

UNDERMINED

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one chair,
one pint,
one actor,
one incredible story.

UNDERMINED IS UNMISSABLE

“a performance that is pure coal-powered electricity”

BROADWAY WORLD

★★★★★

“Danny exerts a powerful presence”

BROADWAY BABY

★★★★★

“partisan but passionate”

THE SCOTSMAN

★★★★★

“It is an entertaining show but it is also important”

BRITISH THEATRE GUIDE

★★★★★

“Undermined is not to be missed”

EDFRINGE REVIEW

★★★★★

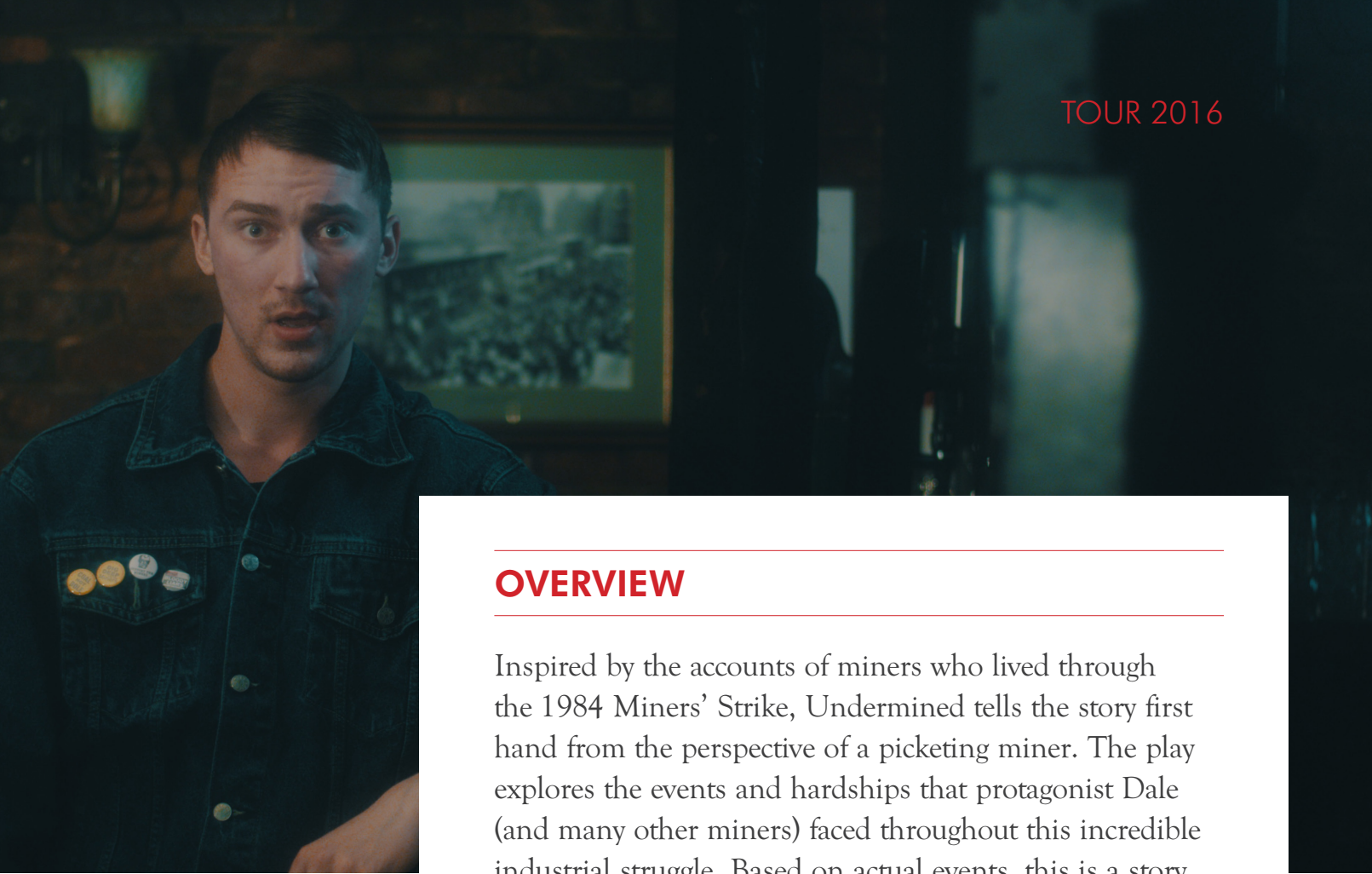
“engaging and extremely professional”

EDFRINGE REVIEW

★★★★★

“a compelling performance”

FRINGE REVIEW



OVERVIEW

Inspired by the accounts of miners who lived through the 1984 Miners’ Strike, Undermined tells the story first hand from the perspective of a picketing miner. The play explores the events and hardships that protagonist Dale (and many other miners) faced throughout this incredible industrial struggle. Based on actual events, this is a story about friendship and community offering an alternative view to the strike to that which was (and still often is) depicted in the media.

Fuelled by energetic and engaging storytelling, multi-rolling and direct address, Undermined offers up a message of unity and solidarity. Audiences are invited into the action and taken on the journey that Dale and his friends experienced in this divisive year. Whether you lived through the 80’s or not the piece delivers a powerful and compelling narrative that anyone can relate to, at the heart of which it is the story of friendship set against the ever-present backdrop of the strike.

UNDERMINED

“An excellent dramatisation of an immensely important period of modern history, and a great piece of contemporary theatre in its own right, Undermined is unmissable.”

AMY HANSON, BROADWAY WORLD

“Undermined is quite simply the best example of theatre telling a political story without labouring the point which I have seen for many a long year.”

DONALD STEWART, FRINGE REVIEW

Undermined is undoubtedly yet inexplicitly political. Mellor steers clear of the ‘Thatcher-Scargill’ struggle, and instead of focusing on the negotiation table focuses on the struggle that the miners faced – this is a show about people, not politicians. This in itself provokes a political response as we bear witness to scabs, picket lines and police lines shown with honest and truthful accuracy.

The production has been made ever more relevant to contemporary audience following the ongoing battle of Corbyn’s left-wing politics and the divisive tactics of both media and current government which, unlike the Strike, have been seen through by a large portion of the general public.

Undermined is a reminder of how much things have and haven’t changed.

“A play portrayed with compassion for the miners, can’t help thinking parallel’s with what’s currently supposed to be going on with the NHS.”

KAYE BRENTON, AUDIENCE MEMBER

ABOUT DANNY MELLOR PRESENTS

Danny Mellor Presents is the Company of Actor, Writer and Director, Danny Mellor. The Company came to life following Danny’s final showcase piece for his MA Acting course at The Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. The last module required the actors to create a piece which they had to write, direct and star in.

“Other actors could do with taking a leaf out of Danny Mellor’s book. The book would be called How to do a One Man Show Properly”

CHLOE ST GEORGE, EDFRINGE REVIEW

In order to challenge himself Danny embarked upon the process of creating a one-man show which was both relevant and which he felt passionate about. With the 30th anniversary of the end of the Miners’ Strike in 2015, Danny saw the opportunity to create a piece which appropriately voiced the truths of a period of social injustice while also offering a valuable message to a contemporary audience.

Undermined is Danny’s first independent production which focuses on exploring the personal and intimate side to performance through conversational storytelling and offers a youthful and contemporary approach to one of Britain’s most controversial disputes.





ABOUT THE SHOW

At the project's inception Danny wanted to use the show as a platform to give a voice to the miners and to educate younger generations about the strike. As one of the most important periods of Britain's modern history it is rare to find people under the age of 30 who have a good understanding of what happened during 1984's strike action.

As such Shafted was born and a half an hour performance packed with energy and flair was produced. A desire to take the show further and expose it to a larger audience saw Danny take the piece to long-time collaborator, director and friend; Ben Butcher. The pair set about developing Shafted and ultimately the show evolved in to Undermined.



"It's a compelling performance, part pit poetry, part storytelling of the highest order and intently theatrical."

DONALD STEWART, FRINGE REVIEW

Of course the development of any new performance must start with the considerations of the audience; what will they respond to? How can you tell many sides of a story as well as educate and inform while entertaining and engaging your audience as a single performer? How can you make what is often considered an 'un-sexy' political and historical topic digestible and enjoyable? The answer, of course, lies in the way that the story is told and the contemporary messages that can be derived from our past.

Having always wanted to try stand-up comedy Danny sought to tell the story of the strike through a one man performance, drawing on real stories for source material. While the project was never intended as a comedy, this approach allowed the piece to develop into a more personal and intimate performance which could hold the attention of an audience through real human connection and offer a more direct dialogue between performer and spectator.



"Danny Mellor's versatility shines in this honest show brimming with human truth."

JOE BALL, HEART TO HEART THEATRE COMPANY

"Mellor's grandad was a miner, and he presents a strongly-performed show with a sense of thoroughness and accuracy here, a piece which is partisan but passionate."

DAVID POLLOCK, THE SCOTSMAN

THE TEAM BEHIND UNDERMINED:

Danny Mellor (Actor/Writer/Director):

Danny is an actor from South Yorkshire where he is currently based. He has recently graduated from The Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama having formerly attended The University of Hull for three years studying Drama. Danny met Ben in Hull where they collaborated on many projects and forged their creative bond.

Danny’s main interests are in social, political and comedic work and everything in between.

Predominantly Danny’s work is in the theatre where he is most at home. In 2015 Danny toured a play focusing on Restorative Justice called After The Accident with Cube Theatre for which Danny received outstanding reviews. Having worked with Paines Plough at The Gate Theatre, Danny also played the young murderer and “star of the play” in Laura Lomas’ play Blister. Danny’s previous appearance at the fringe was in Melanie Anne Ball’s gritty two-hander Brush to which he gave “a fantastic performance as Matt, dominating the stage and demanding our attention”.

Outside of the theatre, Danny has also played a role in the final series of David Goyer’s Da Vinci’s Demons which airs in October. Other credits include Tender by Abi Morgan which was directed by Melanie Spencer, Two by Jim Cartwright which saw Danny’s notable comic and dramatic versatility in full flow and Everyman, a site-specific performance in which Danny played the lead.



Ben Butcher (Director):

Ben is a director from Essex and joined the Danny Mellor Presents team at the time of the project’s transition from Shafted to Undermined. The show continues his long-time collaboration with Danny having worked together with him on a number of projects at University.

Having graduated from The University of Hull in 2012 with a BA(hons) in Theatre Practice. His recent directing work includes Brush by Melanie Anne Ball with Synesthetic Theatre which was performed at Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2013, Insiders, a site sympathetic performance set in an old, disused Methodist church and Pornography by Simon Stephens, an ensemble performance inspired by the choral ideals in Greek tragedy. Ben is primarily interested in creating immersive theatre which challenges actor audience relationships.

Other directing credits include (Bye)Polar which he wrote himself, Stockholm by Bryony Lavery, a contemporary reimagining of GAS II by Georg Kaiser and Hard to Swallow by Mark Wheeler. Ben also managed Hull University’s Z Theatre Company, producing 6 shows and organising a company of 62 members at Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2011. Alongside his work with Danny Mellor Presents, Ben is also running a small youth theatre group while working as a Chief Operating Officer near Cambridge.



UNDERMINED

TECH REQUIREMENTS

Lighting: Basic lighting states, adaptable to space.

Sound: Stereo-sound system for sound cues in between scenes.

Minimum Get In Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

Minimum Get Out Time: 5 minutes

Running Time: 60 minutes

Undermined is highly adaptable to whatever space it is performed in. Lighting is the longest aspect of the get-in. The set comprises of a chair and a pint glass.

CONTACT

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“A dynamic and compelling performance from Danny Mellor as he tells an honest and devastating portrayal of Dale and his comrades in the depths of the miners’ strike. Its political heart is tragic as we draw parallels to the current Tory Government and question whether as a nation we will ever learn from the mistakes made. What has changed? Danny seamlessly navigates his way through the humour, the pride, the poverty and suffering of a community. If only there could be more one man show’s like this at the Fringe.”

STEF O'DRISCOLL, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR PAINES PLOUGH
& ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF INNER CITY THEATRE

UNDERMINED