

'Immediate. Visceral. Anarchic. Enticing. The magical mundane spirals into sensory overload until you feel you've actually spent a weekend at Blackpool sea front. With echoes of Kathy Acker and Ann Quinn, Helen Palmer has the voice of a free spirited writer unafraid to speak their truth.' — Patrick Jones

# Pleasure Beach

*Helen Palmer*

# Pleasure Beach

*Helen Palmer*

16 June 2023

RRP £12

Paperback + ebook

ISBN: 978-1-913513-44-3

*Pleasure Beach* is a queer love story from the North West's saucy seaside paradise, Blackpool, on one day: 16 June 1999. Steeped in the alternative culture and music of the 1990s, *Pleasure Beach* follows the interconnecting journeys and thoughts of three young women over the course of 24 hours and over 18 chapters which are structured and themed after James Joyce's *Ulysses*.

Hedonist and wannabe playwright Olga Adessi, 19, is struggling along the prom to get to her morning shift at the chippy with a monstrous hangover, trying to remember what happened last night with Rachel Watkins, 19, a strange and fragile girl. Former gymnast and teenage mum Treesa Reynolds, 19, is off to the Sandcastle Waterpark with her mum Lou and daughter Lulu, looking forward to a sausage and egg McMuffin on the way.

*Pleasure Beach* breathes and exhales the unique sea air, fish and chips, donuts and candyfloss scents of Blackpool, bringing to life everything the town is famous for, portraying the gritty magic and sheer unadulterated fun of the place and its people across a spectrum of sensory experiences and emotions.



Helen Palmer is a writer from Blackpool. She is the author of *Deleuze and Futurism: A Manifesto for Nonsense* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014) and *Queer Defamiliarisation: Writing, Mattering, Making Strange* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press). She is a 2023 Interdisciplinary Resident at the Oak Spring Garden Foundation, Virginia, USA. She currently lives in Vienna. *Pleasure Beach* is her first novel.

For press enquiries please contact Rory Cook at [rory@prototypepublishing.co.uk](mailto:rory@prototypepublishing.co.uk)

## PRAISE FOR *PLEASURE BEACH*

'A book as mind-bending as Blackpool itself.' — **Jeremy Deller**

'Strap in for a heady rollercoaster ride where stream of consciousness, littered with song lyrics, fuses and fractures into a play script and concrete poetry to create a new language. Immediate. Visceral. Anarchic. Enticing. The magical mundane spirals into sensory overload until you feel you've actually spent a weekend at Blackpool sea front. With echoes of Kathy Acker and Ann Quinn, Helen Palmer has the voice of a free spirited writer unafraid to speak their truth.' — **Patrick Jones**

'*Pleasure Beach* is the alcopop-soaked, stylistically promiscuous Y2K queer seaside teenage experimental novel you never knew you needed – with its chorus of voices ranging from Jacques Lacan to the Vengaboys and an impossibly sweet central romance, it is funny, sexy, class-conscious and, as they used to say, intensely intense.' — **Owen Hatherley**

'*Pleasure Beach* does for neon lycra cycling shorts, Nik Naks, and acid trips what Ulysses did for lemon soap: it kaleidoscopes the everyday in a way that remakes the world by recording the bits of it that all too often slip out of view of the literary. 1999 is right before your eyes reading this novel, and Helen Palmer is Blackpool's incomparable archivist. A social history of fun's commodification and excess, an intellectual ride, a real queer pleasure.'

— **H. Gareth Gavin**

'In *Pleasure Beach* twenty-four hours becomes a female and feminist epic, a compulsive and convulsive kind of ecstasy that makes myth of Blackpool and young women. The 'we' of the novel feels like a chorus hurtling through the same day and night as Olga, Rachel and Treesa, where time warps and extends around the momentum of falling in love. Walking a tightrope between the metaphor and the real, Palmer writes against humans as symbolic figures, collapsing together the internal and the external so that there is a kind of unreal-real rawness throughout. The intimacy of *Pleasure Beach* raves through the text, critiquing patriarchy and capitalism with a structure and style that upends and overturns, a tumult of fixation and energy. The novel is electrifying while redefining what the electric could be.'

— **Prudence Bussey-Chamberlain**

## ABOUT PROTOTYPE

Founded in 2019, Prototype is a publisher of fiction, poetry, anthologies and interdisciplinary projects. With an emphasis on producing unique and beautiful books, we are committed to creating new possibilities in publishing and championing the work of new and established voices in contemporary literature.

Recent prose titles include *Lori & Joe*, the highly-anticipated second novel from Goldsmiths Prize-shortlisted author Amy Arnold, Jen Calleja's novel *Vehicle*, shortlisted for the Short Fiction/University of Essex Prize, and Yuri Felsen's lost modernist novel *Deceit*, in its first English translation by Bryan Karetnyk. Recent titles from House Sparrow Press, an imprint of Prototype, include Derek Jarman's sole piece of narrative fiction, *Through the Billboard Promised Land Without Ever Stopping*. Recent poetry titles include *Incubation: a space for monsters* by Bhanu Kapil, in its first UK edition, Lavinia Singer's collection *Artifice*, and a second edition of Otis Mensah's acclaimed debut collection *Safe Metamorphosis*. In 2022 we published *Journeys Across Breath*, the first volume of collected poems by Stephen Watts, and Lucy Mercer's debut collection *Emblem*, which was The Poetry Book Society's Summer Choice for 2022. Lila Matsumoto's *Two Twin Pipes Sprout Water*, which we published in 2021, was also a Poetry Book Society Recommendation.