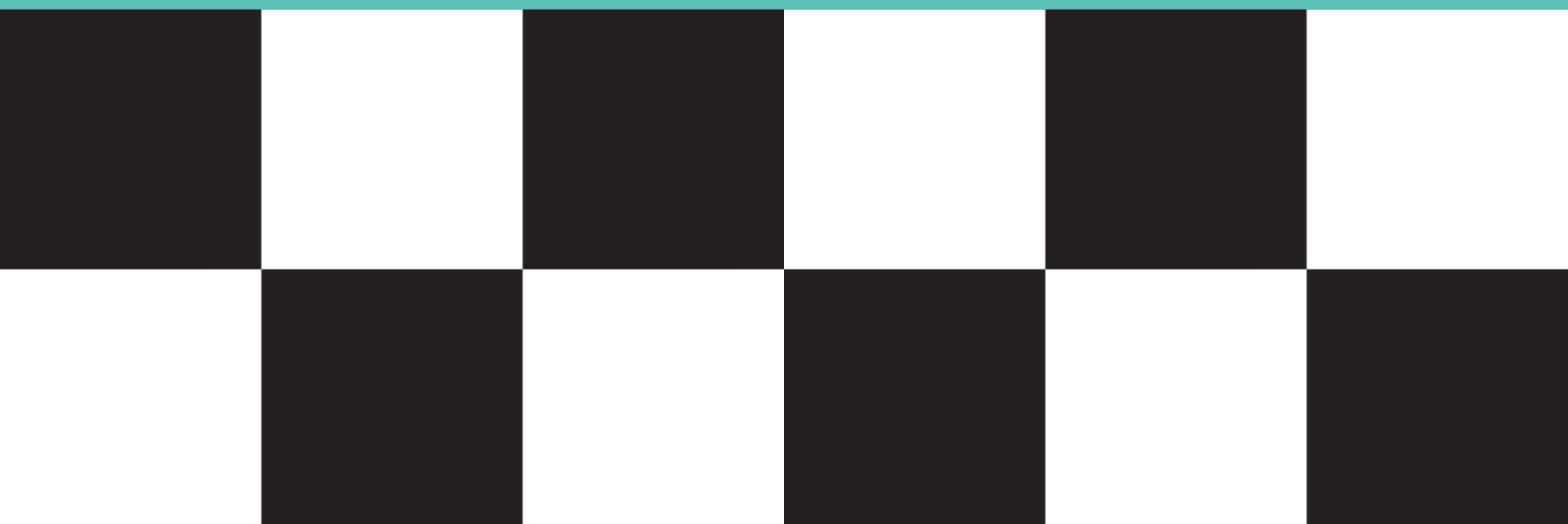


# ENDGAME: DUCHAMP, CHESS AND THE AVANT-GARDE

Press kit



29.10.2016—22.01.2017  
Fundació Joan Miró

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**Fundació Joan Miró**

\*  Barcelona

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Fundación **BBVA**

*Now I am content to just play.  
I am still a victim of chess. It has all the beauty of art – and much more. It cannot be commercialized. Chess is much purer than art in its social position. The chess pieces are the block alphabet which shapes thoughts; and these thoughts, although making a visual design on the chess board, express their beauty abstractly, like a poem. [...] I have come to the conclusion that while all artists are not chess players, all chess players are artists.*

Marcel Duchamp. Address at the banquet  
of the New York State Chess Association in 1952

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## Press release

### ***Endgame. Duchamp, Chess and the Avant-Garde***

Fundació Joan Miró

29 October 2016 – 22 January 2017

Opening: 28 October 2016, 7 pm

Curator: Manuel Segade

Sponsored by the BBVA Foundation

**The Fundació Joan Miró presents *Endgame: Duchamp, Chess and the Avant-Garde*, an exhibition that re-reads the history of modern art through the lens of its relationship to chess.**

**The exhibition, sponsored by the BBVA Foundation and curated by Manuel Segade, looks at chess as a leitmotif that runs through the avant-garde, and metaphorically offers an innovative and playful insight into the history of modern art.**

***Endgame: Duchamp, Chess and the Avant-Garde* brings together around eighty works, including paintings and sculptures – some of which have never been shown before in Spain – by some of the key artists of the twentieth century, drawn from major public and private collections in Europe, America, and Middle East.**

**Highlights include Duchamp's *The Chess Game*, on loan from the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and Paul Klee's oil on canvas *Überschach* from the Kunsthaus Zürich, as well as works from the Centre Pompidou and The Israel Museum and unique pieces by Kandinsky, Sonia Delaunay and Mercè Rodoreda.**

**The selection covers a long period spanning from 1910 to 1972 and also includes four of Duchamp's readymades and a dozen historical chess sets, some of which were designed by leading avant-garde artists and conceptual art pioneers such as Alexander Calder, Max Ernst, Isamu Noguchi, and Yoko Ono.**

***Endgame: Duchamp, Chess and the Avant-Garde* is complemented by a wide range of original documents including books, posters, photographs, films, and audio recordings from public and private archives around the world.**

**Barcelona, 27 October 2016.** *Endgame: Duchamp, Chess and the Avant-Garde* is an account of the twentieth-century avant-garde movements up to the beginning of conceptual art, told from an unusual vantage point: chess.

The BBVA Foundation is sponsoring this Fundació Joan Miró project curated by Manuel Segade (A Coruña, 1977), the current director of CA2M Centro de Arte Dos de Mayo in the Community of Madrid.

Segade argues that the ongoing presence of chess in the life and work of some of the leading artists of modernity is not just anecdotal but rather a narrative thread linking all the different “isms”, as a motif or abstraction or even as a metaphorical key to understanding the position of the avant-garde in the game of art history.

### **The avant-garde in check**

After the opening and the middlegame, when there are only a few pieces left standing, a chess match enters its decisive stage: the endgame. Much has been theorised about this crucial moment. Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968), a passionate chess player as well as a leading avant-garde artist who actively contributed to the conceptual turn that gave rise to contemporary art, wrote a manual on endgames with the chess player Vitaly Halberstadt in 1932. The book, entitled *L'opposition et les cases conjuguées sont réconciliées*, proposed a system that transcended the antithesis between traditional closing methods and the new theories that were emerging at the time.

*Endgame: Duchamp, Chess and the Avant-Garde* shows how this quest for synthesis is also reflected in Duchamp's artistic project as a whole and, by extension, in the strategies used by the avant-garde to challenge tradition in its march towards conceptual art.

### **Marcel Duchamp and the knight's move**

Chess, which had historically been an intellectual pastime of the upper classes, reached its peak in the early twentieth century and spread through all social strata, becoming the most respected game in both the public sphere and domestic circles. This was the cultural context for the formative years of Marcel Duchamp, a leading avant-garde artist who was actively involved in the shift from figurative art to the critique of representation that led to the new forms of artistic practice of the late sixties.

Duchamp's enthusiasm for chess was so great that in 1923 he announced that he would abandon art 'to play chess', an intellectual exercise that he considered 'much purer' than art in its social position. Chess was an artistic activity through which Duchamp could maintain an oppositional logic – represented by the black and white of the pieces – while at the same time the chessboard and its rules allowed him to reach a conciliation that made the confrontation in the endgame

meaningless. According to Segade, the history of the avant-garde and the attack on the paradigm that it represented can be reconstructed between the two extremes of the game – synthesis and antithesis.

Taking Duchamp's life as its timeframe, *Endgame: Duchamp, Chess and the Avant-Garde* explores the hypothesis that chess was a constant backdrop to the historical avant-garde in several senses: 'as an intellectual leisure activity in the private and public spheres, as a social metaphor, as a remnant of the conventional point of view, as a means to reflect on language, as a theatre with the capacity to express the dramaturgy of consciousness, as a war game, and as a gameboard on which to challenge rules and conventions,' Segade explains.

The narrative of the exhibition is illustrated by some eighty works including paintings and sculptures – some of which have never been shown before in Spain – by some of the key artists of the twentieth century, drawn from major public and private collections in Europe, America, and Middle East. The selection covers a long period spanning from 1910 to 1972 and also includes four of Duchamp's readymades and a dozen historical chess sets, some designed by leading artists from the avant-garde and pioneers of conceptual art. *Endgame: Duchamp, Chess and the Avant-Gardes* is complemented by a wide range of original documents including books, posters, photographs, films, and audio recordings from public and private archives around the world that illustrate and contextualise the role of chess in the move from the early avant-garde to the first manifestations of conceptual art.

### **A game in six moves**

The exhibition is structured around six sections. The first, entitled *From Family Leisure to the Painting as Idea*, begins with chess as a motif in the domestic post-impressionist genre and ends with Duchamp's invention of readymades, by way of the geometric explorations of the Cubists and their use of the chessboard as a regulating element in the composition of paintings. This room includes works by Jean Metzinger and Jean Crotti as well as Duchamp himself. Highlights include Duchamp's *The Chess Game*, on loan from the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the readymade *Trébuchet*, from The Israel Museum Collections, the title of which is a play on words based on a classic chess move.

The second section, entitled *Chess and Art for the People*, looks at how chess became an element of education and leisure in the utopian development of Russian constructivism. At the same time, the game took on a renewed, abstract form in the teachings of the Bauhaus, as part of a programme to redesign everyday objects. This room contains three outstanding works: Paul Klee's 1937 *Überschach*, an oil on canvas on loan from the Kunsthhaus Zürich, Sonia Delaunay's *Simultaneous Dresses (Three Women, Forms, Colours)*, from the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid, and Wassily Kandinsky's 1923 *Unbroken Line*, from the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen in Düsseldorf

The third section, *The Psychoanalytic Space of the Chessboard*, shows how, in the hands of the surrealists, chess became a method of psychoanalysis: 'a stage for gender battles and a space for subverting the laws of the chessboard-world itself,' as Segade puts it. This room includes pieces by Man Ray and Muriel Streeter as well as two 1950s works on paper by Catalan writer Mercè Rodoreda in her role as painter. The section ends with a projection of René Clair's legendary film *Entr'acte*, in which Duchamp and Man Ray play a disrupted chess game.

Then visitors will find two notable works that show the bond of friendship that united Marcel Duchamp and Joan Miró: a readymade consisting of a signed tie that Duchamp gave Miró in New York in 1947 for his birthday, and the *Boîte-en-valise*, one of Duchamp's masterpieces, which his widow donated to the Homenatge a Joan Miró collection, the Fundació Joan Miró's modern art collection created as a tribute to the artist.

During the hostilities that shook Europe in the thirties and forties, chess became a key element of national propaganda and a metaphor of triumph in battle. In the fourth section, entitled *The Game of War*, the exhibition explores how chess became an extraordinarily sophisticated vehicle for the work of social psychology during wartime. It also explores how migration resulting from the war favoured the spread of chess culture among the international avant-garde. Paris-based Portuguese artist Maria Helena Ciera da Silva, who had fled to Brazil at this time, produced the painting *The Chess Game* (1943), which is displayed in this room courtesy of the collections of the Centre Pompidou.

In the forties, the imaginary of chess became a recurring subject for the most important artists of the time, so much so that they began to design their own sets, thus blurring the boundaries between chess and the work of art. Many of these sets were exhibited in an exhibition organised by Julien Levy, Max Ernst and Marcel Duchamp in New York in 1944. The penultimate section of the exhibition – *The Imagery of Chess* – is a homage to the historic exhibition from which it borrows its name, and includes some of the most impressive chess sets from the 1944 show: avant-garde chessboards and pieces by Max Ernst, Alexander Calder, and Isamu Noguchi, among others.

One of the foundations of early conceptual art was chess: not long before his death, Duchamp passed on the baton of his work with a last public appearance in a chess performance with John Cage in 1968. Thus began a new stage in history, a new wave that included Pop Art and Fluxus, against the backdrop of the Cold War. The final section of the exhibition, *Endgame: Chess in the Origins of Conceptual Art*, includes the recording of that historic performance, as well as a selection of chess-inspired works produced by pioneers of conceptual art such as Takako Saito, George Maciunas, and Yoko Ono. It also includes two outstanding

readymades dating from the sixties, notably *Hommage à Caissa* (1965), both from The Israel Museum Collections.

The exhibition project is rounded off with a programme of related activities and an accompanying publication featuring a curatorial text in which Manuel Segade discusses the six sections of the exhibition, an essay by Adina Kamien-Kazhdan, Curator of Modern Art at The Israel Museum, on *Échiquier surréaliste*, the legendary photography collage by Man Ray included in the third section of the exhibition, and an article by the writer and professor of Contemporary Art Estrella de Diego, which explores the fascination that chess aroused in leading avant-garde artists and intellectuals.

The exhibition will open at 7 pm on 28 October 2016, and will remain on show at the Fundació Joan Miró until 22 January 2017.

As Manuel Segade explains, *Endgame: Duchamp, Chess, and the Avant-Garde* aims to tell ‘the story of the avant-gardes through “a game called language”, arranging the modern project on a gameboard so as to offer a new vantage point from which to understand the step from the first avant-gardes to the earliest manifestations of conceptual art.’ Visitors are invited to enter the game and discover the history of modernity from a new, playful angle, as a piece on the chessboard of art.



*The 'opposition' is a system that allows you to do such-and-such a thing. The 'sister squares' are the same thing as the opposition, but it's a more recent invention, which was given a different name. Naturally, the defenders of the old system were always wrangling with the defenders of the new one. I added 'reconciled' because I had found a system that did away with the antithesis.*

*But the endgames in which it works [...] really only come up once in a lifetime. They're end-game problems of possible games but so rare as to be nearly Utopian.*

Marcel Duchamp in Pierre Cabanne,  
*Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*

## Curator



Manuel Segade. Foto: Pere Pratdesaba

Manuel Segade (A Coruña, 1977) has a BA in Art History from the University of Santiago de Compostela. Since 1998, he has been working on fragments of a cultural history of nineteenth-century aesthetic practices based on the production of a somatic and sexualized subjectivity, which was the subject of his essay *Narciso Fin de Siglo* (Melusina, 2008).

In 2005 and 2006 he was content coordinator at Metrònom – Fundació Rafael Tous d'Art Contemporani in Barcelona. His projects as independent curator include the exhibitions *La construcció del espectador* for the Luis Seoane Foundation in A Coruña

(2003), the Museu Miquel Casablanca (MICA, 2006), an ephemeral museum of emerging art in Barcelona curated with David Armengol, and several analysis projects that explore the possibility of producing effective, critical communities through contemporary culture, such as *Interferències'06* in Terrassa.

From 2007 to 2009 Segade was curator at the Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea in Santiago de Compostela, where he worked on solo exhibitions by Susan Philipsz (2007), Carme Nogueira (2008), and Clemens von Wedemeyer (2008), and the group shows *Situación* (2008), *Pequena Historia da Fotografía* (2009) and *Familiar Feelings. Sobre o grupo de Boston* (2009). In 2010 and 2011 he programmed the *En Casa* series for La Casa Encendida, in Madrid, with Rubén Grilo, Bestué / Vives, Tris Vonna-Michell and Alexandre Singh.

In May 2011 he curated *La cuestión del paradigma*, on the genealogies of Catalonia's emerging art scene, for Centre d'Art La Panera in Lleida.

In February 2012 he presented the Opening: Young Galleries section at ARCOmadrid, and in June he curated the Lara Almarcegui solo show *Madrid Underneath*, at CA2M Centro de Arte Dos de Mayo, Community of Madrid. Since then, he has produced exhibition projects for ARCOmadrid, MUSAC, the International Biennial of Cuenca, Pavillon Vendôme (Paris, France), and TENT (Rotterdam, the Netherlands).

At the Fundació Joan Miró, Segade curated the exhibition *A place where artists have the right to fail. Stories of Espai 10 and Espai 13*, an overview of thirty-five years of ongoing emerging art programming at this experimental space that has become an internationally recognised laboratory for artists and curators.

Segade has also taught curatorial practices in international post graduate and Masters programmes including the Honours in Curatorship at the Michaelis School of Fine Art in Cape Town (South Africa), the MACBA Programme of Independent Studies (PEI), and Session 24 and Session 25 of the École du Magasin de Grenoble (France), from 2014 to 2016.

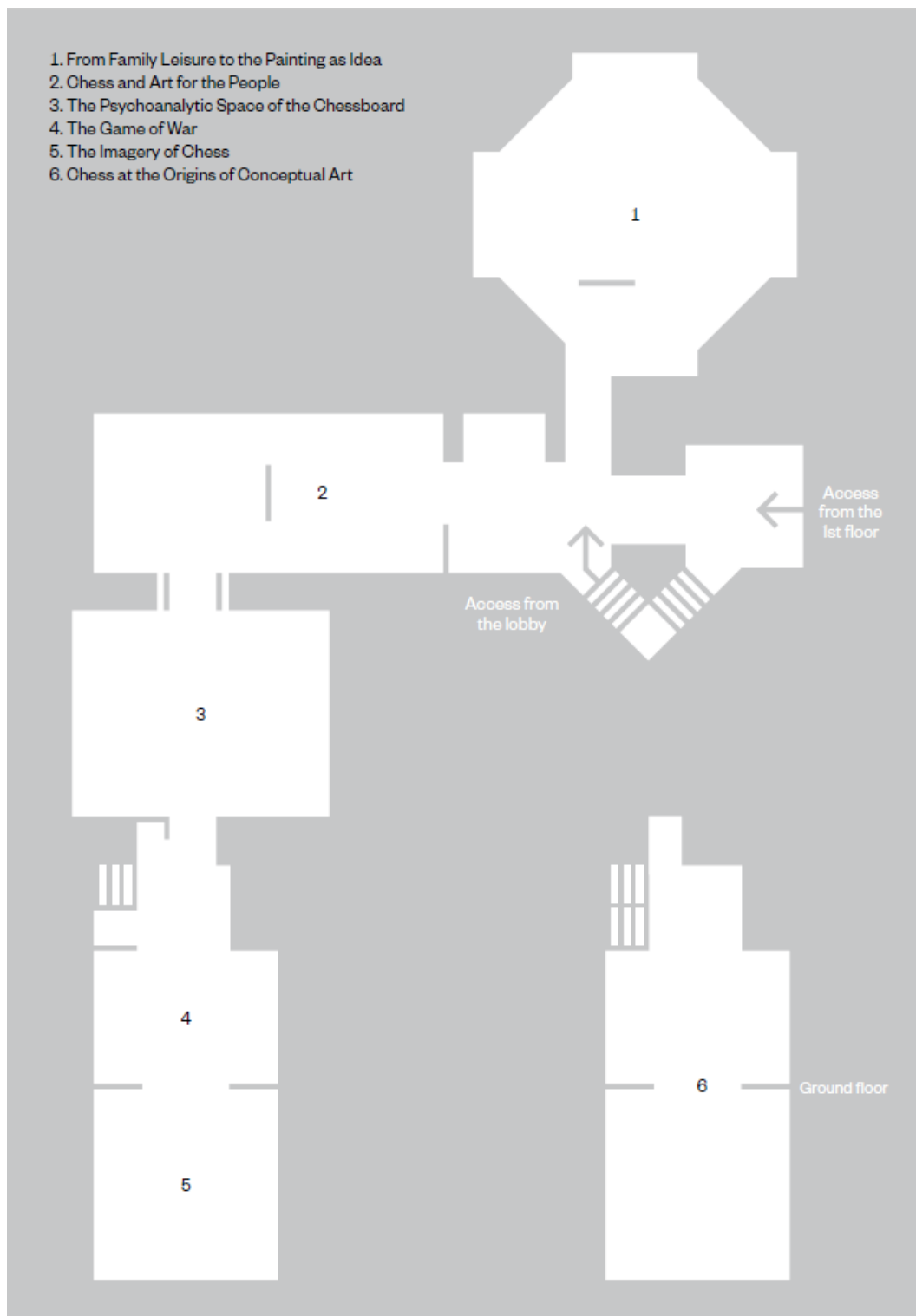
In his most recent projects, he explores forms of gestural approaches to curating as modes of discursive distribution, through educational and pedagogical projects and in performance-like curatorial actions.

He currently lives in Madrid where he is Director of the CA2M Centro de Arte Dos de Mayo, Community of Madrid.

*Actually when you play a game of chess it is like designing something or constructing a mechanism of some kind by which you win or lose. The competitive side of it has no importance, but the thing itself is very, very strategic and that is probably what attracted me to the game.*

Marcel Duchamp, "The Great Spectator", Art in America

## Exhibition layout



## Sections of the exhibition and selection of works

### 1. From Family Leisure to the Painting as Idea

From its origins in antiquity, chess was considered an intellectual exercise and a moral preparation for war. In Europe at the threshold of modernity, chess had become a serious intellectual sport, to the point of having its own Olympics, founded in 1893. It was popular in the private salons where high society gathered and also in the new urban public spaces for the leisure of the working classes.

At around that time, Duchamp had started to rethink his practice after seeing some of Matisse's early Fauvist works. During that period, Matisse was interested in the family as a subject, including chess as a key element for communication between different generations and genders in the domestic life of the bourgeoisie. In 1910, influenced by the idea of capturing family leisure and with a palette reminiscent of Paul Cézanne, Duchamp painted *La Partie d'échecs* [The Chess Game], which shows his brothers Jacques Villon and Raymond Duchamp-Villon playing chess and his sisters-in-law Gaby Villon and Yvonne Duchamp-Villon sitting at a table and reclining on the grass, respectively. In this pastoral family scene, the importance of the background fades and the focus is on the main subject: the players' concentration.

It was there, in the Puteaux art scene, that the Duchamp brothers became interested in the Cubism practiced by their neighbours Jean Metzinger, Albert Gleizes and Fernand Léger in studios that were also frequented by writers like Guillaume Apollinaire and by the mathematician Maurice Princet. In 1914, Raymond Duchamp-Villon made a sculpture linked to the brothers' early attempts to design a modern chess set. Influenced by the dynamism of Futurism and the photographic studies of movement carried out by Eadweard Muybridge and Étienne-Jules Marey, Duchamp-Villon's fusion of a horse and a moving machine resulted in an enormous chess piece that evokes the beauty of movement Duchamp had referred to. At around the same time, Jean Metzinger painted a soldier smoking and playing chess in a Cubist style based on crystallized, overlapping geometric planes.

These avenues for reflection on the fourth dimension, with the introduction of real elements into the painting, were the backdrop to Duchamp's invention of the readymade. His 1917 *Trébuchet* [Trap] is one of only a few of his works that directly refer to a chess move: a pawn structure in which a player forces the other player to lose a piece, regardless of their move, in the hope that they will 'stumble' (*trébucher*) later.

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**Marcel Duchamp**

*La Partie d'échecs* [The Chess Game], 1910

Oil on canvas

114 x 146.5 cm

Philadelphia Museum of Art: The Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection, 1950

© Marcel Duchamp, VEGAP, 2016



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**Jean Metzinger**

*Le Soldat à la partie d'échecs* [Soldier at a Game of Chess], c. 1915-1916

Oil on canvas

81.3 x 61 cm

Lent by the David and Alfred Smart Museum of Art, The University of Chicago. Gift of John L. Strauss, Jr. in memory of his father, John L. Strauss

© Jean Metzinger, VEGAP, 2016



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**Marcel Duchamp**

*Trébuchet* [Trap], 1917 (replica from 1964)

Assisted ready-made: coat rack

19 x 100.1 x 11.6 cm

The Vera and Arturo Schwarz Collection of Dada and Surrealist Art in the Israel Museum, Jerusalem

© Marcel Duchamp, VEGAP, 2016



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**Raymond Duchamp-Villon**

*Le Cheval* [The horse], 1914

Plaster cast

45 x 40.5 x 26.5 cm

Musée de Grenoble, France



## 2. Chess and Art for the People

While Duchamp was in Buenos Aires (where he had moved in 1919) becoming a 'chess maniac' who played all night and slept during the day, artists in the heart of the European avant-garde – including Piet Mondrian, Juan Gris and Fernand Léger – were blurring the distinction between the canvas and the chessboard. Chess was a formal element that could be repeatedly reinterpreted as an exercise – a motif that made it possible to bring order to abstraction; a theoretical object that was to Cubism what the *mazzocchio* had been to perspective in the Quattrocento. Duchamp had this formal aspect in mind when he said that in chess 'there is no social purpose. That, above all, is important.' [Pierre Cabanne, *op. cit.*, 2013, p. 15.].

Be that as it may, the emerging ideological bloc in post-revolutionary Russia defended chess precisely for its social purpose. Although it was a bourgeois pastime associated with café life, the heroes of the Russian revolution helped to popularize the game in the new Soviet Union – Vladimir Lenin, Leon Trotsky and Leo Tolstoy were all great players. In one of the first public displays of the new communist aesthetic at the Soviet pavilion designed by Konstantin Melnikov for the 1925 Paris International Exposition, Alexander Rodchenko presented a 'workers' club' that included for the laborers chairs and a chess table in which the white was replaced with red, the colour of the revolution. The revolutionary communication apparatus included chess as one of the forms of social education of the new political order.

The European counterpart to this sociopolitical approach to chess was the Bauhaus school, which was a crucial point of contact between art and social progress in the avant-gardes. For the first time in Western culture, the Bauhaus explored the possibility of design and the notion of the project forming the core of a kind of interdisciplinary activity that could revolutionize the contemporary social living environment. Wassily Kandinsky, one of the fathers of abstract painting and a teacher at the school, introduced chess motifs as compositional elements and formal patterns in his work. In the thirties, Swiss-German artist Paul Klee, who also taught at the Bauhaus school, produced a series of visual reflections based on chess diagrams. In *Überschach* [Super Chess], the red king rising in triumph over the opponent's final toppled piece seems to reflect Klee's views regarding German National Socialism, which had forced him to return to his native Switzerland in the same year that hundreds of his works were branded 'degenerate art' and removed from German galleries and museums.



In Paris, which was still the epicentre of international modernity, the influence of chess on decoration ran right through Art Deco, with the black-and-white chequerboard becoming an iconic element of good taste. Russian-born artist Sonia Delaunay created 'simultaneous' clothing that reduced the body to geometric circles, parallelepipeds and chequerboards in vibrant colour combinations, using a patchwork aesthetic to create a radical, fragmented style. Her great breakthrough was to take the reproducibility of her fabrics to an industrial scale, in an attempt to democratize avant-garde forms in everyday life.

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**Paul Klee**

*Überschach* [Super Chess], 1937

Oil on canvas

121 x 110 cm

Kunsthaus Zürich, Switzerland

© Paul Klee, VEGAP, 2016



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**Wassily Kandinsky**

*Durchgehender Strich* [Transverse line], 1923

Oil on canvas

141 x 202 cm

Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf. Gift of Westdeutscher Rundfunk, 1967

© Wassily Kandinsky, VEGAP, 2016



(\* Image not available for internet)

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**Michel Aubry**

*L'Échiquier* [The Chessboard], 2000  
Painted wood, two reeds  
114.5 x 188.5 x 93 cm  
Collection Frac des Pays de la Loire,  
Carquefou, France



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**Sonia Delaunay**

**Sonia Delaunay**

*Les Robes simultanées (Trois femmes, formes et couleurs)* [Simultaneous Dresses (Three Women, Forms, Colours)], 1925  
Oil on canvas  
146 x 114 cm  
Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid



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**Josef Hartwig**

*Bauhaus-Schachspiel (Modell I)* [Bauhaus Chess Set (Model I)], 2007  
Reedition of the original chess set from  
1923  
Museu del Joguet de Catalunya, Figueres



### 3. The Psychoanalytic Space of the Chessboard

Between 1923 and 1933, Duchamp participated in chess tournaments all over Europe. After several respectable wins, including the 1924 chess championship of Haute Normandie, he was awarded the title of Chess Master by the French Chess Federation. In 1933, after competing in twenty-four international tournaments, he was selected as a member of the French team for the 5th Chess Olympiad at Folkestone, England. As a result of this change in direction, Duchamp designed posters for a few chess competitions and began his 'literary' production on chess. His most significant literary work was the book he wrote with Vitaly Halberstadt, *L'Opposition et les cases conjuguées sont réconciliées* [*Opposition and Sister Squares Reconciled*]. This publication, designed and illustrated by Duchamp, with texts in French, English and German, is a compilation of unusual, almost impossible or utopian moves that do not turn up more than once in a player's life.

Proof of its importance is the fact that the first of his boxes, *Boîte de 1932*, was made with the notes, proofs and diagrams used in the preparation of the book. He made two further boxes – *La Boîte-en-valise* [The Box in a Suitcase] and *La Boîte verte* [The Green Box], two of his masterpieces – during the years in which, as André Breton had declared in the *Second manifeste du surréalisme* [Second Surrealist Manifesto, 1930], he had supposedly abandoned art in favour of chess, creating an indelible legend.

The years in which Duchamp played chess professionally coincided with the triumph of psychoanalysis and of Surrealism. Surrealists like René Magritte, Max Ernst and Man Ray also played chess, and their works began to be imbued with the metaphor of life and subjectivity as a struggle with oneself – a key idea that could be conveyed through chess – and also by a sexual angle or a map of desire based on the moves of adversaries in a game of chess, in which the central elements are the relationship between the king and queen and the solitary existentialism of the pawn.

Meanwhile, the women Surrealists approached the chessboard through the filter of early gender-related themes. Muriel Streeter, an American Surrealist painter married to Duchamp's art dealer, Julien Levy, painted *The Chess Queens* [1944], a veiled portrait of herself and fellow painter Dorothea Tanning (wife of Max Ernst) which mocks the passion of the masculine knights and toppled pawns, in reference to their own secondary position in the Surrealist group compared to their husbands.

It is present in Catalan culture too: during her stay in Paris and Geneva in the fifties, the writer Mercè Rodoreda worked on paintings influenced by Paul Klee in which the geometric space breaks up into delicate compositions and chess is introduced as a rhetorical figure that paces the observer's reading of the painting.

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**Muriel Streeter**

*The Chess Queens*, 1944

Oil on canvas

343 x 45.1 cm

Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, C.T. Gift of David E. Austin



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**René Magritte**

*Le Géant* [The Giant], 1937

8.8 x 6 cm

Argent photograph

Private collection. Courtesy of Galerie Brachot, Brussels

© René Magritte, VEGAP, 2016



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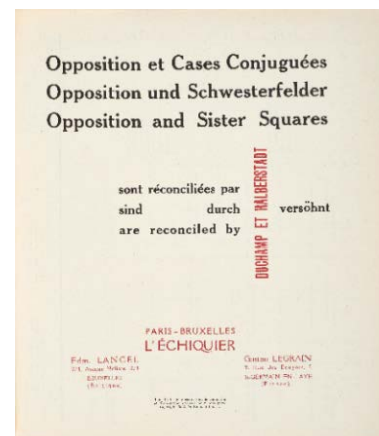
**Marcel Duchamp and Vitaly Halberstadt**

*L'opposition et cases conjuguées sont réconciliées* [Opposition and Sister Squares Reconciled], L'Échiquier, Brussels, 1932

Book

Biblioteca, Centro de Documentación y Archivo del Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid

© Marcel Duchamp, VEGAP, 2016



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**Man Ray**

*Échiquier surréaliste* [Surrealist Chessboard], 1934

Collage. Gelatine silver print

46 x 30.2 cm

The Vera and Arturo Schwarz

Collection of Dada and Surrealist Art in  
the Israel Museum, Jerusalem

© Man Ray, VEGAP, 2016



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**Mercè Rodoreda**

*Untitled (Composition IX)*, 1954

Gouache on paper

48 x 38 cm

Família Borràs-Gras

© Mercè Rodoreda, VEGAP, 2016



#### 4. The Game of War

During the hostilities that shook Europe in the thirties and forties, chess became a key element of national propaganda and a metaphor of triumph in battle. In those tumultuous times, chess developed in two directions: on one hand, the avant-garde influence introduced through the new formats seemed to legitimize further possible modifications, as if the formal aspects of chess were already a language that could be used to convey contemporary political externalities unconnected to the game; on the other, by the time that period of wars arrived, chess had been formally imbued with the traces of the unconscious, thus becoming an extraordinarily sophisticated vehicle for the work of social psychology.

An example of the symbolic importance of chess during the Second World War was the invention of the 'military chess' Tak Tik, in which the usual pieces were replaced by figures from the German army.

At the same time, migration resulting from the war favoured the spread of chess culture among the international avant-garde. Paris-based Portuguese artist Maria Helena Viera da Silva, who had fled to Brazil at this time, produced a painting in which chess fuses the Cubist aesthetic with the psychological space assigned to it by Surrealism.

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**Marcel Duchamp**

*Boîte-en-valise* [The Box in a Suitcase], 1935-1941

Card of box containing miniature replica, photographs and reproductions of Duchamp's works  
40.5 x 38 x 10 cm

Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona. Gift of Alexina Duchamp



© Marcel Duchamp, VEGAP, 2016

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Wehrschach Tak-Tik. Military board game

Reedition of the original chess set from 1938

19.5 x 19.5 x 4 cm



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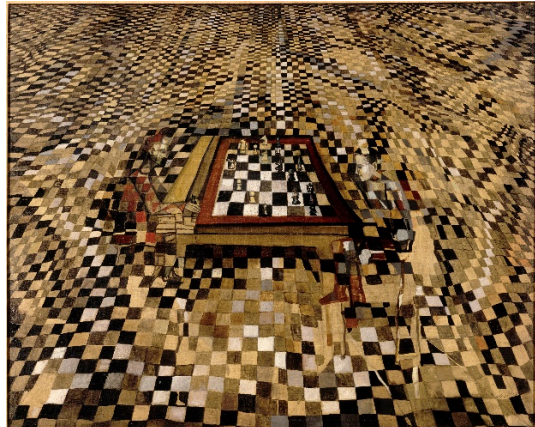
**Maria-Helena Vieira da Silva**

*La Partie d'échecs* [The Chess Game], 1943

Oil on canvas

81 x 100 cm

Centre Pompidou, Paris. Musée national d'art moderne / Centre de création industrielle. Purchase of the State, 1947



© Maria-Helena Vieira da Silva, VEGAP, 2016

(\*Image available on request)

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**Jorge Luis Borges**

*The Chess Game* (Audio from the poem included in the book *El hacedor* recited by the author himself), 1960

Audio, 1 min 44 sec

Fundación Internacional Jorge Luis Borges



## 5. The Imagery of Chess

*The Imagery of Chess* was an exhibition organized by regular chess opponents Julien Levy, Max Ernst and Marcel Duchamp at Levy's New York gallery in 1944. It was the culmination of the indisputable connection between chess and avant-garde art. Duchamp designed the brochure, Dorothea Tanning documented the exhibition, and thirty-two artists were invited to contribute works. Alfred H. Barr, Jr., then director of MoMA, and set designer Frederick Kiesler brought in their expertise, while other artists who were unknown at the time, including Robert Motherwell and Arshile Gorky, contributed two-dimensional works. The show included music by John Cage and Vittorio Rieti, and Max Ernst, Man Ray, André Breton, Yves Tanguy, Isamu Noguchi and Alexander Calder presented new chessboards and pieces: functional designs for a game that was useless in practical terms, an aspect that attracted these chess-playing artists.

Calder's chess set was made out of materials recycled from his studio, such as tool handles and metal scraps, and the canvas board could be rolled up, making it easily portable. Noguchi had recently arrived in New York after his internment in a refugee camp for Japanese Americans in Poston, Arizona, where inmates spent much of their time playing chess. For the New York show he designed a sleek table, adjustable to different heights, with holes replacing the usual squares. Ernst developed a complete geometry that caught Duchamp's fancy: he featured the forms in the exhibition brochure and was photographed playing with the set on several occasions. Man Ray also honed the geometry of the chess set, creating a modern classic that he continued to refine, creating new versions for the rest of his life.

Midway through the show, chess champion George Koltanowski, world record holder in simultaneous blindfold chess, gave a demonstration. Seven of the artists played against him in simultaneous games using the chess sets displayed at the exhibition. They all lost, except Kiesler, who drew. In the games, the player's physical presence was replaced by the vocal ritual of the performer – in this case Duchamp – who recited the moves in the chess notation of numbers and letters to the master, like a litany. Because of the importance the artists placed on removing retinal sensation, this remarkable performance was only documented in a single multiple image by Dorothea Tanning.



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**Dorothea Tanning**

*Chess Tournament at the Julien Levy Gallery, 6<sup>th</sup> January, 1945*  
Collage with three photographs taken by Julien Levy  
8 x 14 cm  
The Destina Foundation, New York

© Dorothea Tanning, VEGAP, 2016



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**Max Ernst**

*Chess Set, 1944*  
Maple and nutwood  
60.3 x 60.3 x 1.3 cm  
Max Ernst Museum Brühl des LVR.  
Private collection

© Max Ernst, VEGAP, 2016



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**Isamu Noguchi**

*IN-61 Chess Table, 1944*  
Ebonized birch plywood, lacquered cast aluminium, acrylic plastic  
49 x 68 x 67 cm  
Vitra Design Museum Collection, Weil am Rhein, Germany

© Isamu Noguchi, VEGAP, 2016



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**Alexander Calder**

*Chess Set, c. 1944*  
Wood and paint  
45.7 x 45.7 cm  
Calder Foundation, New York

© Alexander Calder, VEGAP, 2016



## 6. Chess at the Origins of Conceptual Art

In Paris in 1957, Éditions de Minuit published Samuel Beckett's play *Endgame*, which uses chess as a structural metaphor. Duchamp and Beckett, who had known each other in Paris in the thirties, forged their friendship by frequenting the cafés where the best chess players gathered.

Around that time, Duchamp also cultivated a friendship with Joan Miró, to whom he gave a Readymade – a signed tie– for his birthday in 1947. The two artists decided to work on a joint publication, *Demande d'emploi* (Job Application), which turned out to be Duchamp's last editorial project, and which was only produced posthumously. Miró created a series of prints entitled *Poèmes et chansons* [Poems and Songs] for the project, but they were not included in the final publication.

Marcel Duchamp designed several chess sets in the course of his life, and began to produce them commercially in the late fifties. The most famous is perhaps the pocket chess set that is still used today (now in a magnetic version). His last Readymade was in fact a chessboard entitled *Hommage à Caïssa*, a title that paid tribute to the 'goddess of chess'.

Duchamp's use of his own image as an iconic figure of celebrity, understandable with the concurrent explosion of Pop Art, is also reflected in his iconography of the time. For example, a 1963 image by *Time* photographer Julian Wasser shows Duchamp playing chess in Pasadena with a naked woman (the artist Eve Babitz) in front of his *Large Glass*, in a scene that almost literally represents the original title of the work.

Duchamp's final public appearance as an artist took place in 1968 as part of the chess-based collaborative music performance *Reunion* at Sightssoundssystems, a festival of art and technology in Toronto. It was organized by John Cage, with the participation of musicians David Tudor, Gordon Mumma and David Behrman. On stage, a chessboard connected to a synthesizer emitted sounds through eight speakers whenever a piece was moved. In the first of the two games that were played, Duchamp beat Cage in half an hour. The second, in which Teeny Duchamp played Cage, was interrupted, and resumed in New York five days later: Teeny won. Japanese artist Shigeko Kubota recorded the performance.

The Fluxus movement picked up Duchamp's avant-garde attitude, although they took it into the social sphere of consumption and the public will to action. With increasing symbolic violence as the sixties progressed, Fluxus artists had started to protest against the conservative propaganda generated during the Cold War, in which both blocs used chess as a way of constructing ideology. Fluxus founder Georges Maciunas devised games and amusements imbued with the neo-Dada spirit, including some in collaboration with Japanese artist Takako Saito. Two of

these, *Grinder Chess* and *Spice Chess*, suggest new modalities in which the rules that favour vision in conventional chess are replaced by the player's tactile skills.

But the artist who produced the most consummate chess metaphor of the time was Yoko Ono, who was then on the way to becoming one of the pioneers of conceptual art and John Lennon's partner. Incidentally, Ono had met Lennon at the exhibition *WAR IS OVER (if you want it)* at London's Indica Gallery in 1966, where she presented a series of totally white chess sets. In them, the Cold War match is doomed to failure, as it is impossible for either side to win. The title reinforces the message: *Play It By Trust* – a chess set without visual perception of one's rival, one based on mutual trust, that questions the blindness of the rules and proposes a permanent stalemate in which the very notion of competition is abolished.

Marcel Duchamp died on 2 October 1968. Parisian newspaper *Le Figaro* published his obituary in the chess section. But although all his friends believed that he had been exclusively devoted to chess during the final years of his life, he had actually been working secretly in his studio on his final testament to non-retinal art: *Étant donnés*. The instructions for assembling this posthumous work – a complex installation intended to be revealed to the public after his death – were discovered very recently: another folder/box that enhances the understanding of the final tableau. One of the striking things about the instructions is an element that is not visible in the installation: the base of *Étant donnés* is a chequerboard floor: one last chess set that secures the artist's legacy. As in other works, Duchamp's instructions are the idea or concept that underpins the work, and they are as important for engaging with the work as the work itself.

In a letter to Duchamp, his patron Walter Arensberg once wrote that he seemed to produce and time his work as part of a lifelong game strategy. Duchamp replied: 'Your comparison between the chronological order of the paintings and a game of chess is absolutely right... but when will I administer checkmate or will I be mated?' The aim of a chess game is always to defeat the opponent. The epitaph on Duchamp's grave is unequivocal: 'and besides / it's only the others that die'.

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**Marcel Duchamp**

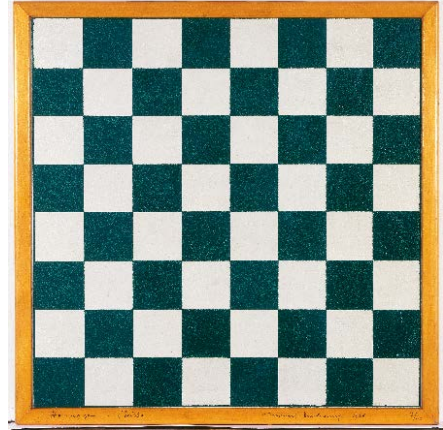
*Hommage à Caïssa* [Homage to Caïssa],  
1965

48 x 48 cm

Ready-made: wooden chessboard and  
silkscreen on artificial leather

The Vera and Arturo Schwarz Collection  
of Dada and Surrealist Art in the Israel  
Museum, Jerusalem

© Marcel Duchamp, VEGAP, 2016



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**Yoko Ono**

*White Chess Set (Play It by Trust)*,  
1966-2016

Reproduction of the original work.

Author: Xavier Torrent

Yoko Ono Exhibitions



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**Takako Saito and George Maciunas**

*Spice Chess*, 1966

16 bottles with black corks, 16 bottles  
with white corks containing spices, and  
64 transparent bottles

28 x 42 x 6.5 cm

Courtesy of Fondazione Bonotto,  
Molvena, Italy

© Takako Saito, VEGAP, 2016

© George Maciunas, VEGAP, 2016



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**Julian Wasser**

Marcel Duchamp playing chess at the  
Pasadena Museum, 18<sup>th</sup> October, 1963

Photograph

18 x 25 cm

Pere Vehí Archives, Cadaqués



## Full list of works

### 1. FROM FAMILY LEISURE TO THE PAINTING AS IDEA

#### **Robert W. Paul**

*A Chess Dispute*, 1903  
Video projection, black and white, 60 min, no sound  
BFI National Archive, London

#### **Carlos Pérez de Rozas**

First Spanish women's chess championship, 1932  
Gelatine silver print  
11 x 12.3 cm  
Arxiu Fotogràfic de Barcelona.  
Ajuntament de Barcelona

#### **Carlos Pérez de Rozas**

Annual festival, 1934  
Gelatine silver print  
22.8 x 17 cm  
Arxiu Fotogràfic de Barcelona.  
Ajuntament de Barcelona

#### **Carlos Pérez de Rozas**

Capablanca, former world chess champion. He played forty games with the members of the Catalan Chess Federation, 1935  
Gelatine silver print  
16.8 x 23 cm  
Arxiu Fotogràfic de Barcelona.  
Ajuntament de Barcelona

#### **Carlos Pérez de Rozas**

World chess champion Alexander Alekhine plays fifty simultaneous games at the Ateneu de Barcelona, 1935  
Gelatine silver print  
16.7 x 23 cm  
Arxiu Fotogràfic de Barcelona.  
Ajuntament de Barcelona

#### **Marcel Duchamp**

*La Partie d'échecs* [The Chess Game], 1910  
Oil on canvas  
114 x 146.5 cm  
Philadelphia Museum of Art: The Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection, 1950

#### **Raymond Duchamp-Villon**

*Le Cheval* [The horse], 1914  
Plaster cast  
45 x 40.5 x 26.5 cm  
Musée de Grenoble, France

#### **Jean Metzinger**

*Le Soldat à la partie d'échecs* [Soldier at a Game of Chess], c. 1915-1916  
Oil on canvas  
81.3 x 61 cm  
Lent by the David and Alfred Smart Museum of Art, The University of Chicago. Gift of John L. Strauss, Jr. in memory of his father, John L. Strauss

#### **Jean Crotti**

*Laboratoire d'idées* [Laboratory of ideas], 1921  
Watercolour on paper  
44 x 54 cm  
Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris

#### **Ferdinand de Saussure**

*Cours de linguistique générale* [Course in General Linguistics], Payot, Paris, 1916  
Book  
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris

#### **Marcel Duchamp**

*Trébuchet* [Trap], 1917 (replica from 1964)  
Assisted ready-made: coat rack  
19 x 100.1 x 11.6 cm

The Vera and Arturo Schwarz Collection  
of Dada and Surrealist Art in the Israel  
Museum, Jerusalem

## 2. CHESS AND ART FOR THE PEOPLE

### **Vsevolod Pudovkin and Nikolai Shpikovsky**

*Shakhmatnaya goryachka* [Chess Fever],  
1925

Video projection, black and white, 18  
min, no sound

Eye Film Institute, Amsterdam

### **Vladimir Nabokov**

*Zashchita Luzhina* [The Defense], Éditions  
de la Seine, Paris, 1930

Book

Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid

### **Michel Aubry**

*L'Échiquier* [The Chessboard], 2000

Painted wood, two reeds

114.5 x 188.5 x 93 cm

Collection Frac des Pays de la Loire,  
Carquefou, France

### **Wassily Kandinsky**

*Durchgehender Strich* [Transverse line],  
1923

Oil on canvas

141 x 202 cm

Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen,  
Düsseldorf. Gift of Westdeutscher  
Rundfunk, 1967

### **Paul Klee**

*Überschach* [Super Chess], 1937

Oil on canvas

121 x 110 cm

Kunsthaus Zürich, Switzerland

### **Josef Hartwig**

*Bauhaus-Schachspiel (Modell I)* [Bauhaus  
Chess Set (Model I)], 2007

Reedition of the original chess set from  
1923

Museu del Joguet de Catalunya, Figueres

### **Sonia Delaunay**

*Les Robes simultanées (Trois femmes,  
formes et couleurs)* [Simultaneous

Dresses (Three Women, Forms,  
Colours)], 1925

Oil on canvas

146 x 114 cm

Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid

### **Oskar Schlemmer**

*Das Triadische Ballet* [Triadic Ballet],  
1922

Adaptation by Bavaria Atelier (1970)

Video projection, colour, 30 min

Bavaria Atelier, GmbH

## 3. THE PSYCHOANALYTIC SPACE OF THE CHESSBOARD

### **Unknown**

Chess players at the fifth French  
championship, including Marcel  
Duchamp. Chamonix, France, 1927

Gelatine silver print

93 x 74 cm

Philadelphia Museum of Art Archives. Gift  
of Jacqueline, Paul and Peter Matisse in  
memory of their mother, Alexina Duchamp

### **Marcel Duchamp**

Poster for the French Chess  
Championship, 1925

Screen printing

78 x 58.4 cm

Staatliches Museum Schwerin /  
Ludwiglust / Güstrow

### **Eugene Znosko-Borovsky**

*Comment il faut commencer une partie  
d'échecs* [How to Play The Chess  
Openings]. French version by Marcel

Duchamp. *Les Cahiers de l'échiquier français*, Paris, 1933  
Book  
Biblioteca, Centro de Documentación y Archivo del Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid

### **Marcel Duchamp**

*Le Monde des échecs* [Chess World], L'Échiquier, Brussels, 1933  
Book  
Biblioteca, Centro de Documentación y Archivo del Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid

### **Marcel Duchamp and Vitaly Halberstadt**

*L'opposition et cases conjuguées sont réconciliées* [Opposition and Sister Squares Reconciled], L'Échiquier, Brussels, 1932  
Book  
Biblioteca, Centro de Documentación y Archivo del Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid

### **André Breton**

*Second manifeste du surréalisme* [Second manifesto of Surrealism], Éditions KRA, Paris, 1930  
Book  
Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona. On loan from Joan Punyet Miró, Teodoro Punyet Miró, Lola Fernández Jiménez and Lucía Punyet Ramírez

### **Unknown**

Bertolt Brecht playing chess with Walter Benjamin, 1934  
Black and white photograph  
18 x 24 cm  
Akademie der Künste, Berlin, Bertolt-Brecht-Archiv, Berlin

### **Man Ray**

Photograph of *Échec dessin* [Chess design], s.d.  
Gelatine silver print  
23.8 x 17.5 cm  
Frederic Amat Collection, Barcelona

### **Man Ray**

*Échiquier surréaliste* [Surrealist Chessboard], 1934  
Collage. Gelatine silver print  
46 x 30.2 cm  
The Vera and Arturo Schwarz Collection of Dada and Surrealist Art in the Israel Museum, Jerusalem

### **René Magritte**

*Le Géant* [The Giant], 1937  
8.8 x 6 cm  
Argent photograph  
Private collection. Courtesy of Galerie Brachot, Brussels

### **Charles Leirens**

Portrait of René Magritte, n.d.  
Black and white  
Musée de la Photographie à Charleroi, Belgium

### **Unknown**

Salvador Dalí and Gala playing chess, n.d.  
Black and white photograph. Vintage copy  
12.7 x 20.6 cm  
Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, Figueres

### **René Clair**

*Entr'acte* [Entreacte], 1924  
Video projection, black and white, 20 min, no sound  
Les Ballets suédois, Paris

**Mercè Rodoreda**

*Untitled (Composition VII)*, n.d.

Watercolour on paper

39 x 49 cm

Fundació Mercè Rodoreda. Institut d'Estudis Catalans

**Mercè Rodoreda**

*Untitled (Composition IX)*, 1954

Gouache on paper

48 x 38 cm

Família Borràs-Gras

**Muriel Streeter**

*The Chess Queens*, 1944

Oil on canvas

343 x 45.1 cm

Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, C.T. Gift of David E. Austin

**Dave Fleischer**

*Chess-nuts*, 1932

Video projection, black and white, 7 min

Paramount Studios

**Joan Miró**

Engravings for *Poèmes et chansons*

[Poems and songs], n.d.

Etching and aquatint

33.5 x 50.5 cm; 33 x 50.5 cm; 33.5 x 52 cm; 33 x 50.5 cm;

Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona

**Marcel Duchamp**

Necktie, birthday present from Marcel

Duchamp to Joan Miró, 20<sup>th</sup> April 1947

Synthetic fibre with printed image, signed and dated on the back

118 x 11 cm

Private collection

## 4. THE GAME OF WAR

**R. L. Chacón**

*Por qué hice las «Chekas» de Barcelona*

[Why I Did the 'Chekas' in Barcelona],

1939

Book

Private collection

**Damàs Calvet Serra**

Chess Set made in Argelès concentration camp, 1939

Wood

21, 5 x 21.5 x 6.5 cm

Museu del Joguet de Catalunya, Figueres

Wehrschach Tak-Tik. Military board game

Reedition of the original chess set from 1938

19.5 x 19.5 x 4 cm

**Maria-Helena Vieira da Silva**

*La Partie d'échecs* [The Chess Game],

1943

Oil on canvas

81 x 100 cm

Centre Pompidou, Paris. Musée national d'art moderne / Centre de création industrielle. Purchase of the State, 1947

**Octavio Paz**

*Marcel Duchamp*, Ediciones Era, Mexico, 1968

Book with a green cloth case partially lined with printed paper

32 x 21 x 2.5 cm

Frederic Amat Collection, Barcelona

**Jorge Luis Borges**

*El ajedrez* [The Game of Chess].

Illustrated poem published in *Gente* review, Editorial Atlántida, Buenos Aires, 1977

Printed paper

32 x 51 (open)

Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona



**Jorge Luis Borges**

*The Chess Game* (Audio from the poem included in the book *El hacedor* recited by the author himself), 1960

Audio, 1 min 44 sec

Fundación Internacional Jorge Luis Borges

**Marcel Duchamp**

*La mariée mise à nu par ses célibataires, même (Boîte verte)* [The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even (The Green Box)], 1934

Cardboard box containing printings on paper

38 x 28.4 x 2.6 cm

MACBA Collection. Fundació MACBA.

On loan from Bombelli Family

**Marcel Duchamp**

*Boîte-en-valise* [The Box in a Suitcase], 1935-1941

Card of box containing miniature replica, photographs and reproductions of Duchamp's works

40.5 x 38 x 10 cm

Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona. Gift of Alexina Duchamp

**5. THE IMAGERY OF CHESS****Marcel Duchamp**

*The Imagery of Chess* exhibition announcement, 1944

Offset lithograph on single folded sheet  
19.5 x 11.7 cm

**Max Ernst**

*Chess Set*, 1944

Maple and nutwood

60.3 x 60.3 x 1.3 cm

Max Ernst Museum Brühl des LVR.

Private collection

**Alexander Calder**

*Chess Set*, c. 1944

Wood and paint

45.7 x 45.7 cm

Calder Foundation, New York

**Isamu Noguchi**

*IN-61 Chess Table*, 1944

Ebonized birch plywood, lacquered cast aluminium, acrylic plastic

49 x 68 x 67 cm

Vitra Design Museum Collection, Weil am Rhein, Germany

**Man Ray**

*Échecs* [Chess Game], 1962

Pencil on paper

21 x 15 cm

Pere Vehí Archives, Cadaqués

**Man Ray**

*Jeu d'échecs* [Chess Set], 1920-1962

Wood, bronze and varnished brass

142 x 57 x 9.5 cm

Courtesy of Galerie Eve Meyer, Paris

**Dorothea Tanning**

*Chess Tournament at the Julien Levy Gallery, 6<sup>th</sup> January, 1945*

Collage with three photographs taken by Julien Levy

8 x 14 cm

The Destina Foundation, New York

**Hans Richter**

*8 x 8: A Chess Sonata in 8 Movements*, 1957

Video projection, colour, 80 min

Courtesy of The Film-Makers'

Cooperative / The Newman American Cinema Group, Inc.

**Vittorio Rieti**

*Chess Serenade*, 1944

Audio, 1 min 27 sec

MODE Records

**John Cage**

*Chess Pieces*, 1944  
Audio, 9 min 49 sec  
MODE Records

6. CHESS AT THE ORIGINS OF  
CONCEPTUAL ART

**Marcel Duchamp**

*Échiquier de poche* [Pocket Chess Set],  
1943-1961  
15 x 12 cm  
Rectified readymade: magnetized black  
leather pocket chessboard with magnetic  
closure. Celluloid chess pieces glued on  
metal bases  
The Vera and Arturo Schwarz Collection  
of Dada and Surrealist Art in the Israel  
Museum, Jerusalem

**Arnold Rosenberg**

Marcel Duchamp playing chess at his  
studio in New York, c.1958  
Photograph  
21 x 15 cm  
Eugenio Granell Photographic Archives,  
Santiago de Compostela

**Oriol Maspons**

Marcel Duchamp playing chess with  
Eduard Tharrats at Bar Melitón in  
Cadaqués, 1964  
Photograph  
Pere Vehí Archives, Cadaqués

**Marcel Duchamp**

Empty cast of Duchamp's face for *Marcel  
Duchamp Cast Alive*, 1967  
Plaster cast  
25 x 17 x 11 cm  
Pere Vehí Archives, Cadaqués

**Julian Wasser**

Marcel Duchamp playing chess at the  
Pasadena Museum, 18<sup>th</sup> October, 1963  
Photograph  
18 x 25 cm  
Pere Vehí Archives, Cadaqués

**Ingmar Bergman**

*Det sjunde inseglet* [The Seventh Seal],  
1957  
Video projection, black and white, 96 min  
Svensk Filmindustri

**Jean-Marie Drot**

*Jeu d'échecs avec Marcel Duchamp*  
[Chess Game with Marcel Duchamp],  
1963  
Video projection, colour, 82 min  
Radio Télévision Française

**Samuel Beckett**

*Fin de partie* [Endgame], Éditions de  
Minuit, Paris, 1957  
Book  
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris

**Marcel Duchamp**

*Hommage à Caissa* [Homage to Caissa],  
1965  
48 x 48 cm  
Ready-made: wooden chessboard and  
silkscreen on artificial leather  
The Vera and Arturo Schwarz Collection  
of Dada and Surrealist Art in the Israel  
Museum, Jerusalem

**Takako Saito and George Maciunas**

*Grinder Chess*, 1964  
Wooden box with various assembled  
materials  
17 x 17 x 7.2 cm  
Courtesy of Fondazione Bonotto,  
Molvena, Italy

**Takako Saito and George Maciunas**

*Spice Chess*, 1966

16 bottles with black corks, 16 bottles with white corks containing spices, and 64 transparent bottles

28 x 42 x 6.5 cm

Courtesy of Fondazione Bonotto, Molvena, Italy

**Yoko Ono**

*White Chess Set (Play It by Trust)*, 1966

Reproduction of the original work. Author:

Xavier Torrent

Yoko Ono Exhibitions

**Robert Filliou**

*Optimistic Box no. 3*, 1969

Wooden box with printed chessboard

6 x 11.9 x 2.9 cm

Courtesy of Fondazione Bonotto, Molvena, Italy

**Shigeko Kubota**

*Marcel Duchamp and John Cage*, 1972

Video projection, black and white, 28 min

Electronic Art Intermix

**Marcel Duchamp**

*Manual of Instructions of 'Étant Donnés':*

1. *La Chute d'Eau*; 2. *Le Gaz d'Éclairage*,

Ed. d'Anne Harnoncourt, Philadelphia

Museum of Art, 1987

Book

30.5 cm x 27.2 cm

Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona

**Lewis Jacobs**

*In His Own Words*, 1968

Video projection, colour, 35 min

West Long Branch

## Artists and sources of the works

### **Endgame. Duchamp, Chess and the Avant-Garde**

Fundació Joan Miró  
29 October 2016 – 22 January 2017  
Curator: Manuel Segade  
Sponsored by the BBVA Foundation

#### **Full list of artists:**

Alexander Calder	Maria-Helena Vieira da Silva
André Breton	Max Ernst
Arnold Rosenberg	Mercè Rodoreda
Charles Leirens	Michel Aubry
Damàs Calvet Serra	Muriel Streeter
Dave Fleischer	Oriol Maspons
Dorothea Tanning	Oskar Schlemmer
Eugene Znosko-Borovsky	Paul Klee
Ferdinand de Saussure	R.L. Chacón
Hans Richter	Raymond Duchamp-Villon
Ingmar Bergman	René Clair
Isamu Noguchi	René Magritte
Jean Crotti	Robert Filliou
Jean Metzinger	Robert W. Paul
Jean-Marie Drot	Samuel Beckett
Joan Miró	Shigeo Kubota
John Cage	Sonia Delaunay
Jorge Luis Borges	Takako Saito, George Maciunas
Josef Hartwig	Vittorio Rieti
Julian Wasser	Vladimir Nabokov
Lewis Jacobs	Vsévolod Pudovkin, Nikolai
Man Ray	Shpikovsky
Marcel Duchamp	Wassily Kandinsky
Marcel Duchamp, Vitaly Halberstadt	Yoko Ono

## Sources of the works:

Archivo fotográfico Eugenio Granell  
Arxiu Fotogràfic de Barcelona. Ajuntament de Barcelona  
Arxiu Pere Vehí  
Bertolt-Brecht-Archiv  
BFI National Archive  
Biblioteca Nacional de España  
Bibliothèque nationale de France  
Calder Foundation  
Centre Pompidou – Musée national d'art moderne  
Doriane Films  
Electronic Art Intermix  
Eye Film Institute  
Fondazione Bonotto  
Frac de Pays de la Loire, Carquefou  
Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí  
Fundació Internacional Jorge Luis Borges  
Fundació Mercè Rodoreda. Institut d'Estudis Catalans  
Galerie Brachot  
Galerie Eva Meyer  
Jean and Julien Levy Foundation for the Arts  
Kunsthaus Zürich  
Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen  
Max Ernst Museum Brühl des LVR  
Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris  
Musée de Grenoble  
Musée de la Photographie à Charleroi  
Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía  
Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza  
MACBA. Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona  
Museu del Joguet de Catalunya  
Philadelphia Museum of Art  
Smart Museum of Art. The University of Chicago  
Staatliches Museum Schwerin  
Successió Joan Miró  
The Destina Art Foundation  
The Film-Makers Cooperative /The New American Cinema Group, Inc.  
The Israel Museum  
Vitra Design Museum  
Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art  
Yoko Ono Exhibitions  
Private archives and collections

*All this twaddle, the existence of God, atheism, determinism, free will, liberation, societies, death, etc., are all pieces of a chess game called language and they are amusing only if one does not preoccupy oneself with 'winning or losing this game of chess.*

Letter to Jehan Mayoux (New York, 8 March 1956), in  
*Affectionately Marcel: The Selected Correspondence of Marcel Duchamp*

## Publication

### ***Endgame: Duchamp, Chess and the Avant-Garde***

Published by the Fundació Joan Miró and the BBVA Foundation

Texts: Manuel Segade, Adina Kamien-Kazhdan and Estrella de Diego

Editions in Spanish, Catalan, and English

Design: Saura-Torrente. Edicions de l'Eixample

128 pages, 80 illustrations



978-84-16411-19-1 *Fin de partida. Duchamp, el ajedrez y las vanguardias*

978-84-16411-18-4 *Fi de partida. Duchamp, els escacs i les avantguardes*

978-84-16411-20-7 *Endgame: Duchamp, Chess and the Avant-Garde*

The show is accompanied by a publication that includes the curatorial text by Manuel Segade, discussing the six sections of the exhibition, an essay by Adina Kamien-Kazhdan, Curator of Modern Art at The Israel Museum, on *Échiquier surréaliste*, Man Ray's legendary photographic collage included in the third room of the exhibition, and an article by the writer and professor of Contemporary Art Estrella de Diego, which explores the fascination that chess aroused in the leading avant-garde artists and intellectuals.

## Activities

Guided tours for the general public, on Saturdays at 11 am (Catalan) and 12. 30 pm (Spanish). Available in English with a previous booking.

Familimiró programme:

***Escac creuat.*** A family afternoon based on the exhibition *Endgame: Duchamp, Chess and the Avant-Garde*.

Saturday 17 December, from 5 to 7 pm. With the following workshops:

***Fora de joc.*** We invite you to chop, shake and stir the pieces of the chess set, and then explore possible results: A coloured gameboard? Edible pieces? A recipe book of new rules?

Actions that take us beyond, inside, and around the game.

*Associació Cultural Nyamnyam* and Vanessa Tedejo

***In-betweeners.*** A participatory installation by Luzie Milena Weigelt. Lockers, keys, steps... an activity in which to discover in-between worlds.

With Luzie Milena Weigelt

Program of activities and guided tours for Friends of the Fundació at <http://www.fmirobcn.org/amics>



*A game of chess is a visual and plastic thing, and if it isn't geometric in the static sense of the word, it is mechanical since it moves; it's a drawing, it's a mechanical reality. [...]*  
*In chess there are some extremely beautiful things in the domain of movement, but not in the visual domain. It's the imagining of the movement or the gesture that makes the beauty, in this case. It's completely in one's gray matter.*

Marcel Duchamp in Pierre Cabanne,  
*Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*

## General information

### Opening hours

Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.  
Thursday 10 a.m. – 9 p.m. (6 to 9 p.m.: 2 for 1 tickets)  
Saturday 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.  
Sunday and public holidays 10 a.m. – 2.30 p.m.  
Monday (unless a public holiday) Closed  
Access to the Foundation 30 minutes before closing

### General admission

Permanent collection + Temporary exhibition: €12 / Concessions\*: €7  
Temporary exhibition: €7 / Concessions\*: €5

\*Students aged 15 to 30 and seniors over 65  
Children under 15 and the unemployed (proof required): Free admission

Annual pass €13  
Multimedia guide €5  
Articket BCN €30 [www.articketbcn.org](http://www.articketbcn.org)

### Accessibility



### Buses

55 and 150 (bus Parc de Montjuïc)  
Transports Metropolitans de Barcelona

### Montjuïc Funicular

(metro Paral·lel, integrated fare)  
Transports Metropolitans de Barcelona

Public transport recommended

Press **images** and digital **dossier** available at our virtual press office  
[www.fmirobcn.org/press](http://www.fmirobcn.org/press) and at the link <http://bit.ly/2dDFHog>

**Follow** the activities of *Endgame. Duchamp, Chess and the Avant-Garde*  
on social media with the hashtag **#Fidepartida** and on the website  
[www.fmirobcn.org](http://www.fmirobcn.org)

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**Fundació Joan Miró**  
\* *J.M.* Barcelona

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Fundación **BBVA**

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