

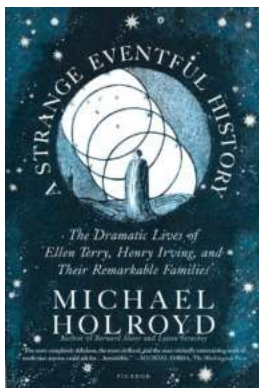
The Dramatic Lives Of Ellen Terry, Henry Irving, And Their Remarkable Families

Ellen Terry and Henry Irving were two extraordinary individuals that left an indelible mark on the world of theater. Their immense talent, dramatic lives, and enduring legacies continue to captivate audiences even today. Through their fascinating personal and professional journeys, they not only transformed the theatrical landscape but also showcased the complexities of human existence and the power of the performing arts.

The Extraordinary Ellen Terry

Ellen Terry was a British actress born on February 27, 1847, in Coventry, England. From a young age, she displayed an innate passion and talent for acting. Terry made her stage debut at the tender age of eight, and her prodigious skills quickly garnered critical acclaim.

Renowned for her versatility, Terry effortlessly portrayed a wide range of characters, from Shakespearean heroines to contemporary figures. Her ability to evoke deep emotions and connect with the audience made her one of the most beloved actresses of her time.



A Strange Eventful History: The Dramatic Lives of Ellen Terry, Henry Irving, and Their Remarkable Families

by Michael Holroyd (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 2538 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 664 pages



Terry's personal life was as eventful as her career. She was married three times and had two children from her second marriage to the celebrated artist, George Frederick Watts. Her relationships and love affairs were the subject of intense public scrutiny, adding to her already dramatic persona.

The Incomparable Henry Irving

Henry Irving, born John Henry Brodribb on February 6, 1838, in Keinton Mandeville, England, was a towering figure in the world of theater. Regarded as one of the greatest actors of his era, Irving's magnetic stage presence and meticulous attention to detail transformed the art of acting.

His collaborations with Ellen Terry were legendary. The chemistry between them on stage was palpable, and their performances were hailed as groundbreaking. Together, they embarked on numerous tours, delighting audiences around the world and elevating the craft of acting to new heights.

Irving's personal life was no less dramatic than Terry's. He too was married multiple times, with his second marriage to Florence O'Callaghan becoming the most enduring. The relentless pursuit of perfection in his craft often took a toll on his relationships and health, but he remained unwavering in his dedication to the stage.

Their Remarkable Families

Beyond their individual accomplishments, both Terry and Irving came from remarkable families that significantly influenced their artistic endeavors.

Terry was born into a family of actors. Her parents, Benjamin Terry and Sarah Ballard, were both accomplished actors, and her siblings also pursued careers in the theater. Growing up in such an environment nurtured Terry's passion for acting and provided her with a solid foundation to embark on her extraordinary career.

Irving's family, on the other hand, had no theatrical background. Nevertheless, his determination to pursue a career in acting won over his father's initial opposition. Irving's unwavering determination and relentless pursuit of excellence propelled him to the pinnacle of the theatrical world.

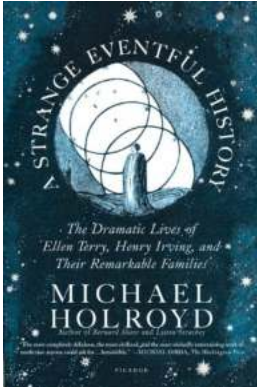
The Enduring Legacy

The legacies of Ellen Terry and Henry Irving continue to resonate in the world of theater. Their contributions to the art form are immeasurable, and their influence can still be felt today.

Terry's ability to breathe life into complex characters and Irving's unparalleled stage presence revolutionized the way actors approached their craft. Their collaborative efforts set a new standard for stage performances and inspired generations of actors to push the boundaries of their abilities.

Moreover, their tumultuous lives and relentless dedication to their art served as a reminder that the path to greatness is often paved with sacrifice and personal struggles. Their stories continue to inspire aspiring actors, reminding them of the profound impact they can have on the world through their captivating performances.

As we reflect on the dramatic lives of Ellen Terry, Henry Irving, and their remarkable families, we are reminded of the transformative power of theater. Their legacies will forever stand as testaments to the enduring beauty and impact of the performing arts.



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Deemed "a prodigy among biographers" by The New York Times Book Review, Michael Holroyd transformed biography into an art. Now he turns his keen observation, humane insight, and epic scope on an ensemble cast, a remarkable dynasty that presided over the golden age of theater.

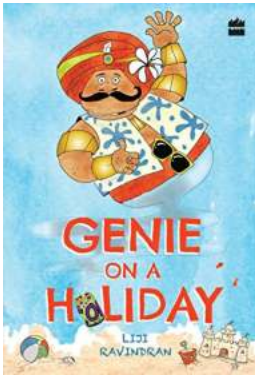
Ellen Terry was an ethereal beauty, the child bride of a Pre-Raphaelite painter who made her the face of the age. George Bernard Shaw was so besotted by her gifts that he could not bear to meet her, lest the spell she cast from the stage be broken. Henry Irving was an ambitious, harsh-voiced merchant's clerk, but once

he painted his face and spoke the lines of Shakespeare, his stammer fell away to reveal a magnetic presence. He would become one of the greatest actor-managers in the history of the theater. Together, Terry and Irving created a powerhouse of the arts in London's Lyceum Theatre, with Bram Stoker—who would go on to write *Dracula*—as manager. Celebrities whose scandalous private lives commanded global attention, they took America by storm in wildly popular national tours.

Their all-consuming professional lives left little room for their brilliant but troubled children. Henry's boys followed their father into the theater but could not escape the shadow of his fame. Ellen's feminist daughter, Edy, founded an avant-garde theater and a largely lesbian community at her mother's country home. But it was Edy's son, the revolutionary theatrical designer Edward Gordon Craig, who possessed the most remarkable gifts and the most perplexing inability to realize them. A now forgotten modernist visionary, he collaborated with the Russian director Stanislavski on a production of *Hamlet* that forever changed the way theater was staged. Maddeningly self-absorbed, he inherited his mother's potent charm and fathered thirteen children by eight women, including a daughter with the dancer Isadora Duncan.

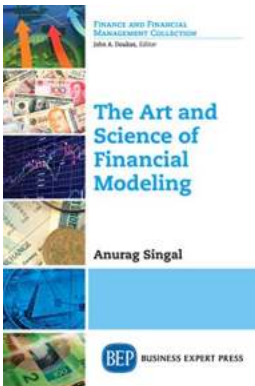
An epic story spanning a century of cultural change, *A Strange Eventful History* finds space for the intimate moments of daily existence as well as the bewitching fantasies played out by its subjects. Bursting with charismatic life, it is an incisive portrait of two families who defied the strictures of their time. It will be swiftly recognized as a classic.

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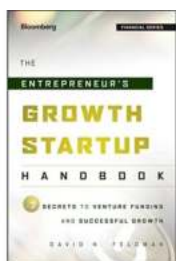
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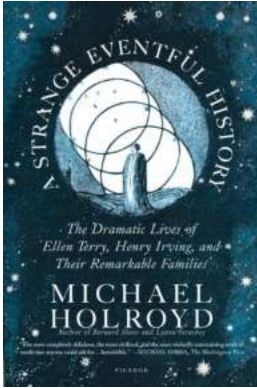
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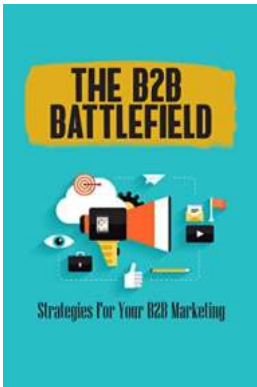
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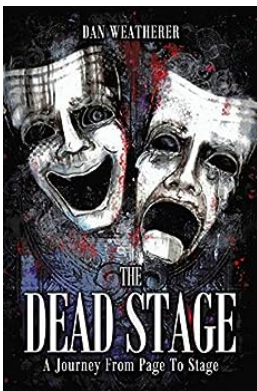
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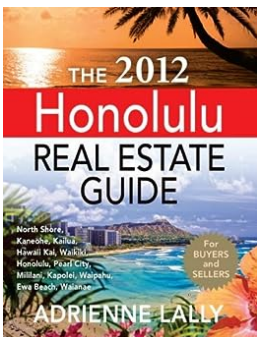
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