

Artist Freiesleben makes Chess Posh.

For me Kramnik and Aronian are rock stars.

Their cultural relevance is immense, whether or not the general public is aware. If I give them eternal meaning today through their portrait sculptures, their bronze busts will shine evermore, even when there are no iPads left in the world. This is my way of showing how I value their relevance for our cultural heritage. Therefore I strive to do my best.

My intention is to make the relevance of the chess masters and chess visible. It can be achieved by placing the portrait sculpture in public places that are connected to chess. Zurich is the place with substantial chess history. It is to the benefit of all, the chess in general, the Chess Society Zurich, the masters, the people of Zurich and its visitors and of course myself.

Chess and portrait sculpture have quite a lot in common. For thousands of years they follow same rules and goals. These are very intricate and complex pursuits - nearly everybody has once or twice tried to play chess or draw a portrait but often experienced frustration. This is known to all of us. Few achieve a remarkable level, but for those who enjoy these pursuits, they evoke great passion and bring immeasurable joy!

For us, who are into it, it's a narrow focus to concentrate on and become really good. A chessboard. A head. Years of learning and studying. Always moving within the same enclosed esthetical system. To see the abstract impact of our two disciplines. There are 7 billion people all of the same built. Each single square millimeter appears to have the same meaning, yet we can still tell 7 billion people apart. No one is alike. And everyone has endless moods with different mimics and nuances. Everything takes place in this small area. Indeed, the human being is incredible; it never ceases to amaze me. This is only a small hint of what portrait sculpture is about. Chess, with all its myriad moves and meanings—bold, subtle or nuanced—seems a remarkably similar fascinating pursuit.

More similarities come out in the actual act of performing. It is always an encounter. It is always a moment to perform. And in the end we only have the result. And this illustrates everything— who we are, what day we had, what we know in general and what we are able to deliver this very moment. Are we free to fly or do we still stick to what we have learnt? They and I, we all know what is known today in our subject. They know all about Kasparov, Fisher, Lasker and I know quite a bit about whatever have been done in showing faces and heads. There is a heritage that we are obliged to enrich by our contribution. To put it directly - chess and portrait sculpture are honest disciplines, they reveal any failure. You are out if you are not able. But unlike chess, with portraiture, everybody is an expert.

We are all used to faces. There is nothing that we are more acquainted with. This in fact is the biggest contrast to today's art situation as well. I would like art to be more accessible; I would like art to have wider public participation and appreciation. With faces it works. This contributes to our mutual aims for art and for chess as well.