

2022-11-10

Schach und Musik (Chess and Music)



Siegfried Schönle
pianomania v. Hannelore Sahm, cutout.

Another exhibition related to chess opened this week. Siegfried Schönle was there again and reported:

[Schach und Musik](#) (in German)

[Update 2022-11-25] The English version of the text is now available: [Schach und Musik \(Chess and Music\)](#) [/Update]

5th exhibition of the Chess and Cultural Foundation G.H.S., Ebersberg, November 5th, 2022 – November 27th, 2022 in the hall "Unterm First"

by Siegfried Schoenle

It is very unusual to call it - two chess exhibitions were opened just one week apart. In Plauen the exhibition "[Schach und Humor | Chess Art and Humor](#)" and in Ebersberg (near the S-Bahn station near Munich) a week later "Schach und Musik" Chess and Music."

- Both also beyond that with accompanying programs until the end of November.
- Both are accompanied by colourful, very well designed catalogues, which make the objects shine, but certainly cannot and do not want to replace viewing them with your own eyes.

Worth seeing? Yes, absolutely and without restrictions!

Both deserve to be visited and admired and also show numerous and rare objects from culture and history for non-chess players.

This may lead to a time conflict for one or the other interested party, but:

"Wer keine Wahl hat, hat die Qual!" (Those who have no choice are in agony!) (F.C. Welskopf, 1929).



Siegfried Schönle

Georg Schweiger and Siegfried Tschinkel, two "pillars" of the exhibition.

The weekend 5./6. November 2022 in Ebersberg began on Saturday afternoon with the opportunity to get in the mood for the topic "Schach und Musik" (Chess and Music) through a preview. Georg Schweiger himself was present and his lively explanations made the difficulties in procuring the rarest objects, e.g. from the Bavarian National Museum in Munich, clear. He was proud to report that the "Musical Chess Game" [catalogue p. 88-93] by Gertrude Gompertz (1829-1878) and Anton Edel (1810-1870) had never before been shown to the public.



Siegfried Schönle

Musical chess game, G. Gompertz / A. Edel, 1852. On loan from the Bavarian National Museum, Munich.

This inventor of the musical chess game in 1852, Gertrude Gompertz, tried Dr. Natascha Niemeyer-Wasserer in her "Spurensuche" [catalogue pp. 63-67].

And, who can claim to have ever seen the "Amber Figure Set" [catalogue pp. 104-105] from the Dr. Thomas Thomsen Collection? [Update 2022-12-05] (We owe the following information to Ms. Barbara Holländer: the sentence "not quite true", she writes and reminds us that on the cover of [KARL issue 4/2007](#) on the subject of chess and music, some figures from the set are shown. Also to the essay by your husband, Hans Holländer (and other authors) entitled Chess and Music in this issue. In addition, she writes, there was an exhibition on chess and music in Berlin in 2006 that has apparently been forgotten. Susanna Poldauf also worked on this with the Holländer family. There was no catalog in 2006.) [/Update] This unique piece was made by the chief restorer of the Amber Room in the Catherine Palace near Saint Petersburg - Alexander Krylov. For over 30 years he has been the amber master of the highest category in Russia.

Not the usual Staunton figures are on the amber board, but various musical instruments form the chess pieces here!



Siegfried Schönle
Alexander Krylov. Amber figure set. Lender: Dr. Thomas Thomsen

So it says:

“This stone – this is the pure sun. Everything on earth lives thanks to the sun. The amber contains solar energy. It is a warm stone, its color is also warm: light yellow.” [Hildburg Heider | 2011-01-30 in DLF]



Siegfried Schönle
Showcase with records. Lender: Siegfried Tschinkel.

Approximately 600 records and sound carriers show a wide variety of chess motifs from the areas of chess players playing music, photos, art, graphics, etc. on their sleeves. These are probably only known in full personally by the collector, Siegfried Tschinkel from Eschweiler! Unfortunately, due to the limited space from his collection and Georg Schweiger's [catalog pp. 94-101 and pp. 108-122], only a few selected pieces find their place in the showcases.

"Chess. Variantenreich wie eine Schachpartie!" (Chess. Rich in variety like a game of chess!) Siegfried Tschinkel is the title of his essay [catalogue p. 68-73], which is framed with excerpts from various programs for the musical "Chess". This collection area for the musical "Chess" alone offers an almost unmanageable wealth of collectibles. Almost every visitor to the exhibition will discover something for themselves according to their musical or artistic preferences.



Siegfried Schönle

Roll-up. The Rolling Stones. The Unreleased Chess Session. 1964.

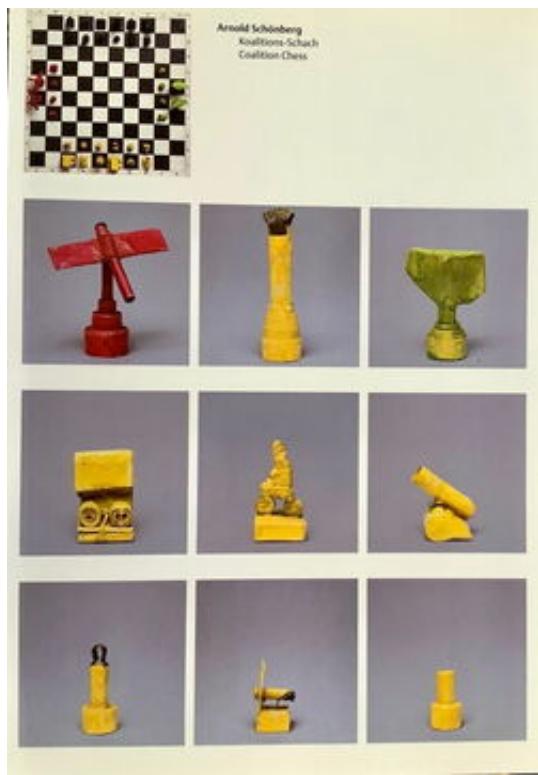
The writer of these lines does not want to hide the fact that for him it is "The Rolling Stones" [catalogue p. 115].

Two other special features of the exhibition are accompanied by specialist essays. Dr. Rainer Buland, head of the Institute for Game Research at the Mozarteum University in Salzburg, writes about a set of figures by the carver Rupert Grießl (1854-1924) entitled "Folk Musicians as Chess Pieces" from the Vienna Museum of Folklore. At the end of his essay, Rainer Buland wishes:

"It is very fortunate that these small sculptures, which do not come from a well-known artist, have been preserved. We would wish for them to receive greater public attention." [Catalogue p. 82]

This folk art attracts attention through the full-page, color illustrations in the catalog on pages 81 and 83 and hopefully also through numerous viewers in the exhibition itself.

The special features of this exhibition have not yet been satisfied.



Siegfried Schönle

Arnold Schönberg - Games, constructions, bricolages, A. Schönberg Center Vienna, 2004, cover.

The times of social upheaval around 1920 did not leave chess untouched either. Some things in society and art should be and become new and different. Arnold Schönberg (1874-1951) developed his "coalition or alliance chess". A chess game with four parties uniting and fighting in two coalitions.

The names of the chess pieces give an idea of the historical experiences they reflect: king, aviator, submarine, tank, artillery, engineer, cyclist, marksman and machine gun.

A game attempt, called "Fliegeralarm", written by Georg Schweiger, with Veronika Exler (2-time Austrian state champion), GM Stefan Kindermann, GM Gerald Hertneck and Georg Schweiger himself is documented in the catalog on pages 46-47. The documentation also consists of photos, the list of figures, the rules and illustrations of the figures carved by the wood carving workshop Kreutz (Gröbenzell) [catalogue p. 84-85].

The visitor is also surprised when he hears about the "rediscovery" [catalogue p. 23-27] of the musical works P.P. Saburov finds out. Dr. Hans Ellinger (Tübingen) and Klaus G. Liehr. You should know that P.P. Saburov was one of the organizers of the famous grandmaster tournament in St. Petersburg in 1914.

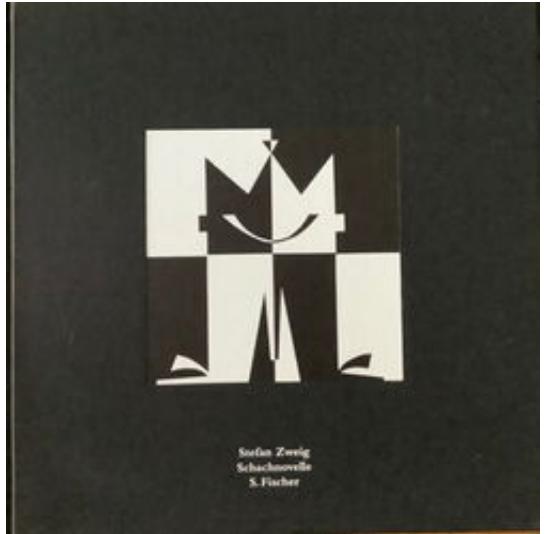


Siegfried Schönle

Display case with the score of the opera Schachnovelle v. V. Dinescu. Lender: Siegfried Schönle.

Comparable to the musical "Chess", Stefan Zweig's "Schachnovelle" has also fascinated a wide variety of arts and artists. Ballet, comics, playwrights, illustrators, etc. took the text as a basis. During the 1994 Schwetzingen Festival, the "Schachnovelle" was the starting point for the composer Violeta Dinescu and her opera version.

A copy of the score [Siegfried Schönle Collection, Kassel], signed by Prof. Violeta Dinescu, lies in one of the showcases, in close and pleasant proximity to the great composer and chess player François-André Danican Philidor (1726-1795).



Siegfried Schönle

Zweig, Schachnovelle, S. Fischer. paper cuts v. A. Holtgreve. book cover.

During the performance in Schwetzingen, paper cutouts by the artist Alfons Holtgreve (Warburg) were projected onto the stage walls, some of which found their way into an illustrated edition of the "Schachnovelle" published by S. Fischer.

Visitors can see this and more in person until the end of November.

The actual opening of the exhibition took place in the evening in the Alter Speicher | Ebersberg instead. This large hall was very well filled with guests seated at tables, which was taken as pleasant for the overall atmosphere of the evening.

After and during the humorous words of welcome from the organizer Georg Schweiger, the mayor Ulrich Proske and the deputy district administrator Walter Brilmayer, who rightly praised the past and present achievements of the cultural foundation, the participants were able to enjoy drinks.



Siegfried Schöngle

Ebersberg November 5th, 2022: Lecture by Dr. H. Pfleger on chess and music

None other than GM Dr. Helmut Pfleger then held the opening lecture for the exhibition "Chess and Music". A "hike" based on well-known and also unknown names from the Middle Ages to the present day was completed by him. From Pedro Alfonsi and Alfons the Wise as early witnesses to chess and music, via Philidor to chess-playing composers such as David Oistrakh, to Robert Schumann, John Cage, Ferenc Erkel. Continuing with double talents, the chess masters and singers or grandmasters and pianists, Vasily Smyslow and Mark Taimanow should be mentioned. Diagrams were presented on the big screen, which found their proper explanation by the presenter. Even for the audience who did not know chess, it had to be made abundantly clear that chess and music belong together and are intertwined. The lecture can be read in the catalog on pages 8-21. Not at all dry, but comprehensible for everyone through photos, diagrams and facsimiles.

The musical performances by the Ebersberg Music School were very well received. Pieces by Bach, Schumann and Mozart were offered.

The Chess Foundation showed itself generously to the well over a hundred guests by allowing them to serve drinks and small meals free of charge during the break.

After the break, Dr. Natascha Niemeyer-Wasserer presented the exhibition catalog to the auditorium. Individual objects were projected onto a large screen and their respective meaning was highlighted.

A chess game, but a special one and a special film, formed the conclusion of this successful evening: Arnold Schönberg's "Coalition or Alliance Chess".

Ilke and Anton Ackstaller documented on film the still "bumpy" attempts by Veronika Exler (2-time Austrian state champion), GM Stefan Kindermann, GM Gerald Hertnecks and Georg Schweiger to play this game and to apply their unusual rules.

A short film premiere at the end of the evening.

An evening that will not soon be forgotten!

See also:

- [Schach- und Kulturstiftung G.H.S](#)
- [Süddeutsche Zeitung](#)