

# WORLD CHESS HALL OF FAME

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## World Chess Hall of Fame Debuts New Exhibits by Internationally-Acclaimed Artists Harry Benson and Marcel Dzama

February 22, 2012 -- Saint Louis, MO -- The World Chess Hall of Fame will open its doors on two new exhibits starting March 9, 2012. *Bobby Fischer: Icon Among Icons, Photographs by Harry Benson CBE* and *Marcel Dzama: The End Game* explore the game of chess and its role in society from dramatically different angles.

The shows will run through August 12, 2012.

"We selected these artists because of their stunning talent and their unique perspectives," said **Susan Barrett**, director of WCHoF. "We hope the exhibitions will enlighten visitors while also challenging their preconceived notions of the significance of chess."

### ***Harry Benson: Icon Among Icons***

Scottish-born photojournalist Harry Benson's work ranges from photographs of world leaders to pop stars, all portrayed with an immediacy and naturalness that speaks of a confidence and rapport between sitter and photographer.

Benson was the only person to have private access to Bobby Fischer during the epic 1972 World Chess Championship match in Reykjavík, Iceland. Fischer became a pop culture sensation due to his incredible playing and the Cold War matchup between him and Russian player Boris Spassky, the defending world chess champion. News outlets referred to the match as the "Match of the Century" and used headlines such as "Fischer vs. Spassky: A Major Struggle in the Cold War."

As the images in this exhibition show, Benson's photography captures a side of the elusive and controversial chess genius that is rarely seen, and offers a window into the private world of the man Benson calls "the most eccentric and most fascinating person I have ever photographed."

Rare images of Fischer will be exhibited along with Benson's photos of other pop culture icons such as Jerry Garcia, Elizabeth Taylor, Barbara Streisand, Bill Clinton, Muhammad Ali, and Jacqueline Kennedy. The juxtaposition allows viewers to see Fischer's cultural significance as virtually equal to that of presidents, movie stars, artists, designers, and leaders, whose impact has made them objects of great attention and devotion in society.

Sample images of Benson's work can be downloaded at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/worldchesshof/sets/72157629066444378/>. **Proper photo credit must be given.**

***Marcel Dzama: The End Game*** features the artist's film, *A Game of Chess*, alongside related drawings, paintings, sculptures, and dioramas. The work draws from a diverse range of references and artistic influences, including Dada and Marcel Duchamp.

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The 14-minute film incorporates ballet, stark landscapes, and moments of violence to tell a story based on the classic game of chess. Performers are dressed in geometrically designed costumes of papier-mâché, plaster, and fiberglass; they dance across a checkered board to challenge their opponents in fatal interchanges.

Some new paintings were created especially for this exhibit, which marks the first solo showing of Dzama's work in the Midwest. A trailer for the film can be viewed at <http://youtu.be/D6mySi-vCHs>. Still images can be downloaded at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/worldchesshof/sets/72157629066508546/>. ***Proper photo credit must be given.***

“WCHoF is pleased to be recognized as one of the most exciting new additions to Saint Louis’ already-vibrant cultural scene. We look forward to welcoming visitors to these new exhibitons throughout the spring and summer,” Barrett said.

### **About the World Chess Hall of Fame**

The World Chess Hall of Fame is a nonprofit organization committed to building awareness for the cultural and artistic significance of chess. It opened on **September 9, 2011** in the Central West End after moving from previous locations in New York and Miami.

The WCHoF is housed in an historic 15,900 square-foot residence-turned-business and features the U.S. and World Chess Halls of Fame, displays of artifacts from the permanent collection, and temporary exhibitions highlighting the great players, historic games, and rich cultural history of chess.

The WCHOF partners with the Chess Club and Scholastic Center to provide innovative programming and outreach to local, national, and international audiences.

For more information, visit [www.worldchesshof.org](http://www.worldchesshof.org).

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