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NORTHWEST FILM FORUM BRINGS TWO EXCEPTIONAL SOCCER FILMS TO SEATTLE

Seattle, WA — With Seattle slated to become the latest city to welcome Major League Soccer, Northwest Film Forum has taken the opportunity to screen two of the greatest films ever made on the sport. *ZIDANE: A 21ST CENTURY PORTRAIT*, is an artful film depiction of soccer superstar Zinedine Zidane screening April 4-6. This experimental documentary is accompanied by another portrait shot in a similar style almost forty years ago, *FOOTBALL AS NEVER BEFORE*, about celebrated Irish talent George Best, screening April 5-6 only.

Tracking Zinedine Zidane exclusively for the duration of a single football match, Douglas Gordon and Philippe Parreno's aesthetic film *ZIDANE: A 21ST CENTURY PORTRAIT* polishes but never penetrates its star's enigma. The film, which opens at Northwest Film Forum on April 4, is a portrait of one player, in one game, on one day. The camera takes viewers incredibly close to Zidane, but always maintains a certain distance, suggesting a wonder and curiosity in even the simplest actions - Zidane dragging his toes while he walks or removing the wristband as he leaves the field.

During the entire 92 minutes of a Real Madrid vs. Villarreal match, seventeen super-35mm Scope format cameras were set around the Bernabeu Stadium focusing solely on Zidane, who agreed to become the center of attention for this extraordinary full-length feature film. Accompanied by a score from the Scottish band Mogwai, the film is an exploration of the psychology of athletics and a profile of a man in his element – and a breathtaking and transcendental experience. Director Douglas Gordon notes that the entire project - Zidane, his performance, and the resulting artwork - was really "an exercise in solitude."

The team behind the seventeen cameras includes operators who have worked in film giants such as Martin Scorsese and Oliver Stone, as well as some of the world's top sports camera operators that work for NFL Films and Major League Baseball.

Additionally, two of the cameras were equipped with high definition zooms used only by the US Army prior to this production.

To accompany ZIDANE, Northwest Film Forum has unearthed an earlier and very similar work, FOOTBALL AS NEVER BEFORE by the German director Hellmuth Costard. In this film, eight 16mm cameras track George Best through ninety minutes at Old Trafford in late 1970 as Manchester United beat Coventry 2-0. It's an unremarkable game, during a time when Best was already known to drown his gifts in white wine. But like ZIDANE, the film is a study in time and motion, wherein the audience learns nothing about team formation but rather, through the fabled integrity of the long lens and long take, is urged to appreciate individual mastery.

The screenings of ZIDANE and FOOTBALL AS NEVER BEFORE will be complemented by introductions from those in both the artistic and athletic field. Henry Art Gallery Associate Curator Sara Krajewski will introduce the Sunday night screenings. More speakers will be announced on the Northwest Film Forum website as they are confirmed.

The film schedule is as follows:

ZIDANE: A 21st CENTURY PORTRAIT (APRIL 4 - 6, Friday-Sunday at 7:15, 9:15pm)
FOOTBALL AS NEVER BEFORE (APRIL 5 - 6, Saturday & Sunday at 5pm)

These screenings were made possible by Brian and Victoria Owen Klein, and are sponsored by Easy Street Records, KBCS 91.3 FM, and Café Presse.

Images for both ZIDANE and FOOTBALL AS NEVER BEFORE are available at <http://nwfilmforum.org/press/zidane.php>.

Individual tickets are \$8.50 general, \$6 children/seniors, \$5 for NWFF members. Northwest Film Forum is located on Capitol Hill at 1515 12th Ave (between Pike and Pine). More information is available at <http://www.nwfilmforum.org>

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