

videogallery | July 15 > September 14, 2025
film screening

OFFSIDE

Artists' gazes on the world of football

Curated by Carolina Latour

"Like any language, football has a purely instrumental moment, governed rigidly and abstractly by a code, and an expressive moment," wrote Pier Paolo Pasolini in an essay published in *Il Giorno* in 1971, comparing the structure of football to a real linguistic system. As a language - with precise rules yet capable of generating powerful emotional expressions - football has become one of the most widespread, complex, and controversial cultural phenomena of our time, providing artists with fertile ground to narrate and uncover often-hidden aspects of society.

On the occasion of the exhibition *Stadi. Architecture of a myth*, this film screening retraces over twenty years of artistic exploration, highlighting how football culture has often been reinterpreted by artists to analyze broader social and political dynamics. Borrowing various elements of this language - such as the aesthetics of uniforms, the emotional and identity-driven phenomenon of fandom, the iconicity of the footballer's role and media exposure, the cult of certain objects, smoke flare colors, and the sacred architecture of stadiums - the works on display become symbolic spaces where issues related to power, the body, gender identity, belonging, and memory emerge.

A recurring approach in the selected works involves altering this language to create logical short circuits and meaning's shifts, diverging from the conventional flow of a football match to generate new readings. Through the removal of iconic elements - such as the ball - the manipulation of commentary, or the montage of isolated and decontextualized scenes, meaning is unmoored and emptied out, transforming players' movements into grotesque choreographies or intimate gestures. Often ironic, these works reveal the symbolic constructions based on illusion or the fragility of the system as it is usually portrayed. Intimacy—along with memory, emotional life, and collective identity—emerges as a central thread in many of the featured works; interwoven with a poetic view of the everyday, it finds visual expression in archival photographs, the ritual calm of washing uniforms, the performative involvement of one's family, or a football commentary that turns into a personal emotional diary.

Though seemingly authentic, football can be manipulated to convey fictitious and identity-driven narratives—but it can also be transformed into an experimental platform for rethinking the relationships between precarity, time, community, and rights. An unstable field, with "imperfect" rules, becomes the space to rediscover the value of play as a tool for self-organization and collective reflection. The goal-scoring moment, as a collective and yet intimate explosion, can be a gesture charged with eroticism, ritual, and belonging, highlighting the ambiguous and layered nature of mass sporting events.

Through multiple viewpoints and diverse approaches, artists explore the myths, rituals, and contradictions of football, offering a complex and layered vision in which power and fragility, spectacle and intimacy, belonging and conflict coexist. In this way, football—like art—proves to be a powerful tool for generating new narratives, subverting entrenched logics, and stimulating a critical and poetic perspective on the world around us.

From Wednesday to Saturday – screening of works by:

Giancarlo Neri, Paola Di Bello, Enzo Umbaca, Stephen Dean, Matteo Peterlini, Cristian Chironi, Santo Tolone, Emma Ciceri, Antoni Muntadas, Giovanni de Cataldo

Every Tuesday and Sunday - solo screenings of works by:

Daniilo Correal, Miguel Calderón, Sara Sjölin, Sam Taylor-Johnson

videogallery – free admission | all screenings loop from 11 AM to 7 PM

Works on view from Wednesday to Saturday:

Giancarlo Neri, *Il Goal Impossibil* (1992 - 6'03")

"The Impossible Goal" is a classic expression in sports journalism. In this work, Giancarlo Neri explores the tension between desire and failure, between athletic gesture and physical impossibility, transforming the iconic moment of the goal into a paradoxical and visionary act. The piece, suspended between irony and poetry, stages a football action that can never be completed - a goal that will never be scored, yet remains etched in the mind as a symbol of aspiration and limitation. Through a stripped-down and highly evocative language, Neri translates the world of football into a metaphor for the human experience, revealing how the game - and its imagery - can speak of dreams, frustration, momentum, and waiting.

Paola Di Bello, *Video-Stadio* (1997 - 7'30")

What's often hardest to see is what lies right before our eyes - places we forget simply because we've seen them too many times. *Video-Stadio* is a fixed shot of one of the support pillars of the third tier of San Siro Stadium in Milan. At the end of a match, people leave the stadium descending the spiral ramps, and due to a perceptual-visual effect, they seem to set them spinning to the rhythm of a blues soundtrack. *Video-Stadio* becomes the "stadium" of the video itself - a reflection on the act of taking a point of view. The image completes itself through the gaze of the viewer.

Enzo Umbaca, *loul never uolc alon* (2002 - 4'03")

In the video, the artist and his wife wear garments embroidered with two halves of a football pitch, standing at the center of the scene surrounded by relatives from both England and Calabria. Together, they form a horizontal chorus singing the Liverpool anthem "You'll Never Walk Alone", phonetically Italianized as loul never uolc alon. Focusing on intimate relationships, the football field becomes a garment - a tailored outfit, a ceremonial robe. Wearing it means stepping into a role and assuming the specific responsibilities that this uniform/field implies.

Enzo Umbaca, *Kick off* (2002 - 9'50")

Set in Piacenza's football stadium, two children stand on the sidelines holding small flags, composing messages using the international nautical flag code - reinterpreting the expressive, codified language of football fandom through a non-verbal mode. Stripped of visual spectacle, the stadium remains empty, while the projection space is filled with the audio recording of a past match between Piacenza and Inter. The opposing chants of rival fans, translated into the children's gestures, lose their tribal tone and transform into a surreal kind of play.

Stephen Dean, *VOLTA* (2003 - 9')

VOLTA is a video by Franco-American artist Stephen Dean that immerses the viewer in the emotional intensity of a football match - not through the action on the field, but through the eyes of the crowd. Shot inside the iconic Maracanã stadium with a handheld camera, Dean filmed exclusively the fans cheering during various days of the Rio de Janeiro championship, offering a vibrant and chromatically saturated vision of fandom as a ritualistic, collective, and sensorial phenomenon. Dominated by vivid hues and a pulsating visual rhythm, the editing transforms the crowd into a choreographed, almost abstract mass, where every gesture, shout, and movement becomes part of a visual and sonic composition. *VOLTA* is not a documentary about football, but a poetic, immersive exploration of the social body in a state of collective trance.

Matteo Peterlini, *zeroazero* (2005 - 9'50")

zeroazero draws inspiration from the 1982 FIFA World Cup final. Two teams face off on the pitch, the crowd cheers, a goal is scored - but the ball is missing. The object of the game is absent, and with it disappear the meaning, direction, and purpose of the sporting action. The athletic gesture becomes absurd choreography, the fury and strategy a grotesque performance, the stadium a space of collective exaltation. The work explores the symbolic power of football as an identity-forming ritual and a mechanism of national belonging - especially in 1980s Italy, when sport became a shared narrative and a political celebration. What remains on the field, after subtraction, is a hollow collective dance, exposed in its symbolic nakedness: an identity built on the illusion of the game, which, stripped of its core, reveals itself as pure surface of spectacle.

Cristian Chironi, *Poster* (2006 - 26'51")

Through the reconstruction and interaction with archival football photographs of his father—an amateur player in Sardinia between the 1960s and 1980s—Cristian Chironi explores the relationship between image, memory, and identity. The artist faithfully wears period uniforms and physically inserts himself into the images, creating a dialogue between the two- and three-dimensional, past and present. Through repeated poses and evocative use of environmental and documentary sounds, the performance reflects on time, cultural transformations, and masculine models, highlighting both collective and personal memory. The slow and methodical process invites the viewer to linger on the image, creating a space for reflection between involvement and detachment, leading to a conclusion that symbolically unites different generations in an intimate family narrative.

Santo Tolone, *Italia – Brasile 82'* (2009 - 8'15")

Santo Tolone draws inspiration from one of the most iconic moments in the history of world football: the 1982 World Cup match between Italy and Brazil, known as the *Tragedy of Sarriá*. A mountain landscape is filmed by replicating the same camera movements and recreating the same framings of a segment of that game. The rigid visual grammar of a sports broadcast replaces the free movement of the gaze.

Emma Ciceri, *Lode* (2009 - loop, 11')

Lode captures the image of a stadium in the silence that follows the end of a match, when the crowd has already left and the event has come to a close. Emma Ciceri compels us to linger a moment longer in the stands and invites us to experience an extremely delicate yet powerful moment: the immediate aftermath. What we expected to see is over, and the narrative has moved elsewhere. On the now-empty curved terraces, only traces and small occurrences remain: remnants of human presence, not yet cleared away, and a multitude of newspaper pages rising and fluttering in the air, stirred by a breath of wind. The work invites us to pause in this liminal space, suggesting the possibility of a peripheral, lateral, poetic gaze—one that lingers on what remains, on the margins, on the minimal presences that continue to silently recount the memory of the event.

Antoni Muntadas, *On Translation: Celebracions* (2009 - 9'36")

This work is an essay-video on football as a global language, capable of conveying emotions and meanings beyond all cultural barriers. Part of the *On Translation* project that Muntadas has pursued since 1995—focusing on cultural, political, and emotional translation processes—the video is a collage of celebrations extracted from match footage and decontextualized: embraces, jubilations, shouts of joy, acts of prayer. The artist invites us to reflect on the power of the sporting gesture and the collective ritual. At the heart of the piece is the ritual energy of celebration: collective phenomena that are spectacular but also intimate, charged with emotion and eroticism. Football, as a true universal language, requires no translation—and Muntadas uses it as a lens to examine dynamics of power, media spectacle, fanaticism, identity ritual, violence, and control through mass emotion.

Giovanni de Cataldo, *Microlavadora* (2023 - 13'43")

Microlavadora is a short documentary film that portrays football as both a collective and domestic ritual—a sacred and profane representation, at once pulsating and quiet—through two seemingly distant yet deeply interconnected settings: the fans' bus (*el micro*) and the club's laundry room (*la lavadora*). The film stages a visual and sonic metaphor for grassroots football: a centrifuge of emotions starting from the street and culminating in the everyday ritual of washing. It weaves together two opposites—movement and rest, outside and inside, shouted passion and hidden labor—to portray football as a collective, historical, and identity-based experience. *Microlavadora* offers this interweaving of memory and present with a poetic and layered gaze, where each journey to the stadium is also a return home.

Solo screenings – every Tuesday and Sunday

Danilo Correale, *The Game* (2013 - 70')

July 15, 20 | August 12, 17 | September 7

The Game is a participatory art project that, through a three-goal football match, challenges the competitive and hierarchical logic typical of both traditional sports and the workplace. Involving employees from three companies based in Siena, the project creates a space for collective experimentation and self-reflection, inspired by Situationist “trialectics” — a model that encourages cooperative dynamics and new forms of relation by moving beyond the rigid opposition of thesis and antithesis. This conceptual approach finds a powerful, tangible translation in the structure of a three-team game. The work explores the political value of play and leisure, presenting them as tools for resistance and the reclaiming of subjectivity within a context of increasing precarity and social fragmentation.

Sara Sjölin, *Sportscast* (2018 – 111')

July 22, 27 | August 19, 24 | September 2

Replaying the 2018 FIFA World Cup match between Sweden and Switzerland, Sara Sjölin replaces the original commentary with a new, personal, and intimate narration. The artist's voice-over recounts autobiographical episodes, emotional reflections, and fragments of childhood memories. The match becomes a “narrative container” in which Sjölin builds a monologue that moves between humor and vulnerability, creating a compelling emotional dissonance. *Sportscast* is a work that uses the structure and conventions of football as a vehicle to explore personal, emotional, and self-ironic storytelling. Developing a form of poetic and anti-dialectical intensity, Sjölin challenges the boundary between public narrative and intimacy, between collective event and individual story.

Miguel Calderón, *México vs Brasil* (2004 - 90')

July 29 | August 3, 26, 31

In *México vs Brasil*, Miguel Calderón constructs a fake documentary that simulates a historic — and entirely imaginary — 17–0 victory of Mexico over Brazil. Through a skillful montage of archival footage, commentary, and recreated scenes, the artist stages a kind of collective desire: the sporting and symbolic revenge of a nation often relegated to the margins of international football power. Ironic, provocative, and poetic, the video plays with the Mexican public's visceral passion for football, turning fiction into emotional truth. The work reflects on the role of the media, the construction of national identity, and the thin line between reality and imagination. Calderón doesn't just celebrate football — he reveals its potential as mythological narrative and shared dream.

Sam Taylor-Johnson, *David* (2004 - 90')

August 5, 10 | September 9, 14

In a single, extended long take, David Beckham is seen resting in a Madrid hotel after training. With this choice, Taylor-Johnson breaks away from the public and performative image of one of football's most iconic figures, instead offering a vulnerable and tranquil portrayal. The sleeping athlete consciously subverts the hyper-mediated image of the footballer, transforming him from a figure of performative power into a subject of quiet contemplation. The work fits within an iconographic tradition ranging from Renaissance sculpture to conceptual video art — evoking both Michelangelo and Andy Warhol — and offers a subtle reflection on the male body, the notion of celebrity, and vulnerability as an alternative form of representation. Taylor-Johnson does not idealize but slows down the act of observation, revealing how even the most carefully constructed public image can contain fragments of intimacy and universal humanity.