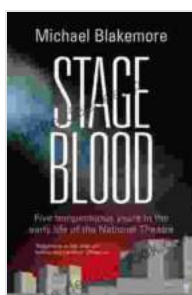


Five Tempestuous Years In The Early Life Of The National Theatre

The National Theatre, founded in 1963, has had a tumultuous start. The theatre's first five years were filled with controversy, financial difficulties, and artistic struggles. But despite the challenges, the theatre managed to survive and eventually thrive.



Stage Blood: Five tempestuous years in the early life of the National Theatre by Michael Blakemore

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 991 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 368 pages



The Early Years

The National Theatre was founded in 1963 by a group of actors, directors, and producers who believed that there was a need for a national theatre in England. The theatre's first home was the Old Vic Theatre in London. However, the theatre was soon forced to move out of the Old Vic due to financial difficulties.

In 1967, the National Theatre moved to its current home on the South Bank of the River Thames. The new theatre was designed by Denys Lasdun and

is one of the most iconic buildings in London.

Artistic Struggles

The National Theatre's early years were also marked by artistic struggles. The theatre's first artistic director, Laurence Olivier, was a controversial figure. Olivier was a brilliant actor and director, but he was also known for his temper and his autocratic style of leadership.

Olivier's tenure at the National Theatre was marked by a number of high-profile failures. In 1963, the theatre's production of "Hamlet" was a critical and commercial disaster. Olivier also clashed with a number of the theatre's actors and directors.

Financial Difficulties

The National Theatre also faced a number of financial difficulties in its early years. The theatre's budget was constantly being cut, and it was often forced to rely on government subsidies.

In 1979, the National Theatre was on the verge of bankruptcy. However, the theatre was saved by a group of private donors who provided the theatre with a £10 million loan.

The Turning Point

The National Theatre's fortunes began to change in the early 1980s. In 1982, Peter Hall became the theatre's artistic director. Hall was a more conciliatory figure than Olivier, and he was able to unite the theatre's company.

Hall also introduced a number of new initiatives that helped to improve the theatre's finances. He increased the number of productions that the theatre staged each year, and he also raised ticket prices.

A New Era

The National Theatre has come a long way since its tumultuous early years. The theatre is now one of the most successful and respected theatres in the world. The theatre's productions are regularly praised by critics and audiences, and the theatre has won a number of prestigious awards.

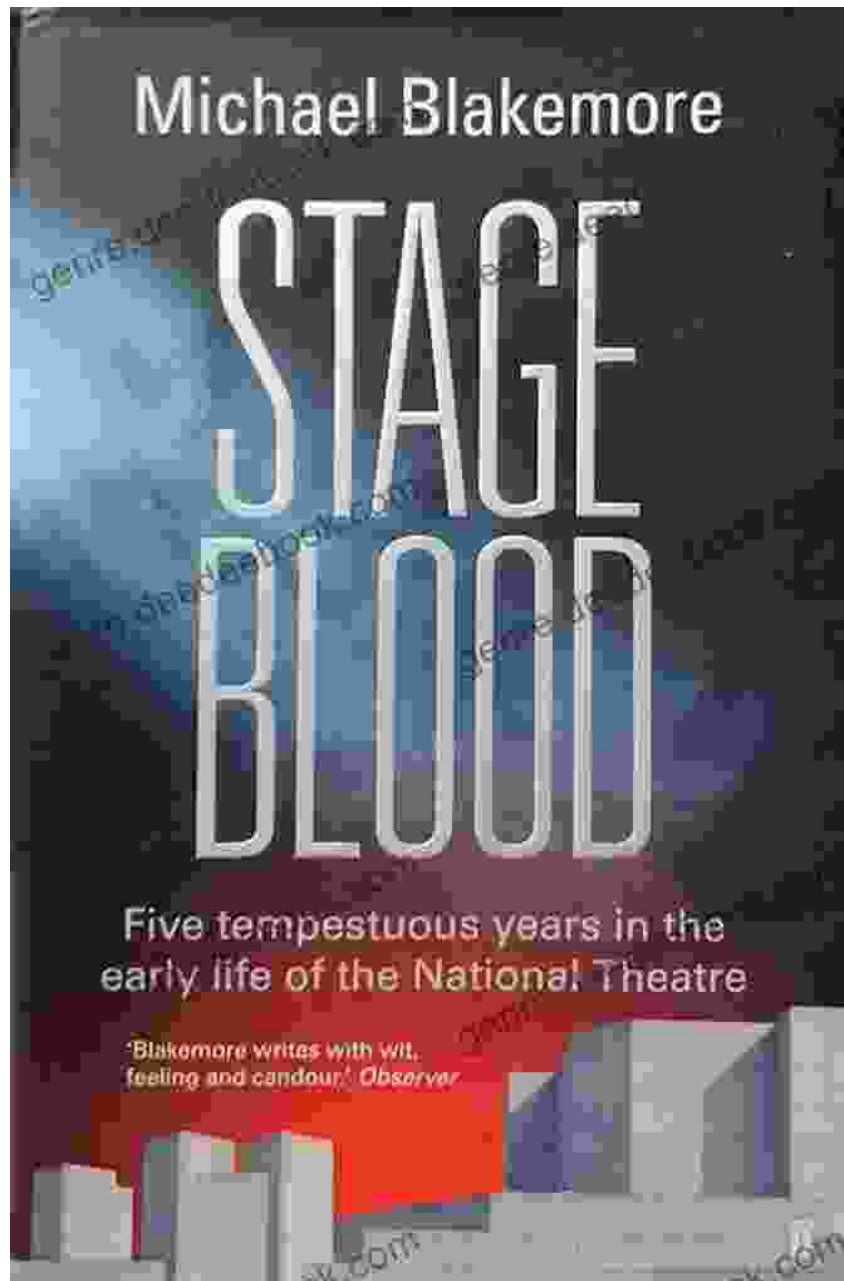
The National Theatre is a vital part of British culture. The theatre provides a space for artists to create new work, and it also helps to educate and inspire audiences. The National Theatre is a treasure that should be cherished for generations to come.

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The National Theatre building on the South Bank of the River Thames

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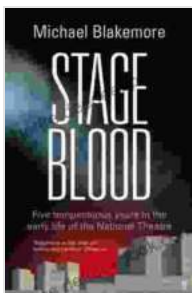


A performance of "Hamlet" at the National Theatre

Image Container



Peter Hall, the National Theatre's artistic director from 1982 to 1988



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