

MARK LAURENCE
ZAMMIT

MICHELA
FARRUGIA

DAVIDE
TUCCI

PHILIP
LEONE-GANADO

TRUDY
KERR

Written & Directed by **HERMAN GRECH**

PRESS **MURINE**

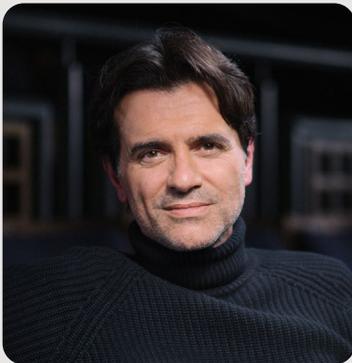
*You'll miss the **FACTS** when they're **GONE***



**20TH FEBRUARY
– 1ST MARCH 2026**

TEATRU
ST JAMES CAVALIER, VALLETTA

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

After almost three decades knee deep in journalism, I find myself genuinely afraid of the world we are living in. It's becoming increasingly difficult to tell the difference between truth and fiction, where noise, ugliness, and hatred are becoming normalised, amplified, and in many cases institutionalised. As authoritarianism rises, good is being framed as bad.

Much of this shift has been driven by the misuse of media, and more specifically, by social media platforms fuelled by big tech that do not give a damn about the truth but have chiselled a dangerous world of so-called algorithms.

Press Mute grew out of that fear. This production, loosely inspired by the concept of live journalism (three of the actors are linked to journalism) became a somewhat cathartic experience for me. It is shaped by personal encounters, anecdotes, and the daily highs and lows of working in a newsroom, from the adrenaline of breaking a story to the exhaustion of watching truth struggle in a culture addicted to distraction.

I have always believed there is a profound link between journalism and theatre. Both tell real-life stories in real time, and both carry responsibility. The stage, like journalism at its best, has the power to slow us down, away from distractions, to confront us with complexity, and to make us sit with uncomfortable questions.

By pitching two journalists against a politician and a podcaster in a world charged with tension, drama, and, yes, laughter, *Press Mute* invites us to question our own behaviour and to recognise how today's world is shaped not only by our clicks but also by our choices to be disengaged.

HERMAN GRECH

Writer & Director



PRODUCER'S NOTE

"You're the enemy of the people," Donald Trump lashed out at a journalist during one of his first White House press conferences.

What began as outrage evolved into a shifting global order - one in which extremist narratives are testing the resilience of democratic values, and where troll culture and orchestrated outrage flood our feeds.

In an era of misinformation and algorithmic dominance, the fourth pillar of democracy is routinely undermined, reframed not as a guardian of truth but as its adversary.

Out of this discomfort emerged conversations with Herman. What started as an instinctive reaction developed into an exploration of a growing theatrical phenomenon: live journalism where journalists step onto the stage and transform reportage into live storytelling. Across Europe and beyond, national theatres are programming such works; newsrooms are collaborating with theatre makers to mobilise the power of narrative. Some journalists now use theatre to expand on investigative exposés; others adopt the language of stand-up to offer audiences a candid, human insight into journalistic practice.

Because live theatre still has the power to hold attention longer than a scrolling headline.

The process behind Press Mute required trust between all involved, including its audiences who complete the work. Your feedback and participation have affirmed that this hybrid space, between journalism and theatre, is fertile ground for civic dialogue.

As Udjenza marks its fifth season, I am proud that we begin with a production that dares to confront the fragility and necessity of truth in public life.

I am deeply grateful to Arts Council Malta for its support and to Spazju Kreattiv for our collaboration, my wonderful team for keeping it all together, and to the actors, journalists and crew who committed wholeheartedly to this process.

Special thanks to Herman Grech, whose journalistic foresight, emotional intelligence and creative dexterity in both writing and direction have forged what I hope will become an enduring collaboration between journalism and theatrical imagination.

TONI ATTARD

Producer & Artistic Director, Udjenza



PHILIP LEONE GANADO

Frank

Philip is a director and actor and currently forms part of the national theatre company ensemble. He trained at the London Academy of Music in Dramatic Arts (LAMDA) from which he graduated with an MA in Directing in 2020. Prior to this, he worked as a journalist for eight years with Times of Malta and other publications, specialising in environment, planning and culture. He is the founder of WhatsTheirNames Theatre, best known for its Shakespeare in the Pub and Shakespeare in the Garden series, now in its 10th year. Other recent directing credits include Boċċi: The Musical, Shieken f'Tiġieġ, My Name is Rachel Corrie, La Ronde and The Trials of Magnus Coffinkey, which won the Award for Outstanding Theatre at the Brighton Fringe in 2024.



MICHELA FARRUGIA

Emma

Michela attended Stagecoach Theatre Arts School in Malta from the age of 3 to 18, studying acting, singing and dance. In 2017 she joined the Teatru Manoel Youth Theatre (TMYT) under the direction of Denise Mulholland, where she trained for a year, developing skills in physical theatre, devising, writing and text work. In 2019 she obtained an LCTL in Drama and Speech from Trinity College London. Following her training, Michela worked professionally as an actor in film and theatre. Notable productions include Ta' Fuqha Senduqa (Udjenja), and Shieken f'Tiġieġ (Whatstheirnames). She co-starred in Luzzu, directed by Alex Camilleri, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 2021. In 2024, Michela joined the Teatru Malta ensemble. Her most recent film is Camilleri's Żejtune.



TRUDY KERR

Al

After having worked as a graphic designer and creative director across London and the US, in 2013 Trudy ventured into radio and television presenting and production, as well as live events. She has produced over 400 television shows, and presented 250 shows.

Trudy went on to become a drive-time radio DJ and focusing on show production, live events MC, before launching The She Word, a popular female-centric podcast. Over the past 13 years, Trudy has carried out more than 2,500 interviews, ranging from prime ministers to pop stars.

In turn this has led Trudy to share her own story through keynote speeches, and encourage others in public speaking and podcasting through workshops.



DAVIDE TUCCI

Perry

Davide embarked on his journey in the arts in 2009. Since then, he has showcased his versatile talents across various platforms, including stage, film and television. Beyond local successes, Davide also made strides internationally with his work for leading platforms like Netflix, Amazon Studios and RAI, among others. Film titles include *Limestone Cowboy* and *13 Hours* while theatrical productions include *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *Raymond 'Fight' Beck*.

Davide returns to Spazju Kreattiv with *Press Mute* playing the role of Perry. One of the things which drew him to the project is his fascination with the dichotomy we all live in with today's realities: as humans we've never been so connected and simultaneously distant from each other. You can keep up with Davide through his socials @davidetucci.



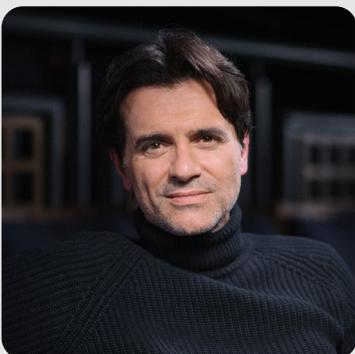
MARK LAURENCE ZAMMIT

Mark

Mark Laurence is a multiple award-winning journalist, television host and media producer. He is now a senior journalist and assistant editor for *Times of Malta* and producer of popular podcast *Times Talk*.

For several years, Mark Laurence worked on Malta's most-watched current affairs TV shows *Xarabank* and *L-Erbgħa Fost il-Ġimgħa*, making a name as one of Malta's best interviewers.

He is also the author of a children's book and the author and producer of a musical theatre production entirely designed, built and performed by 120 young people and staged between 2013 and 2015.



HERMAN GRECH

A journalist and editor, Herman has been directing theatrical productions for more than 30 years. These include Ben Elton's *Silly Cow* (1999), Frank McGuinness's *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* (2006), Kenneth Ross's *The Lockerbie Bomber* (2013), and Anders Lustgarten's *Lampedusa* (2016). In recent years, Herman has focused on original work, writing, directing, and producing *De-terminated: The Abortion Diaries* (2018) and *They Blew Her Up* (2021). The latter, focusing on Daphne Caruana Galizia's assassination, won the Arts Council's *Premju Għal Arti's Production of the Year* award and toured across Europe. Herman is also a former Artistic Director of MADC.

Creative Team

WRITER AND DIRECTOR

PRODUCER

SET DESIGN

LIGHT DESIGN

SOUND & PROJECTION DESIGN

PRODUCTION MANAGER

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

SET CONSTRUCTION

PRODUCTION INTERN

MARKETING MANAGER

PHOTOGRAPHER

VIDEOGRAPHER

ARTWORK AND DESIGN

REHEARSAL PHOTOGRAPHY

DOCUMENTARY VIDEOGRAPHY

Herman Grech

Toni Attard

Romualdo Moretti

Chris Gatt

Dylan Odom

Denise Perini

Emma Micallef

Joseph Galea

Shaun Azzopardi

Sean Borg

Edward De Gabriele

Benjie Zammit

Rebecca Zammit

Elisa Von Brockdorff

Sam Chetcuti

Udjenja Team

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

EVENTS & OPERATIONS MANAGER

PROJECTS COORDINATOR

ASSOCIATE, PRODUCTIONS & DEVELOPMENT

MARKETING MANAGER

ACCOUNTS AND FINANCE

LEGAL

Toni Attard

Laureen Agius

Maria Spiteri Zahra

Denise Perini

Sean Borg

Gilbert Micallef

Jeanine Rizzo

SPECIAL THANKS

Arts Council Malta, Fondazzjoni Kreattività, Times of Malta, Luke Dalli, Daniel Azzopardi, Gabija Kazlauskisene, Gianluca Mifsud, Joseph Galea, The Hyatt Regency, Best Print Malta, Progress Press.

The play runs for around 75 minutes with no interval.

udjenja

MARTA VELLA - JOSETTE CIAPPARA - CHRISTINE FRANCALANZA
CHRYSANDER AGIUS - SEAN BORG

DIREZZJONI TA'
TONI ATTARD

ADATTAMENT TA'
MARTA VELLA

IL-HAJJA
SIGRIETA

tan-*Nanna*
Genoueffa

ADATTAMENT TAR-RUMANZ
TA' TREVOR ZAHRA

24 TA' APRIL
- 3 TA' MEJJU

Teatru
Salesjan





udjenja