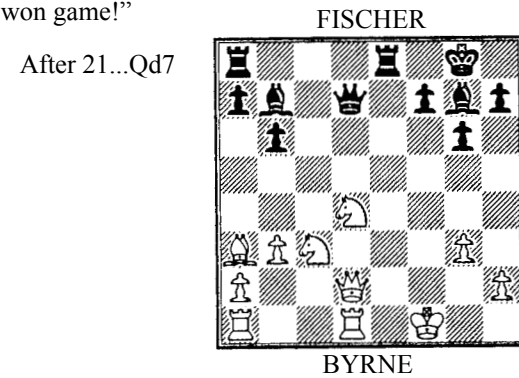


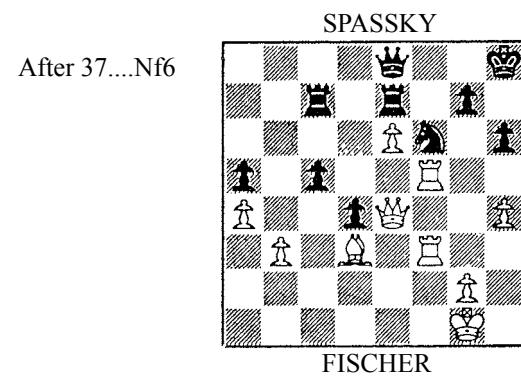
Byrne	Fischer
1. d4	Nf6
2. c4	g6
3. g3	c6
4. Bg2	d5
5. cxd5	cxd5
6. Nc3	Bg7
7. e3	0-0
8. Nge2	Nc6
9. 0-0	b6
10. b3	Ba6
11. Ba3	Re8
12. Qd2	e5!
13. dxe5	Nxe5
14. Rfd1	Nd3!
15. Qc2	Nxf2!
16. Kxf2	Ng4+
17. Kg1	Nxe3
18. Qd2	Nxg2!!
19. Kxg2	d4!
20. Nxd4	Bb7+
21. Kf1	Qd7!
22. Resigns	

This miniature which was awarded the brilliancy prize, was played in the 1963-1964 US Championship which Fischer won with a perfect score, (11-0). K.F. Kirby, editor of the South African Chess Quarterly, wrote that in this game Fischer exercised... "more witchcraft than chess!" Robert Byrne himself wrote that Fischer's 18th move... Nxg2 "came as the shocker... The culminating combination is of such depth that, even at the very moment at which I resigned, both grandmasters who were commenting on the play for the spectators in a separate room believed that I had a won game!"

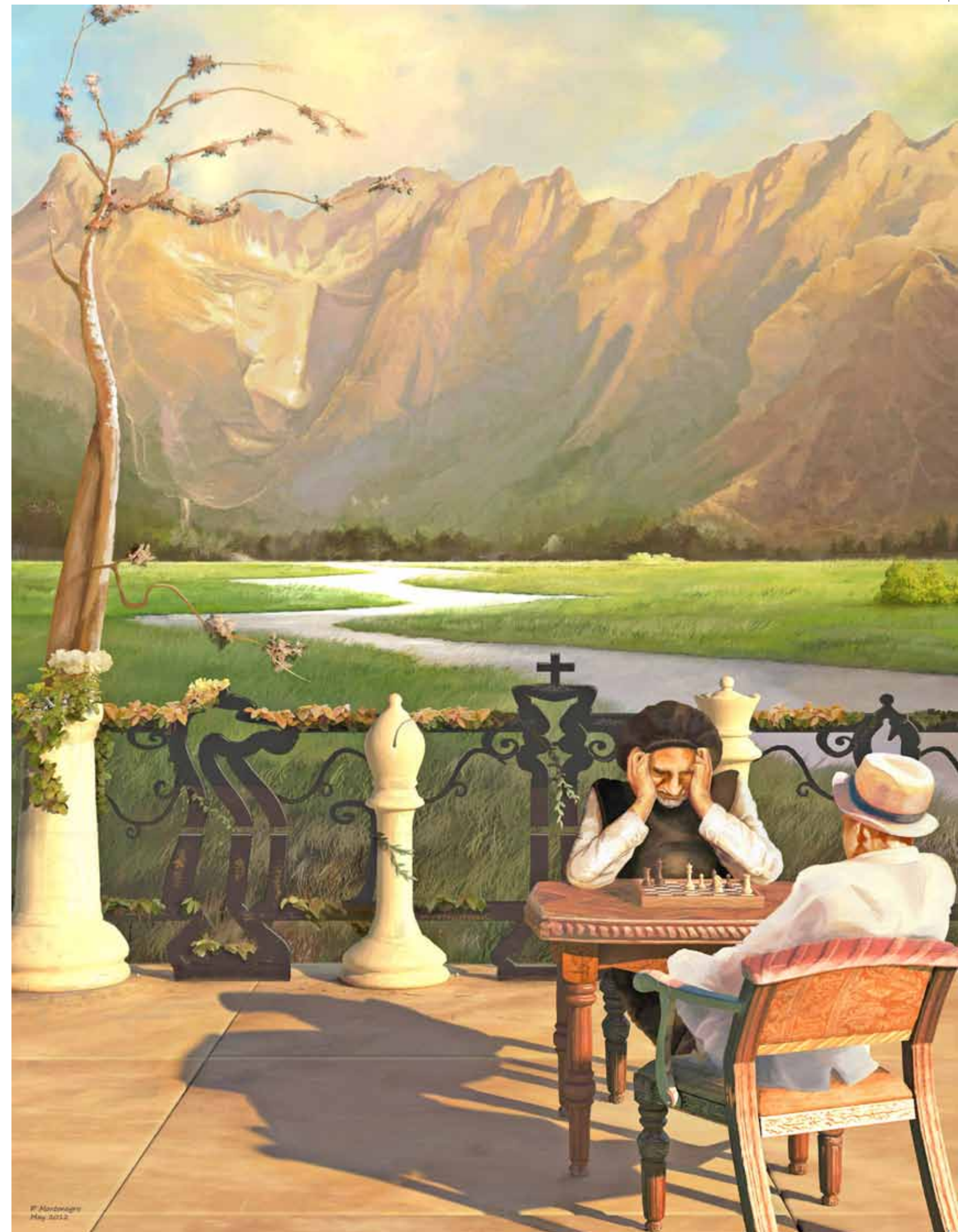


Fischer	Spassky
1. c4	e6
2. Nf3	d5
3. d4	Nf6
4. Nc3	Be7
5. Bg5	0-0
6. e3	h6
7. Bh4	b6
8. cd5	Nd5
9. Be7	Qe7
10. Nd5	ed5
11.Rc1	Be6
12. Qa4	c5
13. Qa3	Rc8
14. Bb5!	a6
15. dc5	bc5
16. 0-0	Ra7
17. Be2	Nd7
18. Nd4	Qf8
19. Ne6	fe6
20. e4!	d4
21. f4	Qe7
22. e5	Rb8
23. Bc4	Kh8
24. Qh3	Nf8
25. b3	a5
26. f5!	ef5
27. Rf5	Nh7
28. Rcf1	Qd8
29. Qg3	Re7
30. h4	Rbb7
31. e6	Rbc7
32. Qe5	Qe8
33. a4	Qd8
34. R1f2	Qe8
35. R2f3	Qd8
36. Bd3	Qe8
37. Qe4	Nf6
38. Rf6!	gf6
39. Rf6	Kg8
40. Bc4	Kh8
41. Qf4	Resigns

This game, Queen's Gambit Declined, (Fischer's first ever in his stellar career), is the most reprinted and replayed of all the world championship title games. It was so beautifully played that when it was over, Fischer received the audience's ovation and Spassky's applause. International grandmaster Miguel Najdorf who was in the audience likened this game to a symphony by Mozart. In that rarefied pantheon of world chess champions, Bobby Fischer's games were the only ones compared to sorcery, Einstein's theory and to a Mozart symphony.



Bone chess piece probably a knight;
Central Asia, possibly before the 11th century.
Dimensions: Height-3.4 cm., Width-2.5 cm.; Weight-6.47 grams
Actual size shown; Private Collection.





“Bobby Fischer was the greatest genius to have descended from the chessic sky.”

“It is difficult to play against Einstein’s theory.” Former World Champion Mikhail Tal

“suddenly it was obvious that in my analysis I had missed what

Fischer had found with the greatest of ease at the board”... “my equanimity was wrecked”.

Former World Champion Mikhail Botvinnik

“It’s not if you win or lose against Bobby Fischer; it’s if you survive.” Former World Champion Boris Spassky

The oil on canvas painting, “Two Chess Players and A Legend” by the California artist Patrick Montenegro, was commissioned to commemorate the 40th anniversary of Bobby Fischer’s victory over Boris Spassky in the 1972 World Championship Match in Reykjavik, Iceland. Fischer, the *über* grandmaster, single-handedly demolished the mighty Soviet empire’s 35-year domination of the world championship title. In this painting, one can see Fischer observing a chess game in progress symbolizing his lasting and immeasurable influence on the game.

For Fischer, the most enigmatic, dominant and transformative player in history, chess was his life’s *raison d’être*. With the media’s extensive coverage of his phenomenal victories, he... “was probably the most famous celebrity on earth,” wrote television talk show host Dick Cavett. Fischer popularized chess worldwide, significantly improved the playing condition and level of play which vastly increased the compensation that continues to benefit all chess masters to this day. The prize money for the 1969 Petrosian-Spassky title match was the equivalent of less than \$10,000 but it increased 25 times to \$ 250,000 for the 1972 Spassky-Fischer match. In the PCA 2000 World Championship Match in London where Vladimir Kramnik defeated Gary Kasparov, the player with the highest (2851) FIDE/ELO

rating in history, 2 wins 13 draws, 0 loss, the total prize money was \$2,000,000. It was Fischer’s astonishing achievements that captivated the public and elevated the respectability of chess and chess masters to unprecedented heights. Harry Golombek, 3-time British chess champion and author of books on chess, Capablanca and Reti, explained that Fischer’s ... “uncompromising attitude is part of the reason for the crushing manner in which his amazing successes have been achieved” and that... “his arrival on the chess scene had, has, and will continue to have colossal importance.” Fischer’s meticulously and objectively annotated *magnum opus*, “*My 60 Memorable Games*” has been and will continue to be required reading for the aspiring player. His remarkable career started with his winning undefeated at age 14, the first of his eight US championship titles including one where he won every game. He was the youngest grandmaster at age 15 to qualify for the World Championship Candidates Tournament, a record set 54 years ago that is still unbroken. His over-all lifetime 72.2% winning percentage is the highest in modern history, an awesome record which he achieved without state financial support and without a team of world-class grandmasters to help him. All he had was his prodigious intelligence, (181 IQ), and his almost insatiable passion for studying the games of contemporary, early 20th and 19th C. masters. And like a great chef who can prepare delectable meals from refrigerator left over’s, Fischer revived discarded lines like Steinitz’s 5.d3 in the Ruy Lopez to defeat Smyslov, (1965 Havana Capablanca Memorial). He also improved on an established Capablanca line with 15.d5 in his victory over Korchnoi in the 1962 Stockholm Interzonal where he was undefeated in 22 games and finished first, 2 ½ points ahead of Petrosian and Geller. He was only 19 years old then.

After an 18-month absence, he played 115 games starting with his 1970 USSR vs. The Rest of the World match against Petrosian, two international tournaments, one Olympiad, one Interzonal tournament, three Candidates matches and the 1972 title match, scoring an incredible 78.6% winning percentage. During this 30-month period, he won

20 consecutive games against the world’s finest grandmasters and crushed 6-0 Mark Taimanov and 6-0 Bent Larsen in their Candidates matches. He won the Candidates Final match against Petrosian with an impressive score of five wins, (including the last four), one loss and three draws and won the 1972 title match against Spassky, 7 wins 2 losses in decisive games, (4 of the 7 wins with the black pieces). It was also during this period that Fischer won the strongest blitz (5-minute chess) round-robin tournament in history, (April 8, 1970, Herceg Novi), white-washing 6-0 three former world chess champions: Tal, Petrosian and Smyslov. He scored 19 points out of a possible 22, 4 ½ points ahead of 2nd place Mikhail Tal. His spectacular records are unlikely to be surpassed.

Gary Kasparov (and eight other players) achieved a higher FIDE/ELO rating than Fischer. Due to the ratings inflation which started in the 1980s and not having played against each other, one may need to compare each player’s lifetime record against the two preceding world champions against whom each had played to put this in context. Excluding the forfeited Game 2 in 1972 in Iceland and the 1992 rematch in Yugoslavia which Fischer also won, his lifetime record against Spassky is 7 wins, 13 draws, 5 losses and his lifetime record against Petrosian is 8 wins, 15 draws and 4 losses, two of which were in 1959 when he was a 16 year old boy. Kasparov has an even record against both Spassky, 2 wins, 2 losses, 5 draws and against Petrosian 2 wins, 2 losses 1 draw but both Spassky and Petrosian were past their prime in the 1980s. Astonishingly, in all of their five games, Petrosian had the black pieces!

In summary, once upon a time in a certain city, three grandmasters lived exactly on the same street. Each had his own fans who placed signboards in the players’ front yards. In Karpov’s, the signboard was, “the best player in the city”; in Kasparov’s, the signboard was, “the best player in the world”. Fischer’s signboard simply read, “the best player on this street”.

Bobby Fischer had a gentle side known only to his closest circle of friends. He loved to be around dogs and horses and was the only player to visit Tal in the hospital during the 1962 Curacao World Championship Candidates tournament. His final words addressed to his caring doctor were, “Nothing is as healing as the human touch”. When he arrived in Iceland after Europe’s oldest parliament voted to grant him citizenship, he was a broken man who spent several months in prison in Japan. He refused treatment for his kidney failure and passed away at age 64 in the same city where he fulfilled his cherished ambition. Dialysis could have prolonged his life but that would have required three times a week treatments for the rest of his life. This is an apt metaphor for a drawn game by repetition of moves or by perpetual check but a drawn game was anathema to Fischer whose fierce competitiveness compelled him to play every game as if it were his last and to always aim for a win. There are treatments for kidney, heart and other organ failure, but there is no known medical treatment for a broken spirit. And so, on his “64th move,” he resigned to that force against whom no one can win. He was buried in a small graveyard near Selfoss: the Catholic priest who gave the blessings reportedly likened his burial to that of Mozart’s: “Like him, he was buried with few present, and he had an intelligence like him that could see what others could not begin to understand.”

Iceland is a country with many beautiful sceneries yet Bobby’s grave is now one of its tourist attractions. On any given day, busloads of tourists travel from Reykjavik to Laugardaelir near Selfoss where they will find only a simple marble headstone with a cross above his name. There is no monument to Bobby Fischer anywhere in the world; the magnificence of his games is his lasting monument.

Jess R. Lambujon, M.D.