

Foreword

Foreword for the book “Schach-Geschichten”

by Frederic Friedel and Christian Hesse

As complex and fascinating as my beloved game of chess is, the chess world around it is infinitely larger and richer than the 64 squares. It expands and blooms eternally thanks to unique contributions like this remarkable book by Frederic Friedel and Christian Hesse.

Schach-Geschichten shows how deeply human the world of chess is and reveals the passion and beauty it provides its fans and practitioners, from amateurs to world champions. The book maps the breadth of experiences chess can contain, how it can uplift both the mind and the spirit. It demonstrates how our conceptions of mathematics, philosophy, and art are all represented and challenged by an ancient game.

Frederic Friedel has met every World Champion since Max Euwe and befriended most of them. I am pleased to say that I am included in this company. We have known each other since the dinosaurs were around, and my friend Frederic narrates many of the things that we have been through together, some never before told: from long train rides to matches for the World Championship to my Human versus Machine challenges against the computer Deep Blue. Frederic’s gregarious personality, intelligence and quick wit attracts people and makes them want to spend time with him. He has the ability to turn every encounter into something memorable, material fit for legends.

Christian Hesse is an internationally known Professor of Mathematics with a PhD from Harvard. He has thought about the relation between chess and mathematics for decades. It is fascinating how deep the connections between these two human endeavours are, from the Queens Problem to Knight’s Tour to the staggering numbers that the game of chess encompasses. Indeed the “Chess Logicals” that he invented bring a whole new dimension to chess studies and to mathematical logic. If you want to apply your mind to the subject, I recommend “The first Zen Chess Logical” in this book.

Frederic and Christian are a dream team that has succeeded in writing a chess book like no other. It is full of entertaining and heart-warming stories, on and off the board, and it introduces a new genre of wonderfully entertaining logical chess puzzles.

Garry Kasparov

13th World Chess Champion

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Blurbs

Frederic Friedel and Christian Hesse have written an unusual chess book. Its breadth of content ranges from personal encounters with world champions since Euwe, to logical chess studies. Frederic is a master story-teller with a passion for the human side of the chess world. Christian shows himself as a narrator of brilliantly composed mathematical chess puzzles, presenting them in his newly-created art form as Zen logicals. Their story lines tell you how simple reasoning allows to construct a big picture out of only a few pixels of information. The book is full of both types of stories that leave you wanting more. -- **Magnus Carlsen, World Champion**

Frederic Friedel is a cult figure in the chess world. He has been around for such a long time that I wouldn't have been surprised to find a story about his encounter with Paul Morphy. Frederic is friendly and warmhearted, and it has always been a pleasure for me to meet with him in the thirty years we have known each other. Christian Hesse is a math professor with a keen interest in chess. Using entertaining examples Christian shows us the intersection of his area of expertise and the royal game we all so love. I enjoyed reading this book and recommend it highly to everyone. – **Vladimir Kramnik, 14th Chess World Champion**

For a number of decades, Frederic Friedel was the ultimate confidant for the top chess players. I have stayed in his house many times and everyone else in the top visited regularly. This intimacy allows him to give you an entertaining peek into that world. Christian Hesse has already published two bestselling books on chess, and in this one addresses the relation between chess and mathematics in a most delightful way. Both of them love chess and are insiders, whilst being detached enough to see a bigger picture. Looking on as a science journalist and mathematician respectively, they can well convey the strange world of chess to the audience. I am confident you will love the book. – **Viswanathan Anand, five-time Chess World Champion**

The ability to recognize and interpret phenomena and contexts is impressive, and the unique style of writing is captivating. Thanks to the authors, who are deeply passionate about chess, this book presents a unique perspective of the richness of chess, and its world-class players, such as Fischer, Kasparov, and Anand. Through the stories, Frederic gives us an insight into the development of the greatest chess champions, how they got familiar with technology, and in doing so, how chess has evolved over the last few decades. Christian, a great chess enthusiast, shows inspiring aspects of the dazzling relationship between chess and mathematics. This book offers a fascinating and entertaining journey. – **Judit Polgar, best female player of all time**

I first met Frederic Friedel when I was thirteen, and we have enjoyed an enduring personal friendship ever since. His ability to recognize extraordinary talent and his descriptions of how he accompanied them to the very top of the chess world is really unique. Christian Hesse's mathematical chess problems were quite new to me, and left me quite fascinated. I hadn't seen anything like it before. – **Hou Yifan, four-time Women's World Chess Champion**

Science journalist Frederic Friedel's encounters with the greatest players of recent decades and Professor Christian Hesse's fascinating balancing act between chess and mathematics show us the wondrous world of the Royal Game in all its beauty. -- **Dr. Helmut Pfleger, grandmaster and ZEIT columnist**

For me, playing chess is always something special. The pieces are set up, the rules are clear, they are already moving in the players' heads. You prepare yourself for thinking. And then the first move. For me, almost always in the first game: pawn e2-e4. And the adventure begins. And the book by Frederic Friedel and Christian Hesse can increase this pleasure even more. Have fun with it. -

Harald Lesch, professor of astrophysics and TV presenter of the science shows "Leschs Kosmos", "Lesch und Co., etc.