MASTERPIECES IN PLAY

The works in this exhibition were chosen from the 1000 chess sets in the collection of Dr. George and Vivian Dean. They range from the 16th to the 20th century and come from Austria, Cambodia, China, England, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Morocco, Persia, Russia, Syria and Turkey.

Across all eras and cultures, the world’s finest craftsmen devised ever-more advanced and ingenious chess set designs, just as chess players plotted and planned ever-more complex and elegant styles of play.

Each chess set on a board in this exhibition is set up in a noteworthy middle game or problem position from approximately the same timeframe and locale as the set. This enables visitors to appreciate the brilliances of the games along with the beauties of the designs and to view the pieces as they were intended to be viewed—in play. Hopefully, looking at pieces in the middle of a period game will bring viewers one step closer to the original experience of both the chess set and chess play of the time. The Islamic designed sets present problems by early Muslim masters al-Adli (c. 800-870) and as-Suli (c. 880-946) played with the old Muslim rules (detailed below). In instances such as the Japanese Carved Coral Set, where a suitable match could not be made, a notable game, like the Anderssen’s “Evergreen Partie” has been offered. Three “immortal” games are included in the exhibition: Anderssen’s 1851; Rubinstein’s 1907; and Zukertort’s 1883, as well as Giaocchino Greco’s first documented smothered mate from 1620.

These games were researched and reviewed with the help of chess scholar Myron Samsin of the Ken Whyld Association and chess teacher and author, Fred Wilson. The games were gleaned from a variety of sources including A History of Chess and A Short History of Chess, both by H.J.R. Murray; Sacking the Citadel by Jon Edwards; the Oxford Encyclopedia of Chess Games edited by David Levy and Kevin O’Connell; and The Oxford Companion to Chess by David Hooper and Ken Whyld.

OLD MUSLIM RULES OF PLAY (as described by H.J.R. Murray)

- The shah (king) moves to any adjacent square which is not occupied by an opposing piece
- The firz or firzan (minister - later queen) moves to any diagonally adjacent square
- The fil (elephant - later bishop) moves diagonally, leaping over the adjacent square to the square beyond
- The faras (horse – later knight) moves as the knight does in modern chess
- The rukh (chariot - rook) moves as the rook does in modern chess
- The baidaq (foot soldier – later pawn) moves to the adjacent square immediately ahead and captures on either immediate diagonal square. On reaching the opposite end of the board it is promoted to a firz. There was no limit to the number of firzes a player could have at once.
- The game is won by either: 1.) checkmate (“shat mat,” the king is without resources); 2.) by capturing all of the opposing king’s pieces (“shah munfarid,” the king is isolated) or 3.) by stalemate (“za’id”).
PLAYERS

Alexander Alekhine, Russian. 1892 - 1946

Adolf Anderssen, German. 1818 - 1879

al-Adli, Persian. c. 800 - 870

as-Suli, Persian. c. 880 - 946

Curt von Bardeleben, German. 1861 - 1924

Joseph Henry Blackburne, English. 1841 - 1924

Giambattista Loli, Italian. 1698 - 1769

Georg Rotlewi, Polish. 1889 - 1920

Akiba Rubinstein, Polish. 1882 - 1961

Howard Staunton, English. 1810 - 1874

Wilhelm Steinitz, Austrian. 1836 - 1900

John M. Bruehl, German. 1736 - 1809

Domenico Ercole Del Rio, Italian. c. 1718 - c. 1802

Jean Dufresne, German. 1829 - 1893

Fyodor Ivanovich Dus Chotimirsky, Ukrainian. 1879 - 1965

Giaocchino Greco, Italian. c. 1600 - c. 1634

Felix Kieseritsky, Baltic German. 1806 - 1853

Emanuel Lasker, German. 1868 -1941

Frank James Marshall, American. 1877 - 1944

François André Philidor, French. 1726 - 1795

Giulio Cesare Polerio, Italian. c. 1550 - c. 1610

Domenico Lorenzo Ponziani, Italian. 1719 - 1796

Vinyaka Rajarama Tope, pub. 1893

Tiruvengadacharya pub, c. 1790

Nikolay Tselikov, Russian. 1881 - 1966

Johannes Zukertort, German/Polish. 1842 - 1888
Dean Exhibition Game Positions and Notation for Chess Sets

1. **Neresheimer French vs. Germans Set and Castle Board**, Hanau, Germany, 1905-10.

   **Game Position:**

2. **Abstract Bead and Dart Style Set with Board**, India, 1700s.

   **Game Position:**
   Vinyaka Rajarama Tope Problem: Mate with Pawn in Four Moves c. 1893
   White Mate: 1. Rh4+, Kg7; 2. Qg4+, Kf7; 3. Rh7+, Ke8; 4. d7#
   Black Mate: 1. Qd1+, Kb2; 2. Rxp+, KxR; 3. Qc2+, Ka1; 4. Qc1+, Ka2; 5. b3#

3. **Mushroom Style Abstract Set and Engraved Silver Board**, Syria, 1600s.

   **Game Position:**
   as-Suli (c. 889-946) Problem: White Plays and Wins. Old Muslim Rules. Weak Queen and Leaping Bishop
3.8. Jade and Marble Set and Board, Persia, 1800s.

Game Position:
al-Adli (c. 800-870) Problem: White Plays and Wins. Old Muslim Rules. Weak Queen and Leaping Bishop

1. Rf6+, Kb5; 2. e4+, fxe4; 3. dxe4+, Kc5; 4. Be3+, Kb6; 5. Rb7+, any 6. Rxb5+, cxb5; 7. Nb7#

3.9. Braided and Embroidered Moroccan Travel Set and Board, Morocco, 1800s.

Game Position:
as-Suli (c. 880-946) Problem: White Plays and Wins. Old Muslim Rules with weak Queen and Leaping Bishop.

1. Nf7+, Kg7; 2. Ne6+, Kf6; 3. g5, Kc5; 4. Bd3+, Kg4; 5. Ne5+, Kh4; 6. Re4+, Kh3; 7. Re3+, Kg2; 8. Rxh3+, Kxh3; 9. Ng4+, Kg1; 10. Rg3+, Kh1; 11. Rh3+, Kg1; 12. Be3+, Kg2; 13. Nf4#

3.10. Abstract Tulip Style Set with Ashtāpada Board.

Game Position:
as-Suli (c. 880-946) Problem: White Plays and Wins. Old Muslim Rules with weak Queen and Leaping Bishop.

1. Re7+, Qxe7; 2. f7+, Kd8; 3. Ne6+, Kc8; 4. b7+, Kb8; 5. a7+, Kxa7; 6. b8=Q+, Ka6; 7. Nc7+, Ka5; 8. Rb5+, Ka4; 9. Nb2+, Ka3; 10. Nc4+, Ka2; 11. Ra5+, Kb1; 12. Bd3+, Kc1; 13. Ra1#
5.1. Burgundy Rock Crystal Set and Board, France, Early 1500s.

Game Position:
Giulio Cesare Polerio vs. Lorenzo. 1575.
Italian Game: Classical. Closed Variation


7.1. Battle of the Sexes, Austria, 1783.

Game Position:
Adolf Anderssen vs. Howard Staunton.


8.1. Europeans vs. Africans Set and Board, Italy, 1800.

Game Position:
NN vs. Giacchino Greco. 1620. Giuoco Piano, First documented Smothered Mate.

1. e4, e5; 2. Nf3, c6; 3. Bc4, Bc5; 4. 0-0, Nf6; 5. Re1, 0-0; 6. c3, Qe7; 7. d4exd4; 8. e5, Ng4; 9. cxd4, Nxd4; 10. Nxd4, Qh4; 11. Nf3, Qxf2; 12. Kh1, Qg1++; 13. Nxg1, Nf2#.
8.2. Good vs. Evil Set and Board, Italy, 1700s.

**Game Position:**
Giambattista Loli vs. Domenico Ercole Del Rio. Modena, 1755. Giuoco Piano Game: Italian Variation


9.1. Catherine the Great Amber Set and Board, Russia, Late 1700s.

**Game Position:**
Smith vs. François André Philidor. London, 1790.
Bishop’s Opening: Berlin Defense.


9.2. Napoleon and Josephine vs. George III and Queen Charlotte Set, France, Early 1800s.

**Game Position:**
Smith vs. François André Philidor. London, 1790.
Bishop’s Opening: Berlin Defense Variation.

10.1. Early Meissen Set and Tray Board.
Germany, ca. 1740.

Game Position:
François André Philidor vs. John M. Bruehl.
London, 1788. Chess Variants

1. e4, e6; 2. f4, Nh6; 3. Nf3, d5; 4. e5, c5; 5. c3, Nc6; 6. Bd3, Ne7; 7. 0-0, Nef5; 8. Bc2, Be7; 9. Qe1, Bd7; 10. d4, Rf8; 11. g3, c4; 12. h3, g6; 13. g4, Nh4; 14. Ng5, Bxg5; 15. fxg5, Nf3+ 16. Rxf3, Rxf3; 17. Kg2, Rf7; 18. ghx6, Qe7; 19. h4, Qf8; 20. Bg5, Bc6; 21. a3, b5; 22. Qe2, a5; 23. Kg3, Kd7; 24. Qe3, b4; 25. axb4, axb4; 26. Rxa8, Qxa8; 27. Qd2, b3; 28. Bd1, Qa1; 29. h5, Qb1; 30. Bf6, Bb7; 31. hxg6, hxg6; 32. g5, Qe4; 33. Bg4, Qc2; 34. Qg2, Qe4; 35. Qh3, Qd3+; 36. Kh4, Qxh3+; 37. Kxh3, Bc8; 38. Kh4, Ke8; 39. Bh5, Rh7; 40. Bg7, gxh5

10.2. Murano Blown Glass Set with Stained and Inlaid Chestnut Board. Italy, 1700s.

Game Position:
Domenico Ercole Del Rio vs. Portocarrero.
Modena, 1790. King’s Gambit: Accepted. Cunningham Defense


11.1. Pique Sable Set, France, Late 1700s.

Game Position:
Wilhelm Steinitz vs. Curt von Bardeleben.
Hastings, 1895. Italian Game: Classical Variation. Greco Gambit, Traditional Line

11.2. Insects Set and Board, Italy, c. 1790

Game Position:
Domenico Lorenzo Ponziani vs. Domenico Ercole Del Rio. Modena, 1770. Queen Pawn Game: Steinitz Countergambit

1. d4, d5; 2. Bf4, c5; 3. Bxb8, Rxb8; 4. e3, e6; 5. c3, b6; 6. Qa4+, Bd7; 7. Qxa7, c4; 8. b4, Ra8; 9. Qb7, Ne7; 10. B5, Nf5; 11. h4, Nd6; White resigns

12.1. Habsburg Dynasty Set and Board, Austria, Early 1900s.

Game Position:


Game Position:

14.1. 1905 Fabergé Kuropatkin Set and Board with Presentation Case, Russia, 1905.

Game Position:
Georg Rotlewi vs. Akiba Rubinstein.
“Rubinstein’s Immortal.” Lodz, 1907.
Tarrasch Defense: Symmetrical Variation


14.2. 1915 Fabergé Egyptians vs. Assyrians Set with Presentation Case, Russia, 1915.

Game Position:
Alexander Alekhine vs. Nikolay Tselikov.
Moscow, 1915. Spanish Game: Exchange. Keres Variation


15.1 Ball-in-Ball Style Set, China, 1800s.

Game Position:

15.3. **Carved Coral Figurative Set**, Japan, 1800s.

**Game Position:**
*Italian Game: Evans Gambit Pierce Defense “The Evergreen Partie”*


17.1. **Angkor Wat Set**, Cambodia, 1700s.

**Game Position:**
*Vinayaka Rajarama Tope Problem: Mate with Pawn in Six Moves. c. 1893.*

1. Bg5, Bd8; 2. Bf6, Bxf6; 3. exf6, Qf7; 4. Re8+, Qxe8; 5. Qxh7#

17.2. **Kashmir Bell Style Set**, India, 1700s.

**Game Position:**
*Tiruvengadacharya Problem: Mate with Pawn in Six Moves. c. 1790*

1. Rf8, Rxf8; 2. Qh5+,Rf7; 3. Qg6, - ; 4. Qe6, Re7; 5. Qd6+, Rxd7; 6. cxd7#