

NE VOUS LAISSEZ PAS CONSOLER

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DEMOCRACIA

REVOLUTION AT THE STANDS

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Football is one of the most important mise-en-scene in the XXth century, a fiction which is clearly ahead of cinema and television because of its performative capacity and the absolute interactivity that it makes possible. When we attend a football game – in the words of the romantic writer Coleridge – a suspension of skepticism is produced; we ignore the origin and ideology of this or that player, the fact that they may sell themselves or be changed by millions of Euros... and we devote ourselves to a devastating plot of winners and losers where we play a comfortable minor **role** which some ones play as if it was a life or death matter.

In this highly ritualized mise-en-scene, the ultra plays a forceful and fictitious identity tale; to all those organized groups, football is a matter of ideology, of community and class. In the fiction of the football show, of which the whole stadium takes part, they are a proactive group, and so fully conscient of their own particularities as of the role they have been **told** to play.

This is not the first time that *Democracia* plays with the concept of social spectacle focusing the aim on a "cyst" of the system (a minority group looked down by public opinion) and its relationship with its alleged antagonist. If in the 'Welfare State' video the evacuation of the residents from a ghetto in Madrid was staged as a choreography between two poles (the people being removed and the middle class citizens applauding the spectacle), in 'Ne vous laissez pas consoler' the artists propose a dialog between the *Ultramarines* – an ultra group of the football team Girondins de Bordeaux – and the revolutionary Intellectuals. But in this occasion the aim is to make clear all those latent parallelisms existing between these two extremes. The common place for this encounter is the language.



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The **integration** of revolutionary intellectual text – generated basically during May '68 and the clear existentialism reminiscences – on banners, scarves, stickers, patches, flags and banderoles by the Ultras, ends in a miracle: 'The truth is always revolutionary' (Lenin), 'Pain is the only nobility' (Baudelaire), 'No idols' (Leo Ferré, anarchist musician and poet), and some other great sentences by Brecht, Camus or Rimbaud are pure epic in ultras and revolutionaries, maybe because there are no middle terms neither to ones nor to the others. What helps the assimilation of the messages regarding the Ultra group may have something to do at first with the active defense of ideals, but in essence, with the comprehension of the territory as a **duel** between the winners and the losers. Because of this evident feeling, because of this mirror effect, the *Ultramarines* understood *Democracia's* proposal and cooperated on an enthusiast way from the very beginning.

The **editing** of this version of the video has been structured following a classical narrative outline: the stadium gets full, climax of the action, the stadium gets empty. We have seen this structure hundreds of times on tv transmissions of the event. But in this relate a discontinuity is produced, and here is where the artistic factor intercedes: we do not see even one frame of the pitch. This video makes me remember the experiment carried out by Jean-Luc Godard and D.A.Pennebaker in 1968 with the psychedelic rock group The Jeffersons Airplane, who were told to play on the roof of a building in the heard of Manhattan and without any kind of permission. The concert (short, as in few minutes police intervened requisitioning the cameras) under the pretext of photographing the faces of astonishment of the passer-bys and neighbors in the contiguous buildings: the idiosyncrasy of the group and the **sociological catalogue** of reactions that it generates are the film's object, as happens in the video by *Democracia*. In this repertory, some recesses to point parallel climes: the journalist at one side of the pitch, at the tribune the personalities. As in the extremely long – and fake – sequence shots by Brian de Palma or Scorsese, the total atmosphere is the addition of microhabitats at different speeds.

The project by *Democracia* is a good example of **bastardization** of artistic practices concerning the negotiation between highly different contexts (Contemporary Art and football industry); the products created for this proposal were co-produced by the Football Club Girondins and today the supporters wear them. Also, the video has began to flow around cinema festivals, where is named short film. It is a good new that those products born at the art factory are reaching the audience from other contexts. No doubts that this is the best option.