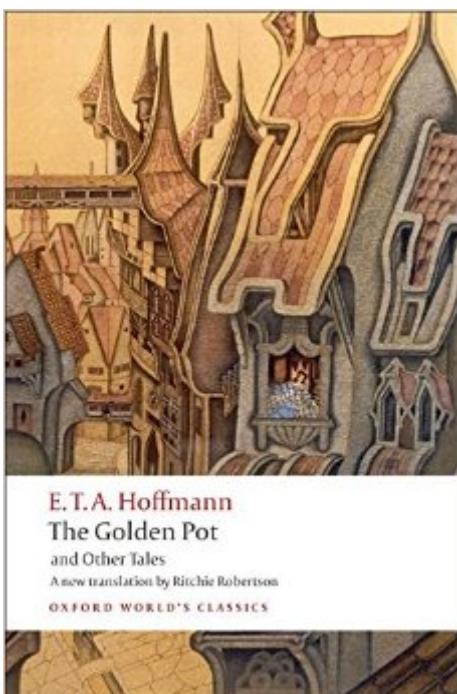


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The Golden Pot And Other Tales: A New Translation By Ritchie Robertson (Oxford World's Classics)



Synopsis

Hoffmann, among the greatest and most popular of the German Romantics, is renowned for his humorous and sometimes horrifying tales of supernatural beings. This selection, while stressing the variety of his work, focuses on those stories in which the real and the supernatural are brought into contact and conflict. This new translation includes *The Golden Pot*, *The Sandman*, *Princess Brambilla*, *Master Flea*, and *My Cousin's Corner Window*.
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Book Information

Series: Oxford World's Classics

Paperback: 464 pages

Publisher: Oxford University Press; 1 edition (January 15, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0199552479

ISBN-13: 978-0199552474

Product Dimensions: 7.7 x 1 x 5.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (11 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #220,020 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #60 inÂ Books > Literature & Fiction > History & Criticism > Regional & Cultural > European > German #140 inÂ Books > Textbooks > Humanities > Literature > World Literature > European #179 inÂ Books > Literature & Fiction > World Literature > European > German

Customer Reviews

E.T.A. Hoffmann is, in my opinion, one of the best and, sadly, unknown authors ever. I came across his name in a study of German Romanticism and even now whenever I want to escape this

mundane reality I turn to his tales. Although known for the Nutcracker, his other tales are far more beautiful, moving and fantastic. The Golden Pot is perhaps the best story I have ever read. For anyone wishing so submerge him/herself in another world for a little while, a world of magic, beauty and horror, this is the best book one could choose. Each of his tales is unique, fantastic and exquisite.

I would like to take a moment to correct a very common misconception about E.T.A. Hoffmann...in all fairness to him, Hoffmann should not be known for writing The Nutcracker on which the ballet is based. The ballet is based on the version of the story written by Alexandre Dumas NOT Hoffmann! Hoffmann's version (the original, and the version Tchaikovsky thought he was writing the music for, until Petipa, the choreographer, decided it was too dark and strange to be made into a ballet and went with the sweet and fluffy Dumas version), is far superior and definitely worth reading even though it is one of his lighter tales. It's more fantastically strange and wonderful than dark and scary. It's also not as thought-provoking as some of his other works. If you're planning to read it I recommend the copy with Maurice Sendak's illustrations, as they set off the tone and mood of the story perfectly. In regards to this particular book (The Golden Pot and others), I have found that everything Herr Hoffmann wrote is worth reading...it's just unfortunate that there aren't more collections of his works available. I've had a devil of a time trying to find a good hardbound copy myself!

In 1814, E.T.A. Hoffmann wrote one of the best novellas I have had the good fortune to read. Regrettably, I neither speak nor understand German, and I only read "The Golden Pot" in translation, but it still managed to enchant me. It is a fairytale -- subtitled "A Fairytale for the Modern Times" -- and attempting to adequately summarize the story would be pointless, which is true for every masterpiece. At a very basic level, the story pits the world of reality against the world of imagination/magic/wonder/poetry. It would be more accurate to say that the latter is active within the former, unbeknownst to the well-to-do inhabitants of early 19th century Dresden. Reading the "Golden Pot" will make you feel it is a great pity that you are not a citizen of Dresden at the beginning of the 19th century. To us, early 19th century Dresden is a faraway magical place of its own right, and so the "modern fairytale" aspect is rather lost to the modern reader. It would have been a much more fulfilling read in 1814, as one would recognize the aspects of the mundane world that Hoffmann describes, and would be thus able to derive greater pleasure from the descriptions of the fantastical that he masterfully weaves hidden in plain sight within it. Hoffmann has chosen an

ingenious approach to the relationship between the reader and the writer, best showcased in the seventh vigil (chapter). This magical novella is required reading by everyone, alongside the works of Shakespeare and Goethe (yes, Western Canon, I know). So what are you waiting for?

I have always known that E.T.A Hoffmann was a brilliant writer and a talent of magnitude in many other areas. I will go one step further and say that in my opinion, there is no better writer of grown-up fairy tales than Hoffman that I know of. Oscar Wilde is close in his fairy tales but they are usually short and not as developed as Hoffmann's. You can call him a romantic author of fairy tales, fiction, horror or fantasy but few authors have the ability to visualize such well thought out tales as Master Flea. When it comes to imagination, I can't help but think that the great Sci-Fi writer Frank Herbert must have read and been influenced by Hoffmann. The Sandman is brilliant and the Golden Pot is even better. I am not sure why Hoffman is so obscure. He had tremendous imagination. I didn't like My Cousin's Corner Window as much but The Sandman, The Golden Pot and Master Flea are easily worth the price of the book even if it were double.

interesting story. There was rumor and innuendo that the "Book of Mormon" was plagiarized in part or whole even--from this. I have now read both and I don't see it. This is basically a story of romance, the supernatural, and some horror tossed in for good measure--of which I will not summarize because many others have done one and same. This is a classic and an old one, that is translated (it says new translation by Ritchie Robertson) because there are numerous translations from the original German. E.T.A. Hoffman is a very interesting character supposedly writing the original "nutcracker" but Tchaikovsky thought it was too dark and too gloomy so someone else tweeked it a bit, (I think Dumas from Count of Monte Christo fame) Anyway, I don't know all those details, I am only pointing out that this is a piece of classic literature that is a great read. I think our schools--mainly public high schools, should require more of these kinds of books like they did when I was in high school. They don't do as much and I think it's a shame. Anyway, I highly recommend this particular book. It's easy fun and interesting, in large part to Ritchie Robertson's translation.

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