

A new movie partly set in Liverpool and featuring Beatles songs has just hit our cinema screens. Janet Tansley speaks to one of its home-grown stars

**A**CTRESS Angela Mounsey provided the make-up department with a major headache during the filming of her Hollywood debut film.

The 50-year-old from Hale Village plays a 40-year-old single mum in *Across The Universe*, in which rock singer Bono plays a hippy guru.

But getting her to look the right age proved a nightmare challenge most of us would welcome.

"They couldn't get me to look old enough," she laughs. "I'm supposed to play a 40-year-old single mum from Liverpool for whom life has been hard, but on the second day of filming the make-up woman was saying 'no, you still look too young'."

"She practically had to black out my eyes and draw in frown lines."

So is it years of clean and healthy living which have given her her youthful looks?

"I don't know. I am clean living and I'm a vegetarian," says Angela. "But I don't think that's got anything to do with it. I think people who are younger than you have a strange perception of what '50' is like."

"Although I was asked to provide a photo of myself in my 20s for the film, so it could be superimposed on someone else and I was like, 'what's this little face peering out of a 1940s hairdo?' I looked like a kid."

In *Across The Universe* Angela plays Martha, the mother of Liverpoolian dockworker Jude, played by Jim Sturgess.

Set in the 60s, it follows Jude's search to find his American father, an GI based at Burtonwood during the war, and his subsequent involvement in the US protest movement.

A familiar tale but done with an unusual twist.

"It's a bit like *Moulin Rouge*," says Angela. "There is very little dialogue, instead the film is set to Beatles music which the cast reinterpret. It's the songs which tell the story. It's very

**PREACH:** Bono stars as a guru

# A date with Bono and Izzard



LOOKING GOOD: Angela Mounsey from Hale village is starring in the film *Across The Universe*



**STREET CRED:** Extras gather for a scene filmed in Stanley Dock

**SEXY:** Selma Hayak (centre) in a scene from *Across The Universe*



psychedelic, but the Beatles' songs are timeless and it's interesting to hear them approached differently.

"It's been beautifully shot in New York and Liverpool, and there are some wonderful scenes especially in Liverpool at Fort Perch Rock and the waterfront."

Co-starring Bono, Eddie Izzard and Joe Cocker, the film marks 'jobbing actress' Angela's Hollywood debut.

One of her other recent productions is an audio visual film for the newly re-opened Sudley House art gallery.

She plays the role of former mistress, Emma Holt, who bequeathed the house, pictures and gardens to the people of Liverpool.

"I welcome people to the house," says Angela, who adds: "I am also the voice of the Planetarium at National Museums Liverpool, regaling the wonders of the

solar system.

"And roles like these are just as important as the Hollywood roles. They introduce children to the world of learning and different places and history. You get the background on the characters and direction throughout the filming.

"The intensity that you bring to these roles, too, is the same - you just don't get the limo!"

Angela also works for a training consultancy, AFTA Thought.

It provides actors for training conferences and workshops, held mostly for public sector managers and staff.

But its unusual approach to the way it designed and delivered training packages soon saw it taking on a more active and far-reaching role.

"We provide films for a variety of organisations or groups from the mental

health professions to child protection, for example.

"I have been, for instance a domestic violence victim. My last job was for Merseyside police playing a

rape victim giving her testimony.

"It was harrowing, delivering those lines.

"But this will be shown to judges, people in the health service and police officers, so that they can understand what

a person goes through, why a 'woman like me' doesn't walk away, that it's not that she's being weak.

"If, through what I do, I can save someone from going through a dreadful ordeal and make those working with them more aware, then I have achieved something.

"It's important and it shows what, as an actor, you can do."

Angela would like to do more films in the future but, while she prepares she is not sitting at home twiddling her thumbs.

She's a member of RbA Management, the only - she believes - co-operative agency in the city.

"It means the people

promoting the actors are the actors themselves. We take it in turns to man the office - it's my turn at the moment - and that also means we know exactly what the actors are up to and we can take great delight when one of us takes part in a film like *Across The Universe*.

"It's great kudos for us and we have had success with a couple of films including *Sparkle*, starring Shaun Evans, Bob Hoskins, Stockard Channing and Anthony Head, in which one of our members, Roy Carruthers appeared.

"There is a pecking order with agencies and the more success we have, the higher up the pecking order we go and the more opportunities may be shown to us."

Meanwhile Angela is revelling in the success of *Across The Universe* and her dazzling appearance at the premiere: "I'm just glad I scrubbed-up well."

◆ *Across The Universe* is out now on general release



**CO-STAR:** Eddie Izzard in a scene from *Across The Universe*