BLOOD RED, SISTER ROSE

AUTHOR: THOMAS KENEALLY

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BOOK DESCRIPTION

For centuries the story of Joan of Arc has held a special fascination for writers all over the world. Each has seen her in a different way.Novelist Thomas Keneally is no exception.

For him Joan-or Jehanne-is a rather ordinary young girl, a plain-spoken bewildered adolescent-albeit one who literally saved France for Charles VII. Concentrating largely on the Maid's lifting of the seige of Orleans, Keaneally's research has been impeccable and his interpretation brilliant.

As victory is assured, Jehanne-who by this time is regarded by many as an unchivalrous transvestite witch-undergoes a natural transformation which at once makes her woman and inevitably seals her doom. And she knew it.

ABOUT AUTHOR

Thomas Michael Keneally, AO (born 7 October 1935) is an Australian novelist, playwright and author of non-fiction. He is best known for writing Schindler's Ark, the Booker Prize-winning novel of 1982, which was inspired by the efforts of Poldek Pfefferberg, a Holocaust survivor. The book would later be adapted to Steven Spielberg's Schindler's List (1993), which won the Academy Award for Best Picture. Often published under the name Tom Keneally in Australia.

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Life and Career: Born in Sydney, Keneally was educated at St Patrick's College, Strathfield, where a writing prize was named after him. He entered St Patrick's Seminary, Manly to train as a Catholic priest but left before his ordination. He worked as a Sydney schoolteacher before his success as a novelist, and he was a lecturer at the University of New England (1968–70).
He has also written screenplays, memoirs and non-fiction books. Keneally was known as "Mick" until 1964 but began using the name Thomas when he started publishing, after advice from his publisher to use what was really his first name. He is most famous for his Schindler's Ark (1982) (later republished as Schindler's List), which won the Booker Prize and is the basis of the film Schindler's List (1993).

Many of his novels are reworkings of historical material, although modern in their psychology and style. Keneally has also acted in a handful of films. He had a small role in The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith (based on his novel) and played Father Marshall in the Fred Schepisi movie, The Devil's Playground (1976) (not to be confused with a similarly-titled documentary by Lucy Walker about the Amish rite of passage called rumspringa).

In 1983, he was made an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO). He is an Australian Living Treasure. He is a strong advocate of the Australian republic, meaning the severing of all ties with the British monarchy, and published a book on the subject in Our Republic (1993).

Several of his Republican essays appear on the web site of the Australian Republican Movement. Keneally is a keen supporter of rugby league football, in particular the Manly-Warringah Sea Eagles club of the NRL. He made an appearance in the rugby league drama film The Final Winter (2007).

In March 2009, the Prime Minister of Australia, Kevin Rudd, gave an autographed copy of Keneally's Lincoln biography to President Barack Obama as a state gift. Most recently Thomas Keneally featured as a writer in the critically acclaimed Australian drama, Our Sunburnt Country. Thomas Keneally's nephew Ben is married to the former NSW Premier, Kristina Keneally.