP' WINS TROPFEST NZ 2014

Auckland short film directors Andrew Cooper and Nicola Peeperkoorn have taken out First Prize at Tropfest NZ 2014 with their film 'Help'.

'Help' was one of the 14 finalist short films which delighted an estimated crowd of 8,000 at the TSB Bowl of Brooklands in New Plymouth last night.

"We are surprised, shocked and honoured to win," said Cooper.

"We managed to bring together the people in our film to make magic happen," said Peeperkoorn. "The people that came out were amazing, too. There's nothing better as a filmmaker than seeing the audience reaction."

'Help' tells the story of a support group leader for wickedly weird addictions who discovers that he has his own.

"It had a great twist in it, was really well shot and acted, and cut straight to the chase," said renowned New Zealand actor and director Michael Hurst. "It was a clear winner for us."

Hurst was one of five industry judges who selected the quirky tale for top honour.

Sponsored by the Motion Picture Association and NZ Screen Association, First Prize is a return flight to Los Angeles to meet with film and TV executives, five nights accommodation and \$500 spending money.

"The skill level of the finalists was extraordinary," said NZ Screen Association Managing Director Tony Eaton. "With the new young generation coming through, we are incredibly proud to be sponsor and a part of this industry."

With a cast of more than 25 in 'Help', one performance stood out. Greg Smith received the Best Actor Award for his role in the film.

The other award winners were:

Taranaki Arts Festival Trust Best Actress: Lola Brown in 'Bea Spectacled'.

Yoobee School of Design Best Animated Film: David Pettit for 'The Lighthouse Keeper'.

Ngā Aho Whakaari/Wairoa Maori Film Festival/Te Puni Kōkiri Best Maori Director: Allan George for 'On the Rocks'.

Yoobee School of Design Best Use of Visual Effects: Adam Harvey for 'You Only Die Forever'.

Tropfest International Managing Director Michael Laverty was on hand to announce "WIRE" as the Tropfest Signature Item (TSI) for 2015.

Kim Muriwai, chair of the Māori in film and television body Ngā Aho Whakaari, was a first time attendee at Tropfest. "It was wonderful to see families together enjoying a wide range of films," she said. "It's such a great opportunity and we'll be doing our best to make sure our talented filmmakers enter."

"It was a great turnout from the audience, the weather was perfect and we were delighted at how everything went," said Taranaki Arts Festival Trust Chief Executive Suzanne Porter.

"Tropfest NZ goes from strength to strength and we are excited to be a growing part of the largest short film festival in the world."

The Tropfest winner and finalist films can be viewed on Tropfest NZ's YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/user/TropfestNZ?feature=watch>.

Special video appearances were made on the night by acclaimed New Zealand actors Temuera Morrison, Zoë Bell and Jay Ryan.

Acting luminaries who walked the red carpet at the event included Jennifer Ward-Lealand, Sara Wiseman, Craig Hall and Stephen Hunter.

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PHOTO:

Tropfest 2014 Winners for HELP Left to Right: Best Actor – Greg Smith, Best Director- Andrew Cooper, Co-director/producer – Nicola Peeperkoorn PHOTO CREDIT: Rob Tucker



About Tropfest

Tropfest began in Sydney 22 years ago when director John Polson showed a six-minute film he made for under \$100 at his local café ('The Tropicana') in Sydney for 200 friends and family. Today the free Australian event is attended annually by a live audience of around 150,000 film-lovers and hundreds of thousands more watching via its live national TV broadcast and other platforms.

In the past two decades, Tropfest has become recognised as one of the world's most exciting launchpads for emerging filmmakers. Tropfest is also known for securing the support of some of the biggest names in the international film community including Hugh Jackman, Nicole Kidman, Russell Crowe, Geoffrey Rush, Liev Schreiber and Tobey Maguire. Tropfest launched last year in New Zealand, Arabia and in the USA with Tropfest Las Vegas and Tropfest New York.

The Tropfest YouTube Channel. Past Finalist films can be viewed at Tropfest's YouTube channel: <http://www.youtube.com/tropfest>. The channel has 45,920 subscribers and the films have been viewed more than 25,413,000 times.

The first Tropfest NZ event was held in 2012. In 2013 the Tropfest NZ competition began and was attended by 8,000 people. The winner was a short film called 'Cappuccino Tango', directed by Taranaki local Dave Smith.

TROPFEST NZ – The world's largest short film festival, now in New Zealand.



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