

CHESS HORIZONS

The Art of Chess



**Gus Gosselin
receives
Governor's Points
of Light Award**

**2005 US
Championship**

April - June 2005 ■ \$3.95

About MACA

The Massachusetts Chess Association is an educational non-profit organization whose purpose is to promote chess in Massachusetts and represent the interest of chess players within the state to the governing body of chess in the United States, **The United States Chess Federation (USCF)**.

As part of its role as a state organization, MACA has programs in place to support the existing chess community as well as promote chess among schools and the general public. Highlights of these programs are:



Providing at least four major tournaments each year:

Massachusetts Open (State Championship)
Massachusetts Game/60 Championship
Greater Boston Open
Pillsbury Memorial



Running a scholastic program, which consists of a series of tournaments to determine the state's scholastic champions as well as "warm up" tournaments throughout the year. Free boards and sets are provided to schools and clubs through MACA's **Living Memorial Chess Fund (LMCF)**.

Quarterly publication of the award winning *Chess Horizons*, a journal of regional, national and international chess news and features.

Promotion and development of chess in correctional institutions through our Prison Chess program.

We hope you will chose to join MACA and enjoy the benefits of membership while knowing that you are helping to promote chess throughout Massachusetts.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RATES

(Includes Subscription to Chess Horizons unless otherwise noted.)

Adult: \$12.00; Life: \$175.00; Life (age 65 or older): \$100.00; Junior (under age 18): \$6.00.

Make checks payable to MACA and mail to:

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Dues are non-refundable



The Art of Chess

Kristin Villiotte

Pelican bishops, two-faced queens, bean bag knights and oil can kings are just some of the chess pieces created by ninety international artists for the exhibition *Chess*, at Fuller Craft Museum in Brockton February 12 through June 5, 2005. Over two hundred individual pieces, plus two chessboards, are on view showcasing the art of chess pieces being made today by some of the world's best artists.

Metalsmiths and jewelry makers from all over the world were invited to contribute individual chess pieces for the exhibition. The only requirements were that pieces had to be identifiable (e.g., as king, queen, pawn, etc.) and meet height limitations (between 4cm and 10.5cm). These few restrictions left the artists free to create innovative, outrageous and extraordinary pieces that exemplify the art of chess while presenting views on every-

thing from war, class, religion and the environment. Some of the pieces are abstract designs, making it difficult to decipher their role. Most are more readily recognizable, even if not exactly resembling the chess pieces we play in our homes.

The kings and queens are the expected paragons of power and some of the most elegant and elaborate pieces in the exhibition. They revel in their royalty, wearing pearls, rubies, diamonds and other precious gems as well as spectacular gold and silver crowns. They are also imposing figures worthy of their imperial ascriptions, such as Sam Shaw's *King of the Stones* carrying a granite shield and club, or Kiwon Wang's queen wearing a crown made out of the *New York Times*.

The pawns are less elaborate counterparts to their royal rulers; however, they present equally powerful statements. Adam Musto's copper bullets and Christina Miller's tombstones are solemnly serious pieces offering reflections on war. Whitney Couch's *Fish Spines* are delicately enameled cylinders armored with sharp spines ready to inflict damage upon their enemy. These pawns

may be the smallest pieces, but they are just as capable of doing harm as other pieces on the board.

The knights are among the most easily identified pieces in the exhibition and some of the most whimsical. Judy McCaig's sterling silver sea horse and Susie Ganch's knight with a mane of real horsehair are distinctly equine in shape and playful in nature, as are several others. Patty Cokus' *Galloping Knight* bobs its head as it clip-clops along the board and Adam Paxton's knights are plastic toy horses decked out in thick gold rope necklaces.

Rooks are sanctuaries and prisons, often at the same time. They are seemingly impenetrable fortresses protecting themselves and others. Several conceal hidden secrets, some good like amethyst hearts and golden walls, and some dark like brambles and thorns.

Brooke Battles' *Flower* waves 18k gold petals in the air, serving as a beacon for its kinfolk and Shella Robinson's light-hearted rook is a playing card house protected by a white picket fence and an Astroturf yard.

Most of the bishops in the exhibition are humorous pieces, pok-

ing fun at ecclesiastical order. Marilyn Da Silva has a set of salt and pepper shakers dubbed *Well Seasoned Bishops* while Tom Hill's bishops take the form of pelicans protecting their young. Other bishops are tall, authoritative clerics preaching down to the masses. Julia Turner's bishop is in an elegantly elongated cross topped by a pearl while Grant McCaig's bishop holds aloft a pink plastic cross.

There are two chessboards in the exhibition, both of which would be decidedly difficult to play. Marjorie Schick's *Deception* is an optical illusion with black and white striped wood laminate pieces that blend into each other and the board. Felieke Van Der Leest used the unconventional material of yarn to crochet a chessboard complete with a border of afghan-like fringe and two fabric knights.

Several of the artists in *Chess* are masters of craft, renowned for their magnificent masterpieces in miniature. Thomas Mann, Dorothy Hogg and Bob Ebendorf, some of the world's most acclaimed jewelry makers, all have pieces in the exhibition that are brilliant examples of contemporary craft. They are pioneers in their fields creating innovative pieces that take the craft of jewelry making to new levels.



Katy Hackney, Pawns, wood

Kristin Villiotte is the Communications Director for the Fuller Craft Museum, the home for craft in New England.

Chess Horizons

Jewelry maker Thomas Mann was at the forefront of America's contemporary craft movement. He combines industrial designs and materials from machines and electronic devices with romantic imagery to create jewelry in a unique style which he calls Techno.Romantic™. For *Chess*, Mann has crafted six pieces out of a glow-in-the-dark polymer encasing brass, aluminum and acrylic hearts. His pieces use modern day technology to bring a centuries old game into the contemporary era.

Several artists from Scotland are featured in *Chess* and silversmith Dorothy Hogg is one of the country's most celebrated. A professor of Jewelry and Silversmithing at Edinburgh College of Art, Hogg is a recipient of the prestigious Member of the British Empire (MBE) from Queen Elizabeth II for her outstanding achievements in the field of jewelry making. The creativity and technical mastery for which she is so honored is evident in her chess piece: a sterling silver pawn which doubles as a ring. The simple geometric shape is composed of lines so graceful that the piece appears as if it would move with equal ease over a chessboard as slip onto your finger.

Another artist receiving high honors in the craft world is Robert Ebendorf. His innovative approach to jewelry making, combining unconventional materials with precious metals, has gained him induction into the National Metalsmiths Hall of Fame. Ebendorf's *King* combines found objects with silver and copper to make an entirely unique piece with a commanding and majestic presence.

These artists and their fellow metalsmiths and jewelry makers have taken a game rich in history and recreated its pieces in exciting and unexpected new forms. Their witty, humorous, serious and political observations inform their work with personality and character that will change the way you look at, and play, the game of chess.

Fuller Craft Museum, the New England home for contemporary craft, is an ideal site for this exhibition. The Museum's tagline of "Let the art touch you" resonates with the tactile, sensory and functional nature of chess and the physical and emotional experience you get playing the game. Chess pieces are meant to be touched, picked up and moved. Pieces have to work from all angles, even from above as a chess player looks down at board, and relate to one another in strategic arrangements. The exhibition *Chess* merges chess pieces and jewelry designs together in creations that are rooted in function and stunning in form.

The exhibition at Fuller Craft showcases the chess pieces in a wall mounted case which allows the work to be viewed from multiple angles. The gallery also has three chess sets on low tables which visitors can play aided by kid-friendly instruction manuals. Accompanying text gives the viewer historical insight into the background of the game. The real gems, however, are the chess pieces themselves.

Chess was organized by the Velvet da Vinci Gallery, San Francisco. The exhibition traveled to the Vennel Gallery, Scotland, the Ruthin Craft Centre, Wales, the Victoria and Albert Museum, England, and Gallery I/O, New Orleans, before arriving at Fuller Craft Museum. The exhibition will be on view at Fuller Craft through June 5, 2005. It is accompanied by a four-color twenty page catalogue.

Fuller Craft Museum is located at 455 Oak Street in Brockton, Massachusetts. The Museum is open daily, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission is \$5 adults, \$3 seniors and students, free for members and children under 12. For more information on exhibitions and events at Fuller Craft please call 508.588.6000 or visit www.fullercraft.org.



Florian Ladstaetter, King and Queen,
PVC, pearls, sterling silver



(right) Deborah Boskin, Bean Bag Knight, sterling silver,
vinyl; (left) Dorothy Hogg, Pawn, sterling silver

The Art of *Chess*
February 12 – June 5, 2005
Fuller Craft Museum

MACA'S Greatest Volunteer

Stephen Dann

"On February 14, Governor Mitt Romney met with Gus Gosselin, the November 2004 recipient of a Governor's Points of Light Award, and presented him with the Award. The Award was established by the Massachusetts Service Alliance and the Governor's Office in 2001 as a way to honor individuals who have made a lasting impact in their communities through service and volunteerism. Since that time, men and women of all ages who have successfully engaged others through their determination have been recognized for their outstanding commitment to improving our Commonwealth. To learn more, or to obtain a nomination form, visit the Massachusetts Service Alliance website at www.mass-service.org.

Gus Gosselin has worked hard to promote chess as a way to reach troubled youth. By organizing local and state tournaments, he has supported countless teens as they have used the game to develop their minds and satisfy their competitive urges. Gus has also recruited community volunteers to create their own after school and weekend chess events. 'His 30-plus years of running tournaments and clubs for children have been remarkable,' said Frank DelBonis, former MACA board member." (From the *mass-service.org* newsletter, Spring 2005 *Call To Service*)

He started out as "just another player" at the New Bedford Chess Club, but became more active during Bobby Fischer's world championship victory in 1972. Gus Gosselin began his service to MACA in 1973 as one of 25 local chairmen of the 1973-74 MACA membership drive, leading the field by enrolling 19 new members. Gus received a plaque and a two-year MACA membership (\$5 back then!) for his efforts. But for more than 30 years, Gus has continued to serve MACA and local chess causes and inspires both young and old players, parents, teachers and social service agencies to help him in his efforts.

Gus couldn't "wait" to retire as a product engineer for Morse Cutting Tools in New Bedford so he could devote his full efforts to promoting chess. But first, he took on a few "little" volunteer jobs, becoming a member of MACA's board of directors in 1975, a regional scholastic coordinator for South-eastern Mass. in 1976 and MACA's treasurer in 1977. But most of all, Gus took on the most thankless of all jobs, organizing, directing and reporting the results of tournaments and club events, and he has never looked back.



Ruth and Gus Gosselin with Governor Mitt Romney at the Governor's Points of Light Award Presentation

When Rhode Island needed help running tournaments, he gave it freely, organizing events for many years at Rhode Island College in Providence. When the New England Chess Association began to lack bids of its annual events, he kept a number of these going, and became president of NECA for a number of years.

As time went on, scholastic chess became MACA's largest single effort after producing *Chess Horizons*. Gus volunteered to assist schools, leagues and social service organizations that sponsored chess programs. This included inner city programs in the Boston area and teaching programs after school, some that he still oversees to this day.

After many years as MACA treasurer, he began work to invest MACA's life membership funds, and later donations to numerous memorial funds. He founded the Living Memorial Chess Fund as a way to honor more deceased and living players and benefactors and create a single trust fund to promote chess now and in the future. Because of wise investments and donations, the Association now has one of the largest endowments of any state, but far from the goal that he believes that we can achieve.

Solid promotional ideas such as "kids teaching kids," his program to teach chess to very young students in Boston's poorest and minority neighborhoods, and currently, scholastic events at Burger King Restaurants on Sundays, have left a legacy that generations of players will not soon forget. If this writer has his way, MACA will honor Gus at this year's testimonial fund raising dinner in November (last year held at the Boston Globe).