

A LOOK BACK: *The Times Picture Annual 2016* is a brilliant testimony photojournalists Matthew Mirabelli, Darrin Zammit Lupi, Chris Sant

Photos worth a thousand words

Kevin Casha

Christmas is a time I particularly like ... it's a short, yearly period in which most of us usually break up our daily frenetic routines in order to attempt to bring a little more happiness into our lives and, hopefully, the life of others.

The festive season carries a lot of traditions and routines. One routine I like retaining during this time is to receive my copy of *The Times Picture Annual* and engross myself into writing its review.

This 2016 publication is now in its 11th edition and, as always, the level of images contained within its covers are testimony to the brilliant work of Maltese photojournalists. The work, a collection of the best captures by Darrin Zammit Lupi, Matthew Mirabelli, Chris Sant Fournier, Steve Zammit Lupi, and Mark Zammit Cordina, pictorially depict a valid cross-section of what has occurred on our island during the past year.

As one leafs through the categorised sections of the book, one is struck by the ingenious and creative way that most images have been recorded. Not only that, but as any photojournalist worth his salt will readily testify, pictures should "speak for themselves" and pass on a message without or with minimal text. The power of good photography lies in the message that it can transfer to viewers.

It is not easy to sift through the publication's photographs and pick out the best ones. Photography is also an art form and reviewing and assessing it is extremely subjective. What is a fantastic image for me might leave someone else totally cold. Understandably, the book's most prolific section is the news category and here we find various images which have stopping and reflective power.

The image by Darrin Zammit Lupi on pages 20 and 21 hits you because of the extreme contrast between the two sets of figures - whereas in the top part we have four casually garbed residents looking down at five heavily-armed AFM soldiers. Darrin is a master at juxtaposition and this is a perfect example.

Another image from the same photographer (page 23) makes one marvel at his keen eye for seeing an image. Here one just sees the top of a policeman's hat and four floodlights. Although they might not be everyone's cup of tea, not many are able to see and capture such pictures.

In what has been a quite turbulent year for local politicians and society, a good number of images revolve around the many issues of alleged corruption that have unfortunately plagued the running of the island. Most

images are dramatic and descriptive but a few refreshingly shine out through their humour. Such an image is the one on page 37 by Zammit Cordina. He captured the "decisive moment" when Prime Minister Muscat greets Federica Mogherini in Malta. This image makes one ponder as although the picture, as is ethical, has not been altered or doctored at all, the chosen split second in which the shutter was released sometimes can give a different interpretation - in this case a harmless and light-hearted one.



THE TIMES PICTURE ANNUAL 2016 // NEWS



STEVE ZAMMIT LUPI
November 2, 2016
Prime Minister Joseph Muscat welcomes EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini to Auberge de Cassala in Valletta.



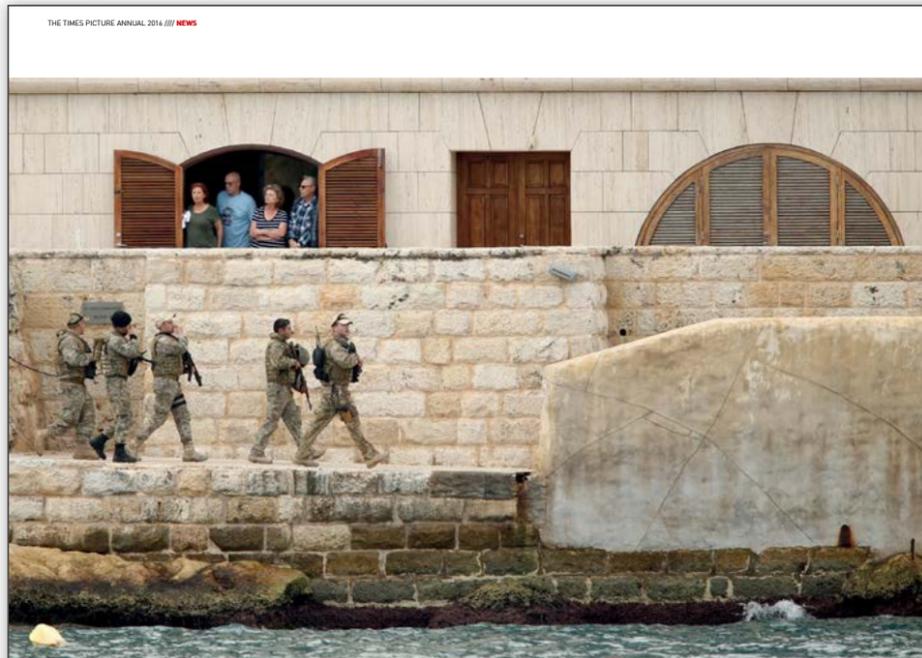
MARK ZAMMIT CORDINA
NOVEMBER 2, 2016
Prime Minister Joseph Muscat welcomes EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini to Auberge de Cassala in Valletta.

MATTHEW MIRABELLI
DECEMBER 4, 2015
At full stretch, Gorrie defender Quasima Sibba (left) slides in to dispossess Floriano's Maurizio Villa during their Premier League football match at the Hibernians Stadium in Corradino.



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A great image is the combination of the right choice of technique, moment, mood, composition and message
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On a much more serious note, the island had an unusual number of "professional" unsolved murders and the picture by Sant Fournier on pages 48 and 49 gives one the shudders. Taken in Buġibba after the explosion of a car bomb, it is very reminiscent of images associated with a terrorist attack - let us hope future issues of the *Annual* carry less pictures such as these.



DARRIN ZAMMIT LUPI
NOVEMBER 28, 2015
Armed Forces of Malta soldiers patrol outside St Angelo's in Valletta during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Valletta.

THE TIMES PICTURE ANNUAL 2016 // NEWS



STEVE ZAMMIT LUPI
OCTOBER 6, 2014
A policeman quickly guides traffic away from a roadblock in gridlocked morning traffic near Paola.



STEVE ZAMMIT LUPI
OCTOBER 21, 2014
A farmer rescues his goat the day after a fireworks explosion wrecked his farm shed in Bugibba. The previous day's explosion in the farmer's field from which fireworks were supposed to be set off wrecked a number of cars and killed several farm animals.