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# King Stag

## Carlo Gozzi's Tragicomedy in a Staging for Marionettes by Sophie Taeuber-Arp, René Morax, and Werner Wolff

## Edited by Museum für Gestaltung Zürich

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- Offers the first English translation of a modern adaption of King Stag, an 18th-century Italian fairy-tale play by Swiss dramatist René Morax (1873–1963) and director Werner Wolff (1886–1972)
- Features newly produced photographs of an elaborate restaging of the play's first 1918 puppetry production with Sophie Taeuber-Arp's original stage sets and mariontettes
- Essays by distinguished scholars explore the genesis of Morax and Wolff's version of King Stag, place it in historical context, and highlight its significance

*King Stag* is a play originally written in 1762 by Italian playwright and champion of Commedia dell'arte Carlo Gozzi (1720–1806). It is about love and conspiracy at the court of King Deramo. In search of a bride, Deramo falls victim to the intrigues of his adversary Tartaglia and is temporarily transformed into a stag.

In 1918, on the occasion of a major art exhibition staged in Zurich by the modernist association Swiss Werkbund, Swiss dramatist René Morax (1873–1963) and director Werner Wolff (1886–1972) produced a modern adaption of Gozzi's fairy-tale play that turned it into an amusing parody of Sigmund Freud's and Carl Gustav Jung's psychoanalysis, which had caused much controversy in Zurich at the time. The production was conceived as a puppetry, for which avant-garde artist Sophie Taeuber-Arp (1889–1943) designed the stage sets and created an ensemble of 17 radically abstracted marionettes that broke with every tradition of the genre.

This book offers the first English translation of Morax and Wolff's adaption of *King Stag*. The text is supplemented with photographs of a restaging of the puppetry, produced especially for this volume, featuring Taeuber-Arp's striking marionettes. Essays by distinguished scholars explore the genesis of the original 1918 production and place it in historical context, shed new light on the play and its model, the Commedia dell'arte, and highlight its significance for Switzerland's avant-garde.

**Museum für Gestaltung Zürich** is Switzerland's leading museum of design and visual communication. Its widely renowned collection comprises more than 500,000 objects representing Swiss and international design history. **Sabine Flaschberger** is curator of Museum für Gestaltung Zürich's decorative arts collection. **Petra Schmid** is head of publications at Museum für Gestaltung Zürich.







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