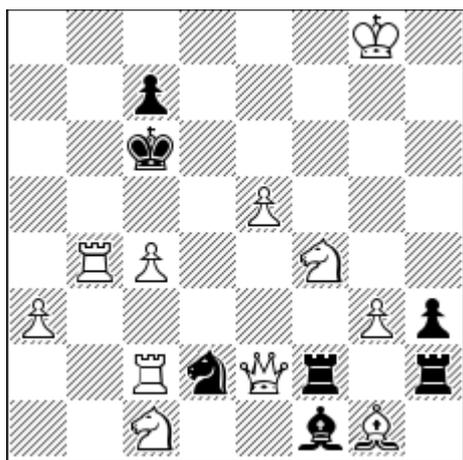


Preliminary award: Threemovers

In 2019, 12 authors from 7 countries have competed in the ChessStar informal tourney by submitting altogether 28 compositions, among which 7 by two co-authors, 4 merediths and 3 miniatures. The level of this tourney was very good and this explains why I had to include almost half of the entries in the award. However only few of these really emerged from the bunch. This being said, here is my ranking:

1st Prize: № 2412 – José A. Garzon (Spain)



#3

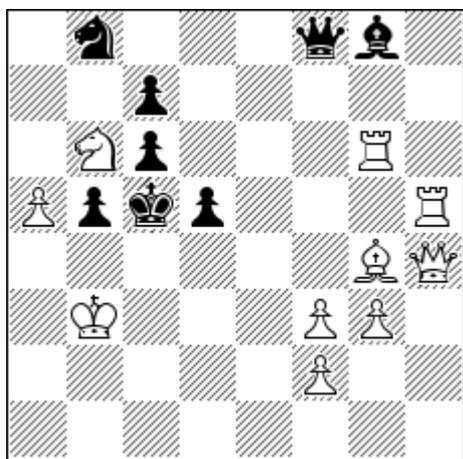
11+7

The brightest star of this tourney! The Soliloquy-Garzon theme, developed and presented by the author in an article published in the October 2016 issue of Problemas, is here shown with the versatile wQ thrice, once in the try 1.Qg4? (> 1...Bxc4+ 2.Qe6+ Kd5 3.Qd5#), 1...Se4! and twice in the post-key play 1.Qh5! (> 2.Qe8+ A Kc5 a 3.Se6# B) with the variations following the thematic check 1...Bxc4+ 2.Qf7 (> 3.Qd5#), 2...Rxf4 3.Qe6#. There is also an interchange of White's 2nd and 3rd moves in the threat variation which is reversed in the variation 1...Kc5 a 2.Se6+ B Kc6 3.Qe8# A. Commenting his solution the author also mentions that the so-called Pelle moves and mates involved in the thematic lines should have been named Pacioli ones, after the Renaissance mathematician Luca Pacioli (c. 1445-1517)

1.Qg4? [2.Qe6+, 3.Qd5#; with 1...Bxc4+ Queen soliloquy]
1...Se4!

1. Qh5! [2.Qe8+ (A) Kc5 (a) 3.Se6# (B)]
1...Bxc4+ 2.Qf7 [3.Qd5# (C), Queen's soliloquy]
2...Rxf4 3.Qe6#. Queen's soliloquy
2...Kc5(a) 3.Qd5# (C) Queen's soliloquy
1...Kc5 2.Se6+(B)Kc6 (b) 3.Qe8# (A)
1...Kd7 2.Qf7+
2...Kc8 (c) 3.Qe8# (A)
2...Kc6 (b) 3. Qd5# (C) Pseudo soliloquy
2...Kd8 3.Rb8#
1...Sxc4 2.Qe8+ Kc5 (a) 3.Sb3# (D)

2nd-3rd Prize: № 2355 – José A. Garzon (Spain)



#3

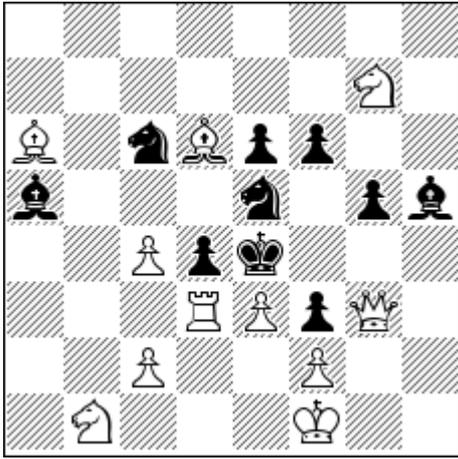
10+8

1...Kd4 2.Bf5+ Ke5/Kc5 3.Qf4/Qb4#
1...Qxf3+ 2.Bxf3 [3.Qb4#] Sa6 3.Sd7#
1.B~? [2.Qb4#], but 1...Qxf3+

1.Bf5! [2.Qb4#] d4+ 2.Be6+ Kd6 3.Bf7# [2...Qf5 3.Qe7#] Bishop's soliloquy
1...Sa6 2.Sd7#

Another illustration of the Soliloquy-Garzon theme but with the wB as thematic unit. The flight 1...Kd4 and the check 1...Qxf3+ are provided. As the random move 1.B - ? (> 2.Qb4#) taking the flight is refuted by 1...Qxf3+ the unpin key 1.Bf5! (> 2.Qb4#) prevents both set defences but offers a new check 1...d4+ leading to consecutive battery moves by the wB with 2.Be6+ Kd6 3.Bf7#. The subvariation 2...Qf5 3.Qe7# nicely exploits the selfblock on d4. White correction, yes, but no Indian theme (author's comment), as there is no critical white move in the main variation, just an interference on e6.

2nd-3rd Prize: № 2406 – Alexander Shpakovsky (Russia)



#3 11+10

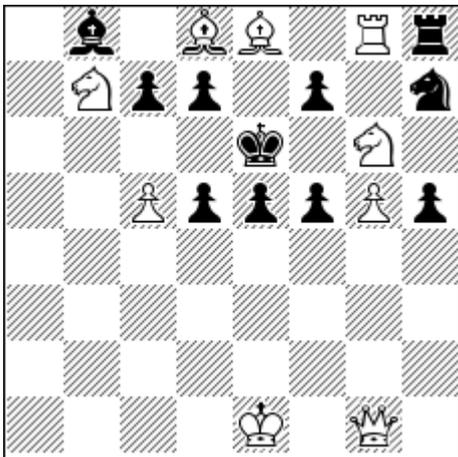
At last the bBs equally involved in the thematic play are mirroring each other in the initial position, which adds an elegant visual touch to this masterly composition.

1.Bb7? ~ 2.Rxd4#, 1...dxe3!

1.Bb5! ~ 2.Qxe5+! Sxe5 3.Rxd4#, 2...fxe5 3.Bxc6#
1...Bc3 2.Rxd4+!! Bxd4 3.Sd2#, 2...Sxd4 3.Sxc3#
1...Be8 2.Bxc6+!! Bxc6 3.Rxd4#, 2...Sxc6 3.Qg4#
1...dxe3 2.Rxe3+ Kd4 3.Sxe6#

Clear illustration of the Rudenko paradox (x2) with nice extra features. First there is threat correction introduced by the same key piece (wBa6) after 1.Bb7? (> 2.Rxd4#) and 1.Bb5! (> 2.Qxe5+ Sxe5/fxe5 3.Rxd4/Bxc6#). Secondly the try refutation 1...dxe3 comes back as defence in the additional variation 2.Rxe3+ Kd4 3.Sxe6#.

1st-3rd HM: № 2342 (v) – Rauf Aliovsadzade (USA)



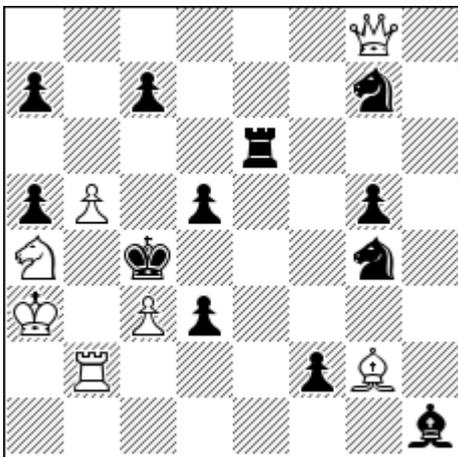
#3 9+11

White and finally e.p. capture mates in the third and fourth variations. Like this last one the extra valuable variation 1...fxg6 also shows a capture of the bPf7 and a mate on f6.

1.Qf1! (2.Sf4+ exf4 3.Qe2#),
1...c6 2.Bxd7+ (A) Kxd7 3.Qxf5# (B),
1...e4 2.Qxf5+ (B) Kxf5 3.Bxd7# (A),
1...d4 2.Qc4+ d5 3.cxd6 e.p.#,
1...f4 2.Qh3+ f5 3.gxf6# e.p.
(1...fxg6 2.Rxg6+ Sf6 3.Rxf6#).

Hopefully the author has upgraded his own original to produce such a rich and harmonious composition well deserving its high distinction. The content is truly impressive! Adabashev synthesis: distant self-block with reversal Zilahi in the first two variations; unblock for flight and black Umnov, line opening for

1st-3rd HM: № 2354 (v) – Leonid Makaronez (Israel)

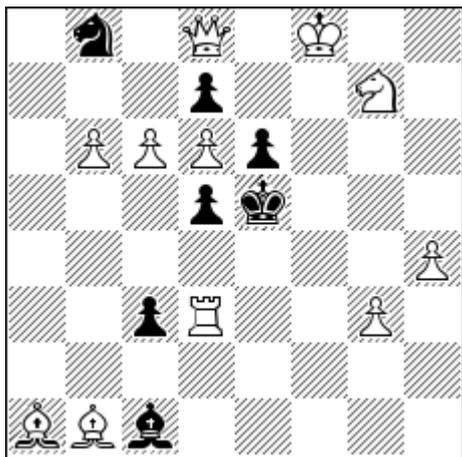


#3 7+12

1.Qf7! (> 2.Qxc7+ Rc6 3.Qxc6#)
1...Se5 2.Qxf2 (> 3.Qc5,Qd4#) Sf5/d2 3.Qc5/Qd4#
1...c6 2.Qxa7 (> 3.Qc5,Qd4#) Sf5/d2 3.Qc5/Qd4#
1...c5! 2.Rb3! (> 3.Sb2#) Re2 3.Qxd5#
1...Se8 2.Qxe6 (> 3.Qc6,Qxd5#) Sf6/Sd6 3.Qc6/Qxd5#
1...d2 2.Bf1+ Re2 3.Bxe2#

Beautiful exploitation of the wQ properties. The key move 1.Qg7! with the threatening variation (> 2.Qxd7+ Rd6 3.Qxd6#) is just a teaser for the fireworks to come. However the author missed to fully develop his solution by only mentioning the «unfinished» variation 1...d5 2.Rc3 (> 3.Sc2#). Otherwise he would have seen the dual after 2...Rf2 3.Qxe5#,Bxe5# and managed to avoid it as I did in the following version. A detail that makes all the difference for this composition between «to be or not to be» awarded!

1st-3rd HM: № 2378 – Evgeny Gavryliv (Ukraine) & Leonid Makaronez (Israel)



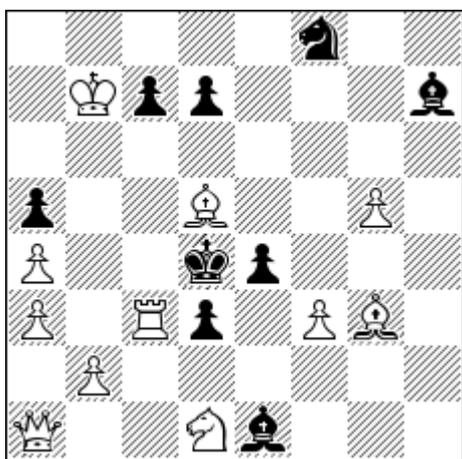
1...Ke4 2.Qf6 d4 3.Qd4#
 1.Rc3!(2.Qf6+Kf6 3.Rf3# 2...Kd6 3.Sf5# Se8#)
 1...Bh6 2.Rc5+Kd6 3.Qe7#
 1...Bg5 2.Qg5+Kd6 3.Se8#
 1...Bf4 2.Rc5+Kd6 3.Qe7#
 1...Be3 2.Qe7!Kd4 3.Rc1#
 1...Bb2 2.Qg5+Kd6 3.Se8#

A set mate is prepared for the flight taken by the give-and-take key forming a battery. The post-key play displays a wide range of various effects in response to basically three different defensive moves by the bBc1 (1...Bb2,Bg5/Bf4,Bh6/Bg5). Entertaining achievement!

#3

11+7

COM: № 2318 – Leonid Makaronez (Israel)



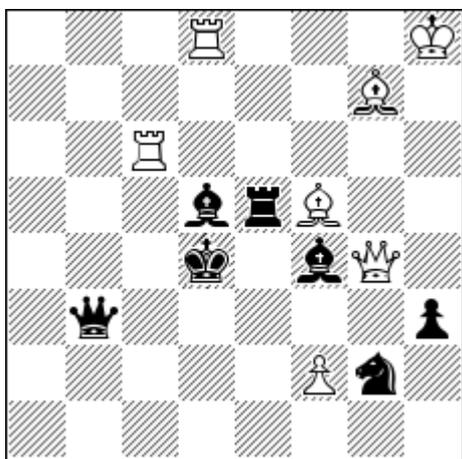
1...Bc3 2.Qa2--3.Qc4#
 1...Kd5 2.Qa2+Kd4 3.Qc4#
 1...Se6 2.Rc4+Kd5 3.Se3#
 1.b4?(2.Rc5+Bc3 3.Qc3#)
 1...Bc3 2.Qa2--3.Qc4#
 1...d2 2.Rc1+Kd3 3.Bc4#
 1...ab!
 1.b3!(2.Rc4+Kd5 3.Qe5#)
 1...Bg3 2.Rc6+Kd5 3.Se3#
 1...Bc3 2.Qc3+Kd5 3.Qc4# Qe5#
 1...d2 2.Rc1+Kd5 3.Qe5#
 1...Kd5 2.Rd3+Ke6 3.Qf6#
 1...d6 2.Kc6 d2 3.Re3#
 1...Sg6 2.Be4 Bc3 Qc3#

Some interesting changed play between all three phases is freely achieved here. The variations 1...Kd5 and 1...d2 2.Rc1+ are respectively changed from the set and the try play to the post-key one. Moreover the threatening variations after 1.b4? and 1.b3! differ totally even if they are introduced by the same white unit.

#3

11+9

COM: № 2321 – Mikail Croitor (Moldova)



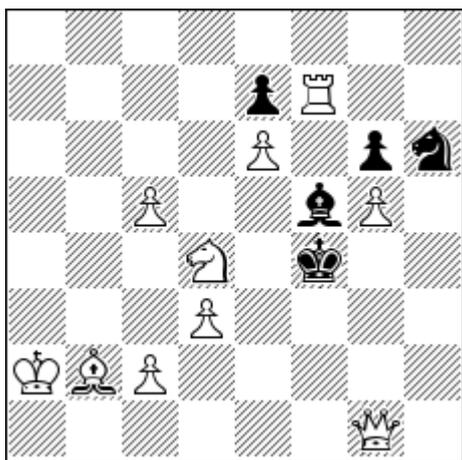
1.Bh7! threat: 2.Bxe5+ Kxe5 3.Qg7#
 1...Qb8/Qb7 2.Qd1+ Bd2 3.Qxd2#
 1...Qg3/Qe3 2.Rxd5+ Kxd5 3.Qd7#

In the initial position three black units are pinned. After the key in the threat and two other variations equally introduced by a bQ move each of the pinning white units plays on the 2nd move.

#3

7+7

COM: № 2385 – Leonid Makaronez (Israel) & Leonid Lubashevsky (Ukraine)



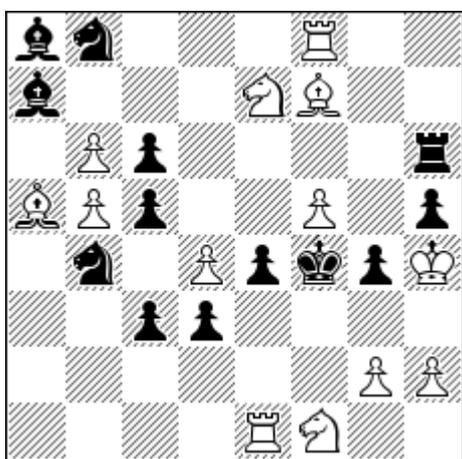
#3

11+9

1.Qg2!(2.Se2+Ke3 3.Bc1#)
 1...Ke5 2.Sc6+Ke6 3.Re7#
 1...Ke3 2.Qf3+Kd2 3.Qe2#
 1...Sg4 2.Sf3! Zugzwang
 2...Sg4--3.Bc1#
 2.Se3 3.Be5#

A nice flight-giving key introduces three variations, two of these after bK moves. The third one introduced by 2.Sf3! is surely a gem: Black is in zugzwang and the two subvariations 2...S-/Se3 show black correction with a damaging self-block.

COM: № 2397 – Rauf Aliovsadzade (USA) & Alexander Melnichuk (Russia)



#3

13+13

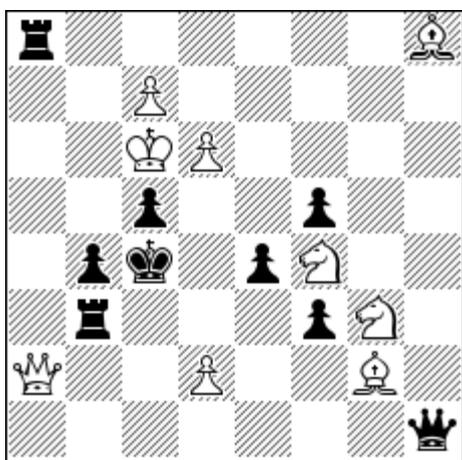
1.b7! (2.Bc7+ & 2.Sg3),
 1...Sd7 2.Sg3 (3.Rxe4#), 2...Re6 3.Sxh5#, 2...e3 3.Rf1#, 2...Sf6 3.Bc7#,
 1...Sd5 2.Bxd5 (3.Rxe4#), 2...Re6 3.fxe6#, 2...e3 3.g3#, 2...cxd5 3.Sxd5#.
 Visserman Type.

Fringe vars:

1...e3 2.Rxe3 (3.g3#), 2...g3 3.hxg3#,
 1...Rd6 2.Sg3 (3.Sxh5, Rxe4#) Rxd4 3.Sg6#.

A double but long threat variation introduces a rich content displaying the Visserman type in two of the three subvariations of the two main lines. A heavy setting has been necessary to show this ambitious idea.

COM: № 2399 – Rauf Aliovsadzade (USA) & Alexander Melnichuk (Russia)



#3

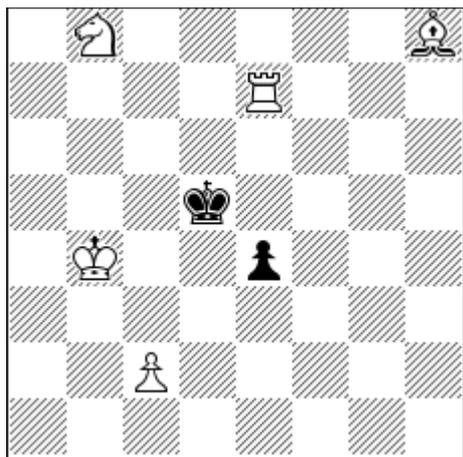
9+9

1.Sg6! - 2.Se5+ A Kd4 3.Sxf5#
 1... Qxh8 2.Bf1+ B Kd4 3.Sxf5#
 1... Rxh8 2.Qa6+ C Kd4 3.Sxf5#

1... Qh3 2.Ba1! - 3.Se5# A
 2... Qxg3 3.Bf1# B
 2... Ra6+ 3.Qxa6# C
 (1...Qa1 2.Bxa1 (-3.Se5# A, Bf1# B) Ra6+ 3.Qxa6# C)
 (1...e3 2.Qc2+ Rc3 3.d3#)

By the same authors just mentioned above but with a light setting this composition after a valuable flight-giving key shows an original exchange of White's three 2nd moves (in the threat and two other variations) and three 3rd moves (in the threat of a fourth variation and two other subvariations).

COM: № 2417 – Rauf Aliovsadzade (USA)



1.Re8!
1...e3 2.c4+ A (threat) Kd6 3.Be5# B,
1...Kd6 2.Be5+ B Kd5 3.c4# A.

After a precise key the bK is mated on two adjacent squares. Interchange of White's 2nd and 3rd moves (AB-BA) in miniature with model mates. A little gem well deserving its place in the award.

#3

5+2

I thank Ferhat Karmil who has kindly accepted to let me judge this tourney. I congratulate composers of all awarded problems and wish the same success in the future for the others.