



The Blue Touch Paper: A Memoir

David Hare

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“Frank, moving, and beguiling, *The Blue Touch Paper* is the fascinating story of becoming a writer in the 1960s and 70s when Britain was changing even faster than the author.”?Joan Didion

David Hare has long been one of Britain’s best-known screenwriters and dramatists. He’s the author of more than thirty acclaimed plays that have appeared on Broadway, in the West End, and at the National Theatre. He wrote the screenplays for the hugely successful films *The Hours*, *Plenty*, and *The Reader*. Most recently, his play *Skylight* won the 2015 Tony Award for Best Revival on Broadway.

Now, in his debut work of autobiography, “Britain’s leading contemporary playwright” (*Sunday Times*) offers a vibrant and affecting account of becoming a writer amid the enormous flux of postwar England. In his customarily dazzling prose and with great warmth and humor, he takes us from his university days at Cambridge to the swinging 1960s, when he cofounded the influential Portable Theatre in London and took a memorable road trip across America, to his breakthrough successes as a playwright amid the political ferment of the ’70s and the moment when Margaret Thatcher came to power at the end of the decade.

Through it all, Hare sets the progress of his own life against the dramatic changes in postwar England, in which faith in hierarchy, religion, empire, and the public good all withered away. Filled with indelible glimpses of such figures as Alfred Hitchcock, Laurence Olivier, Tennessee Williams, Helen Mirren, and Joseph Papp, *The Blue Touch Paper* is a powerful evocation of a society in transition and a writer in the making.

8 pages of illustrations

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