

# ACCIDENTAL DEATH OF AN ANARCHIST



## Commedia dell'Arte—A brief history

Dario Fo's writing is said to have been heavily influenced by Commedia dell'Arte



Commedia dell'Arte literally translates as 'the art of comedy'

It began in Italy during the 16th century and consisted of 10 stock recognizable characters.

Performances were always improvised with lots of classic well known gags and slapstick.

The troupe of players would perform outside in the piazzas on stages that they would build themselves.

Its improvisational style lent itself to local politics and plenty of satire. This is maybe where this theatre style heavily influences Fo. His plays are open for clever and up to date satirical additions.

A troupe of 10 actors would play stock characters that were easily recognizable to the audience by their costumes and masks.

Basic plots could be traced back to those of the Romans and the Greeks and most ended happily ever after.

The actors were multi-talented in that they could sing, play instruments, do acrobatics and most importantly were very quick witted.

Harlequin the clown and Punch and Judy are characters that derived from Commedia dell'arte and that people still recognize today.

