

GIOVANNI DE CATALDO

EL CLÁSICO DE LAS COLECTIVIDADES

The exhibition *El Clásico de las Colectividades* by Giovanni de Cataldo, organized by Blueproject Foundation in collaboration with Fondazione Pastificio Cerere and curated by Renato Della Poeta, explores the territories where migratory identity, popular devotion, and Argentine football culture merge into a communal ritual. The title refers to the historic rivalry between Deportivo Español and Sportivo Italiano, clubs founded by their respective immigrant communities in Buenos Aires: a symbolic conflict that, both on the pitch and in the stands, becomes an act of resistance, belonging, and shared memory.

The exhibition unfolds as an ecosystem of forces and counterbalances, a play of physical and conceptual tensions in which “collectivity” itself becomes the structure sustaining the work. Four large tapestries, suspended from iron bars resting on antique domestic coat racks made of bronze and brass, stage a fiction of perfect balance. To counter the weight of the fabric and prevent the bars from bending or sagging at the center, singular counterweights have been placed both at the ends and along the lower sections of the tapestries: bunches of keys and small objects evoking an intimately everyday dimension, a metaphor for those daily bonds that, united, generate strength and bear the weight of history.

Upon entering, visitors are welcomed at the center of the space by the tapestry dedicated to Gaucho Gil, the popular saint of the Guaraní tradition and protector of football supporters. In front of the work, a metal cube functions as a profane altar for votive offerings — cigarettes, candies, bottles — complemented by souvenir magnets in a fluid transition between the domestic and the sacred. On either side, the walls host the mirrored tapestries of Deportivo Español and Sportivo Italiano, where the crowd becomes a choral passion. At the back of the gallery, the first section of the exhibition concludes with the tapestry depicting meat hanging from the stadium railing, an ambiguous image suspended between ritual sacrifice and the profane reality of the previa, the communal gathering before the match.

The anthropological and visual journey is completed in the final room, where a video projection traces the chronological development of the Aguante research project. The footage documents the ritual of the previa across the Argentine landscape, mapping a transgenerational and geographical itinerary—beginning in Cipolletti and Villa Regina in Patagonia, moving up the coast to Mar del Plata and finally arriving in Buenos Aires. In each of these locations, the camera encounters different supporter groups in their gathering places, recording their collective spirit, chants, and preparations for the match.

Through this system of weights, images, and geographies, the exhibition restores the deepest meaning of aguante — unconditional support, endurance — understood as the capacity of a collective to unite around its myths and rituals in order not to be swept away by the passage of time.

AGUANTE, a project by the artist Giovanni de Cataldo promoted by Fondazione Pastificio Cerere in partnership with MUNTREF – Museos de la Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero in Buenos Aires, is the winner of the 14th edition of the Italian Council, the program for the promotion of Italian contemporary art in the world supported by the Directorate General for Contemporary Creativity of the Ministry of Culture.