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- 1 Marionette, König Hirsch: König Deramo, 1918, Entwurf/Bemalung: Sophie Taeuber-Arp. Abbildung: Museum für Gestaltung Zürich / ZHdK
- 2 Marionette, König Hirsch: Hirsch, 1918, Entwurf/Bemalung: Sophie Taeuber-Arp. Abbildung: Museum für Gestaltung Zürich / ZHdK

For the Swiss Werkbund exhibition in Zurich, Sophie Taeuber-Arp (1889–1943) designed an ensemble of radically abstracted marionettes with geometric bodies for the puppet show *König Hirsch* (King Stag), giving them an unexpected range of motion based on her dance training.

In the run-up to the Werkbund exhibition, Alfred Altherr (1875–1945), director of the Kunstgewerbeschule Zürich and the affiliated museum, enlisted various artists to produce plays for the planned Swiss Marionette Theater. Taeuber's designs were influenced by her work as a teacher for textile design, her own independent work as an artist, and her experiences in the area of expressive dance as taught by the dance educator Rudolf von Laban. Out of basic geometric shapes such as cylinders, cones, and spheres, she developed a whimsical cast of characters distinguished—in contrast to the figures largely based on human proportions created by her colleagues—by the way in which the body and clothing form a unified sculptural whole. Taeuber reduced the use of textiles to symbolic set pieces such as a narrow strip of brocade to identify dignitaries. The seventeen marionettes formed the cast for Carlo Gozzi's

Commedia dell'Arte text *Re Cervo*, a fairy tale published in 1762 about King Deramo's search for a wife. The play was adapted for the Werkbund exhibition by the authors René Morax and Werner Wolff, resulting in a parody of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis. In this eventful comedy, the characters Freudanalytiker and his assistant, Dr. Oedipus Komplex, cause various metamorphoses to take place with the help of the power of the *Urbido*, against the local color of the Zurich setting, as the royal hunt takes place in the Burghölzli forest. (Sabine Flaschberger)

Marionette, König Hirsch: Wache, 1918  
Entwurf/Bemalung: Sophie Taeuber-Arp  
Ausführung: Carl Fischer  
Material/Technik: Holz, gedrechselt, bemalt  
55.5 x 18 cm  
Eigentum: Museum für Gestaltung Zürich / ZHdK

<https://www.eguide.ch/en/objekt/koenig-hirsch-wache/>