

Summary

PRZEMYSŁAW STROZEK (Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences; Archiv der Avantgarden – Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden) / Football, decathlon and the martial arts. The Axis Powers and the visual propaganda of the international mega sporting events: 1934–1940

The article focuses on the visual propaganda of international mega sporting events organized and planned by three countries, which would form the Axis Powers: Italy, Germany and Japan. These were the 1934 World Cup in Italy, the 1936 Berlin Olympics and the planned 1940 Olympic Games in Tokyo. Each of the three regimes developed a specific type of sport to be promoted by artists at the sporting events they hosted: football in Italy, a decathlon in Germany and martial arts in Japan. Despite fundamental differences in sporting topics and artistic styles, the depictions of athletes represented the militarist and imperialist ambitions of the future Axis Powers. What united some depictions of athletes around these events were fascist salutes performed by athletes, which testified to the visual mediation of the 1934, 1936 and 1940 international mega sporting events as simply fascist events.