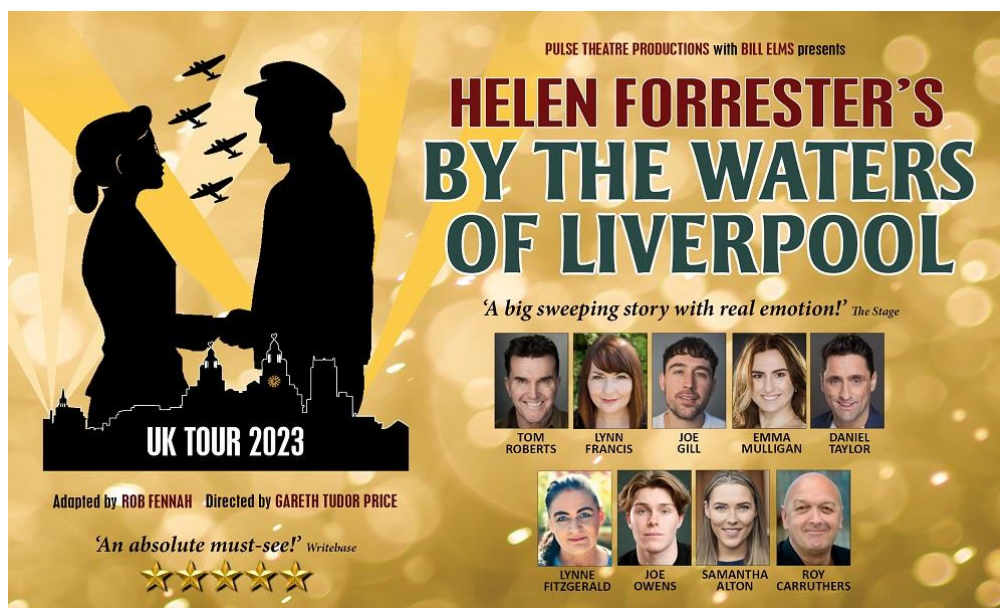


Pulse Theatre Productions and Bill Elms present



# FULL CAST ANNOUNCED FOR AUTUMN TOUR OF HELEN FORRESTER PLAY 'BY THE WATERS OF LIVERPOOL' WITH OPENING VENUE ALSO REVEALED

Coronation Street's Tom Roberts and Emmerdale's Joe Gill complete the cast, joined by newcomer Emma Mulligan in the lead role of Helen

Line-up also features Lynn Francis, Daniel Taylor, Lynne Fitzgerald, Joe Owens, Samantha Alton, and Roy Carruthers

Tour will open at The Auditorium in Liverpool, as M&S Bank Arena steps in to save the day after The Epstein Theatre announces closure

Autumn 2023 UK Tour 12 venues feature Crewe, Coventry, Sale, Rhyl, Darlington, Lichfield, St Helens, Southport, Halifax, Lytham, and New Brighton

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The creative team bringing Helen Forrester play By The Waters Of Liverpool to stages across the UK this Autumn have revealed its full cast – along with a change to the Liverpool venue opening the tour.

The highly anticipated **By The Waters Of Liverpool Autumn 2023 UK Tour** has been a long time coming since its inaugural 12-week 17-venue tour in Spring 2020 was abandoned after visiting only three theatres due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

**The 2023 eight-week tour will now open at The Auditorium at M&S Bank Arena Liverpool on Monday 4 September, and visit a further 11 venues across the country.**

The tour was scheduled to open with 15 performances at the **historic Grade II Listed Epstein Theatre** in Liverpool city centre. However, the venue's management team last week announced it would close at the end of June due to cuts in council funding, making the venue untenable.

**The three remaining roles have now been announced. Tom Roberts will play John Forrester, Helen's father. Joe Gill will play Harry O'Dwyer (Helen's love interest). Newcomer Emma Mulligan will take the lead role of Helen Forrester.**

**The trio complete the nine-strong cast playing over 50 characters, and also features Lynn Francis, Daniel Taylor, Lynne Fitzgerald, Joe Owens, Samantha Alton, and Roy Carruthers who were all announced in April.**

The new stage production is based on the book of the same name by **the acclaimed author Helen Forrester**. Her enigmatic and touching portrayal of her life story continues to win her fans worldwide through four best-selling volumes of autobiography **Twopence To Cross The Mersey, Liverpool Miss, By The Waters of Liverpool, and Lime Street At Two.**

**By The Waters Of Liverpool Autumn 2023 UK Tour** finally ventures out across the UK after its premiere run was cut short in March 2020. After some years in the planning, the production was just two weeks into a 17-venue tour spanning three months when the country went into a national lockdown.

**By The Waters Of Liverpool Autumn 2023 UK Tour starts in Liverpool and finishes in New Brighton – both locations hugely important in Helen's life story.**

The tour will open with four performances at **The Auditorium at M&S Bank Arena**, later concluding with six days at the **Floral Pavilion in New Brighton** in late October – just a few miles from where Helen Forrester was born in Wirral.

Between Liverpool and New Brighton, the production will also visit venues in **Crewe, Coventry, Sale, Rhyl, Darlington, Lichfield, St Helens, Southport, Halifax, and Lytham.**

**By The Waters Of Liverpool** is a stunning period drama produced by the team who brought the smash-hit **Twopence To Cross The Mersey** to the stage to rave reviews for a UK tour in Autumn 2022.

The creative team are producers **Rob Fennah and Lynn McDermott for Pulse Theatre Productions and Bill Elms**. The show is directed by **Gareth Tudor Price** and written by **Rob Fennah**.

The play also features sizeable chunks from Helen's earlier book **Liverpool Miss**, together with flashbacks to **Twopence To Cross The Mersey** and elements of **Lime Street At Two** to give audiences a complete picture of her life.

**Tom Roberts** has countless television credits including bad boy Scott Emberton in Coronation Street; DS Flanagan in Emmerdale; five seasons as Tony in 2point4 Children; EastEnders; Casualty; Holby City; Waterloo Road; Hustle; Brookside; Hollyoaks; Boon; and The Bill. Film credits include The Bradford Riots; Oh Mary, This London; The Casebook Of Eddie Brewer; Doreen: The Movie; and Just 14.

Having trained at Mountview Drama School, Tom's theatre credits include Blood Brothers, Fiddler On The Roof, Kes, Death Of A Salesman, The Three Musketeers, Misconceptions, Bouncers, Changing Rooms, Intimate Exchanges, Frankenstein, April In Paris, Educating Rita, The Holly And The Ivy, On Golden Pond, and The Verdict. His extensive radio work includes drama for BBC Radio 4, as well as several appearances on The Archers.

**Joe Gill** is best known for playing the role of Finn Barton in ITV's Emmerdale. He has also appeared in Brassic, Casualty, In The Flesh, The Sparticle Mystery, River City, In With The Flynns, and short film The Rest Is Flowers. Joe recently wrapped on his first leading feature film role in Treading Water, due for release later this year.

On stage Joe recently appeared in Into Battle at Greenwich Theatre to rave reviews. Theatre credits also include The Full Monty, Butterfly House, Tiger, Romeo & Juliet, and The Comedy of Errors. He has also worked on a web series BookStreamz – narrating and performing a wide variety of stories from well-known and undiscovered authors, streamed live to the homes of audiences.

**Emma Mulligan** is a 2021 acting graduate from East 15 Acting School. She is originally from Northern Ireland. Most recently she played the role of Marie in short film Undead Dilemma. Emma played numerous roles at drama school, including Dunyasha in The Cherry Orchard, Inez in No Exit, and Mattie-Fae in August: Osage County.

**Four of the cast members announced recently – Lynn Francis, Daniel Taylor, Lynne Fitzgerald, and Roy Carruthers – are all returning after appearing in the Twopence To Cross The Mersey tour last year.**

**Lynn Francis** is well-known on the Liverpool theatre scene. Her theatre credits include The Royal, Ladies Day, A Nightmare On Lime Street, and The Salon. Screen roles include Reds & Blues, The Ballad Of Dixie & Kenny, and Charlie Noades RIP. She also worked alongside Ian Hart and Dougray Scott in film The Lie Is Dead.

**Daniel Taylor** is an award-winning actor, producer, and theatre director. He has recently toured the UK in the lead role of Something About George – The George Harrison Story. Theatre credits also include Blood Brothers, The Very Best Of Tommy Cooper, Lennon: Through A Glass Onion, Down The Dock Road, and A Midsummer's Night's Dream. Television credits include Loose Women, The Bill, and Miranda's Games With Showbiz Names.

**Lynne Fitzgerald** is best known for her comedy acting role. She is also an acclaimed writer and director. Theatre credits include *Desperate Scousewives*, *2Georgeous4U*, *Two*, *The Importance Of Being Earnest*, *Catfish Therapy*, *The Salon*, *Night Collar*, and *Last Train To Auschwitz*.

**Joe Owens** has most recently been seen in the new and reimagined production of *Masquerade* at Liverpool's Epstein Theatre. His training includes the BA Acting course and Foundation Certificate at LIPA, as well numerous years spent with the Young Everyman and Playhouse (YEP) company. Credits include *Dogs* directed by Nathan Powell; *Love's Labour's Lost* directed by Conor Wray; and *Posh* directed by Francesca Goodridge.

**Samantha Alton** is best known for her one-woman performance as Kitty in *Kitty, Queen of The Washhouse*, at Shakespeare North Playhouse. She has been performing professional for almost a decade now after graduating with first class honours in 2013.

**Roy Carruthers** is a familiar face on stages in Liverpool. Theatre credits include *Ladies Night*, *Funny Money*, *Night Collar*, *The Price*, and *Lennon's Banjo*. Television credits include *Good Cop*, and *Longford*. Film credits *Sparkle*. Roy has also appeared on Radio 4's *Pick Of The Week* programme.

**Writer and producer Rob Fennah enjoyed a long friendship with Helen Forrester** since adapting her first book **Twopence To Cross The Mersey** into a stage musical in 1994. It premiered at the Liverpool Empire Theatre and Helen travelled from her home in Edmonton, Canada, to see first-hand her story brought to life on stage. Rob later went on to develop *Twopence* into a straight play which has toured successfully since its first outing in 2015.

Since the author's death in 2011, Rob has remained friends with Helen's son Robert Bhatia. The productions are **fully endorsed by the Helen Forrester Estate**.

**Writer and producer Rob Fennah said:** *"Announcing the full cast is taking another major step forward in bringing *By The Waters Of Liverpool* to life on stage once again. Our outstanding cast will tell Helen Forrester's remarkable life story in ways to make people stop and think, laugh and cry, but most of all to appreciate her incredible writing."*

**Co-producer Bill Elms added:** *"The announcement of *The Epstein Theatre* closure in Liverpool has been a huge blow across the city and the wider creative arts industry. We have been working hard to find a venue to ensure the tour can still start in Liverpool, a vital backdrop to Helen's story. So we're extremely thankful and grateful to the M&S Bank Arena for stepping in to save the day, which sees us transfer the show to *The Auditorium* – sitting on the banks of the River Mersey. It is a very fitting move now that *By The Waters Of Liverpool* is actually opening by the waters of Liverpool! It's great knowing we'll all be back out there again in less than three months taking Helen's wonderful story to audiences across the UK."*

**By The Waters Of Liverpool** has sold more than a **million books**. It is set in the 1930s after Helen's father went bankrupt during the Depression. Her family were forced to leave behind the nannies, servants and comfortable middle-class life in the South West of England. The Forrester's chose Liverpool to rebuild their shattered lives. They were in for a terrible shock. Taken out of school to look after her young siblings, Helen is sick of being treated as an unpaid slave and begins a bitter fight with her parents for the right to

go out to work and make her own way in life. But by 1939 and with Britain on the verge of war Helen, now aged 20, has still never been kissed by a man. But things start looking up for her when she meets a tall strong seaman and falls in love.

Helen's literary achievements were further celebrated in 2020 to mark her 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday when an iconic **Blue Plaque** was unveiled at the **late author's family home in Hoylake on the Wirral, a place which featured heavily in her work.**

**Helen Forrester's son, Robert Bhatia, said:** *"The partnership between playwright Rob Fennah and my mother Helen, and her legacy, has been outstanding."*

**Helen Forrester's best-selling volumes of autobiography include Twopence To Cross The Mersey, Liverpool Miss, By The Waters Of Liverpool, and Lime Street At Two.**

**Adapted by Rob Fennah · Directed by Gareth Tudor Price**  
**Produced by Pulse Theatre Productions and Bill Elms**  
**Fully endorsed by the Helen Forrester Estate**

**Website:** [www.bythewatersofliverpool.com](http://www.bythewatersofliverpool.com)  
**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/ByTheWatersThePlay](http://www.facebook.com/ByTheWatersThePlay)  
**YouTube:** <https://youtu.be/r6TLMnPUleg>

## **LISTING INFORMATION**

**HELEN FORRESTER'S  
BY THE WATERS OF LIVERPOOL**

**LIVERPOOL – THE AUDITORIUM AT M&S BANK ARENA**  
**Monday 4 September – Wednesday 6 September 2023**  
[www.mandsbankarena.com](http://www.mandsbankarena.com)

**CREWE – LYCEUM**  
**Monday 18 September – Tuesday 19 September 2023**  
[www.crewelyceum.co.uk](http://www.crewelyceum.co.uk)

**COVENTRY – ALBANY THEATRE**  
**Wednesday 20 September – Thursday 21 September 2023**  
[www.albanytheatre.co.uk](http://www.albanytheatre.co.uk)

**SALE – WATERSIDE**  
**Friday 22 September – Saturday 23 September 2023**  
[www.watersidearts.org](http://www.watersidearts.org)

**RHYL – PAVILION**  
**Tuesday 26 September – Wednesday 27 September 2023**  
[www.rhylpavilion.co.uk](http://www.rhylpavilion.co.uk)

**DARLINGTON – HIPPODROME**

**Friday 29 September – Saturday 30 September 2023**

**[www.darlingtonhippodrome.co.uk](http://www.darlingtonhippodrome.co.uk)**

**LICHFIELD – GARRICK**

**Tuesday 3 October – Wednesday 4 October 2023**

**[www.lichfieldgarrick.com](http://www.lichfieldgarrick.com)**

**ST HELENS – THEATRE ROYAL**

**Monday 9 October – Wednesday 11 October 2023**

**[www.sthelenstheatreroyal.com](http://www.sthelenstheatreroyal.com)**

**SOUTHPORT– THE ATKINSON**

**Thursday 12 October – Saturday 14 October 2023**

**[www.theatkinson.co.uk](http://www.theatkinson.co.uk)**

**HALIFAX – VICTORIA THEATRE**

**Monday 16 October – Tuesday 17 October 2023**

**[www.victoriatheatre.co.uk](http://www.victoriatheatre.co.uk)**

**LYTHAM – LOWTHER PAVILION**

**Thursday 19 October – Saturday 21 October 2023**

**[www.lowtherpavilion.co.uk](http://www.lowtherpavilion.co.uk)**

**NEW BRIGHTON – FLORAL PAVILION**

**Tuesday 24 October – Sunday 29 October 2023**

**[www.floralpavilion.com](http://www.floralpavilion.com)**

**ENDS**

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**For more information, interviews or images please contact Erica Dillon at Bill Elms Associates on [erica@billelms.com](mailto:erica@billelms.com)**

**EDITORS NOTES**

**PRODUCTION IMAGES**

Please credit Anthony Robling when using production images.

Production images are from the By The Waters Of Liverpool Tour 2020

**INTERVIEWS / REVIEW TICKETS**

Interviews with the cast and writers are available upon request. Please send requests to Erica Dillon on [erica@billelms.com](mailto:erica@billelms.com)

**EDITOR'S NOTES**

### More about Helen Forrester

Helen Forrester was born June Huband in Hoylake, Cheshire (now in Merseyside), the eldest of seven children of inept, socialite, middle-class parents who lived on credit. When her father was made bankrupt during the Great Depression, the family was thrown into poverty. Evicted from their comfortable home in an English market town and with nothing more than the clothes they stood up in, the large family took the train to Liverpool where they hoped to rebuild their lives. While Forrester's father searched unsuccessfully for work, the family were forced to live together in a single room. As the eldest child, the 12-year-old Helen was kept away from school to look after her six younger brothers and sisters. For the next few years the family were forced to rely on meagre hand-outs from the parish, and the kindness of strangers. At the age of 14 Forrester rebelled against her life of drudgery and her parents agreed to allow her to attend evening classes to make up for her missed years of education.

Throughout her teenage years, Forrester worked for a charitable organisation in Liverpool and Bootle, which provided background for her novels *Liverpool Daisy*, *A Cuppa Tea and an Aspirin*, and *Three Women of Liverpool*. After surviving the Blitzing of Liverpool and losing two consecutive fiancés to the Second World War she met and, in 1950, married Dr. Avadh Bhatia; her life with him in India provided background for *Thursday's Child* and *The Moneylenders of Shahpur*. The couple travelled widely, eventually settling in Edmonton, Canada, in 1955, where Dr. Bhatia became the director of the Theoretical Physics Institute at the University of Alberta. He was a pioneer in electronic transport theory and the study of diffraction of light by ultrasonic waves. The best-selling memoir of her childhood was *Twopence to Cross the Mersey*. It was later turned into a successful musical. Living in Alberta provided background for Forrester's novels *The Latchkey Kid* and *The Lemon Tree*. *Yes Mama*, which takes place mostly in late 19th and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Liverpool, also includes a section about Alberta. She died on 24 November 2011 in Edmonton, Alberta.