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## TWOPENCE TO EMBARK ON ITS NEXT JOURNEY WITH 3-WEEK RUN AT LIVERPOOL'S ROYAL COURT

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Following a hugely successful tour across Merseyside earlier this year, **Twopence to Cross the Mersey** will return for a **three-week run next Autumn** at the newly refurbished **Royal Court Theatre** in Liverpool.

The **new stage play version** of *Helen Forrester's Twopence to Cross the Mersey* wowed audiences in Liverpool, Southport, St Helens and Wirral during a six-week tour in Spring 2015.

Due to popular demand, **Twopence to Cross the Mersey** will return to entertain larger audiences for 23 shows at the popular **Royal Court**, which has undergone a multi-million pound refurbishment.

The new version is being staged by **Pulse Records Ltd** in collaboration with producer and stage writer **Rob Fennah** and producer **Bill Elms**. They are joined by director **Bob Eaton**.

**The show will open on Tuesday, 20 September, 2016 and will run for three weeks until Saturday, 8 October, 2016. Tickets go on sale at 10am this Friday (16 October).**

**Preview performance tickets for Tuesday and Wednesday, 20 and 21 September, 2016, are priced at £15 (excluding booking fee). Standard ticket prices then range between £20 and £26 (excluding booking fee).**

Full cast details will be announced in the coming months.

**Producer and stage writer Rob Fennah said:** *"I had always visualised Twopence to Cross the Mersey as a straight play and was thrilled when audience and reviewers alike gave the new adaptation a big thumbs up. Taking the play to the Royal Court Liverpool will enable even greater numbers of Helen's readers to come and see her most famous book come to life on stage."*

*“Earlier this year, Helen's son, Robert Bhatia, and his family, flew in from Canada especially to see it. Robert told me he could feel his mother's presence on the stage and was so captivated by the performance he was moved to tears.”*

**Kevin Fearon, Chief Executive of Royal Court Liverpool, added:** *“Twopence has always been a show that has gone down well in the city and I think that it will be a great fit for our audience. Bob Eaton, who has directed so much here, has done a great job with this version and the cast were fantastic too. I'm already looking forward to seeing it on the Royal Court stage!”*

**Helen Forrester's Twopence to Cross the Mersey** tells the true story of a young girl and her formerly wealthy family as they are suddenly thrown into poverty during the Great Depression of the 1930s. Leaving behind the nannies, servants and comfortable middle-class life in the South West of England, they uproot their shattered lives and choose Liverpool as the place to start again to rebuild their dreams and fortune. Unbeknown to them however, a terrible shock awaits them.

This year's tour of the Twopence stage play included a momentous milestone – 21 years since it was first performed to audiences at the Liverpool Empire, in its musical form.

Follow on **Facebook/TwopenceThePlay** or **twitter @twopenceplay**

#### **PERFORMANCE DETAILS**

##### **TWOPENCE TO CROSS THE MERSEY – The Stage Play**

##### **Royal Court Theatre Liverpool**

Tuesday, 20 September, 2016 – Saturday, 8 October, 2016

Matinees Thursday and Saturday

No Sunday performances

Tickets: £20 – £26

Preview performances: All seats £15 (20 & 21 September 2016)

To book tickets call **Royal Court Liverpool** on **0151 709 4321**, online at [www.royalcourtLiverpool.com](http://www.royalcourtLiverpool.com) or in person at the Royal Court Box Office from 10am to 6pm, Monday to Saturday. (Booking and handling fees may apply)

Tickets can also be purchased from **TicketQuarter** on **0844 8000 410** online at [www.ticketquarter.co.uk](http://www.ticketquarter.co.uk) or in person at Queen Square, Liverpool City Centre. (Booking and handling fees may apply)

#### **VENUE DETAILS**

Royal Court Liverpool

1 Roe Street

Liverpool

L1 1HL

0151 709 4321

[www.royalcourtLiverpool.com](http://www.royalcourtLiverpool.com)

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**For more information, interviews, images, review or competition ticket requests please contact Bill Elms at Bill Elms Associates on 0151 245 0135 or [bill@billelms.com](mailto:bill@billelms.com).**

## **EDITORS NOTES**

### **PRESS NIGHT: Thursday, 22 September, 2016**

#### 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.