

RACE TO THE BOTTOM

*Clayton **Nepveux** iii*

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Dust. Sun. Dry brush.

A CROWD CHEERS OFF CAMERA...

THE CAMERA PANS 90 DEGREES TO LAND ON...

A peculiar competition about to begin.



Two distinct, opposing groups of FANS,
cheer from atop pop warner sized
aluminum bleachers.

One GROUP wears WHITE. The other GROUP wears
BLACK.

The raucous fans wave flags and hold signs
representing their team.





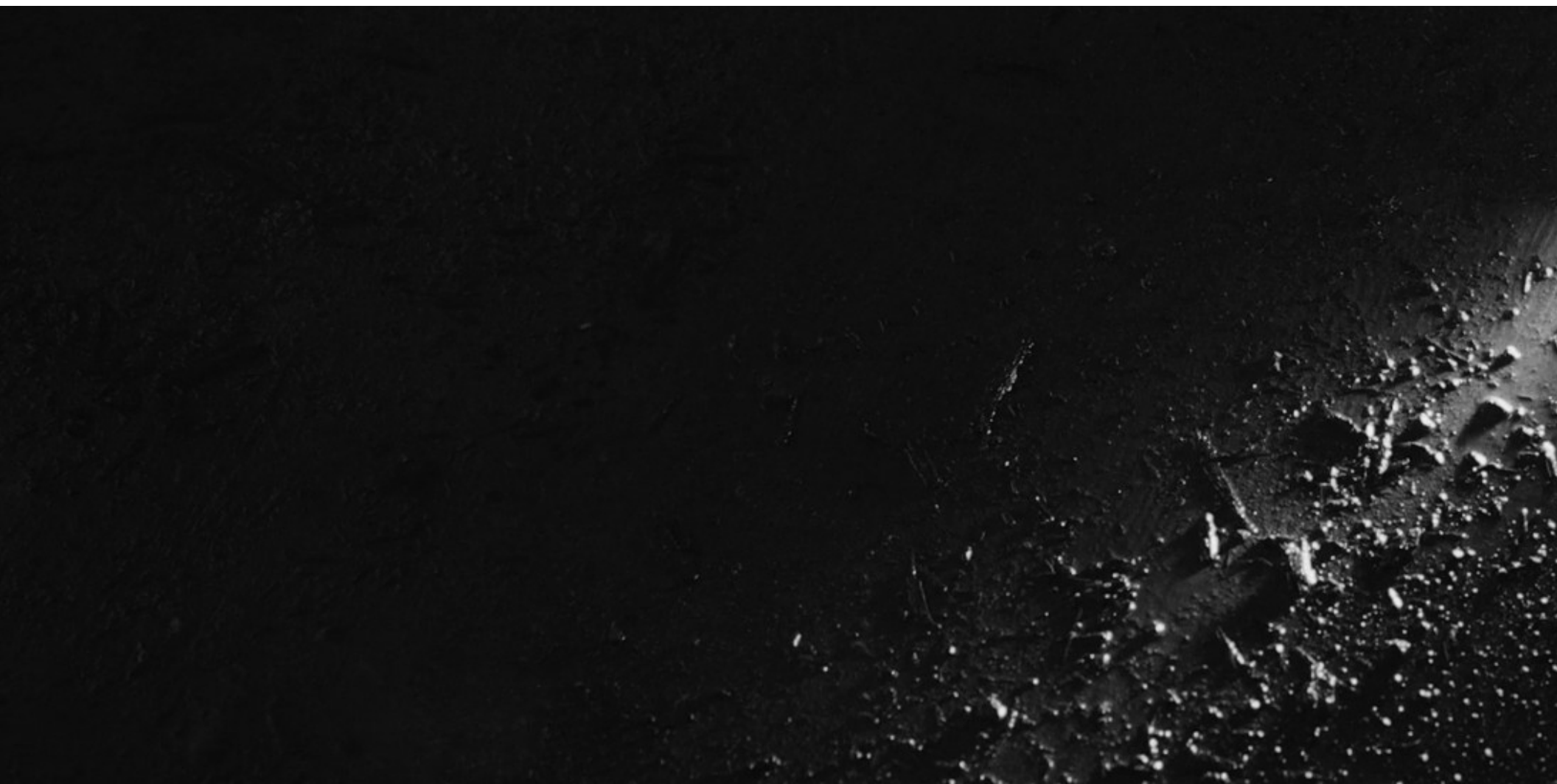


The COMPETITORS consist of TWO TEAMS of THREE FIT YOUNG MEN.

The BLACK TEAM wears black wrestling singlets.

The WHITE TEAM wears white wrestling singlets.

Each team member holds a shovel.







THIS CONTEST IS A RACE TO THE BOTTOM.

The athletes take their positions.

A GLAMOROUS WOMAN in a reflective bikini, raises a starter pistol.

The crowd goes quiet.

The competitors lock in.

Sweat drips. Grips tighten.

Eyes narrow with a hunter's focus.

BANG! THE GUN FIRES.



The men dig furiously.

The crowd goes wild.

THE CAMERA TILTS UP THE SUN...
AND TILTS BACK DOWN TO...



EXT. DESERT - DAY -LATER

The Crowds cheer.

The Diggers are up to their waists in perfectly square trenches.

Their shovels sling dirt high into the air, and onto the opposing team.

The crowd grows ever more fanatical.
They hurl insults and popcorn at each other.



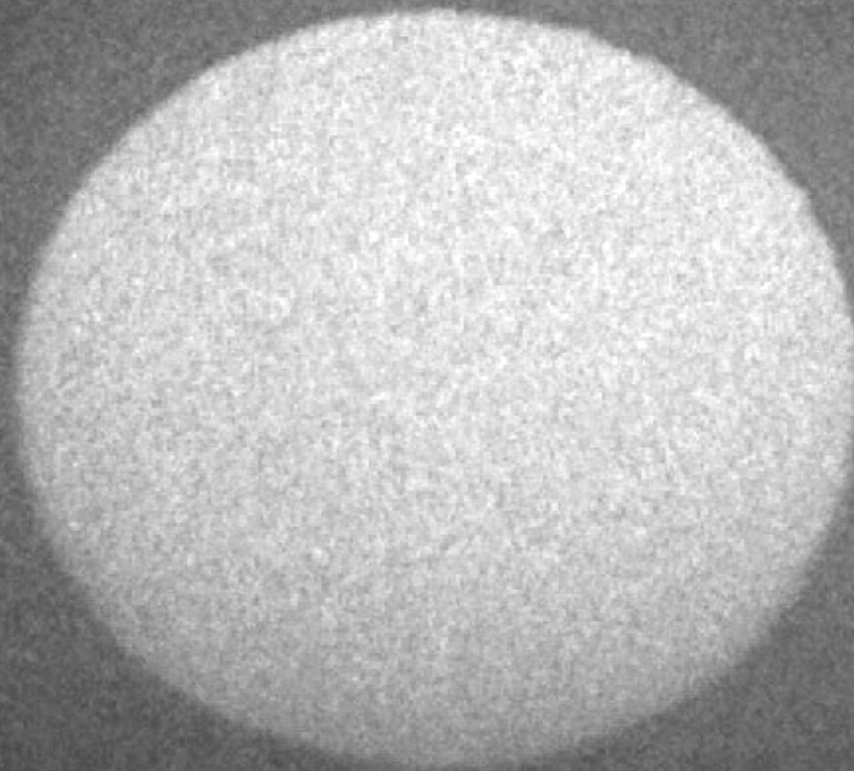
Inside the trenches, the men dig.

Muscles ripple. Earth moves.

One of the diggers takes pause, and looks to
the sky...

THE CAMERA MIMICS HIS MOVEMENT AND TILTS UP TO
THE SUN...

AND BACK DOWN TO...



EXT. DESERT - DAY - LATER STILL

The Crowd is more subdued.

Some people cheer but many look uninterested...
think mid-third quarter in a blowout.

The Holes are now deep enough that the two teams
are completely out of sight.

WE CAN HEAR THE SOUND OF THEIR SHOVELS ECHO FROM
THE DARK.

The GLAMOROUS WOMAN in the bikini pulls a LEAD
LINE from the BLACK TEAMS HOLE.

She presents the line to the crowd.

The BLACK CROWD reacts with a cheer.

The WHITE CROWD awaits their depth measurement.

The GLAMOROUS WOMAN lowers the lead line into
the White Hole.

The two teams are in a dead heat.



INT. WHITE HOLE - DAY

The white team digs furiously.

INT. BLACK HOLE - DAY

The black team digs furiously.

WE SEE A CROSS SECTION OF THE EARTH AND THE
PROGRESS OF THE TEAMS.

IT RESEMBLES A HUMAN ANT FARM.

EXT. DESERT - DAY - LATER

What is left of the crowds, are completely disengaged.

Popcorn buckets and empty soft drinks litter the bleachers.

WE CAN HEAR THE SHOVELS STILL ECHO FROM THE PITS.

The last remaining members of the black crowd leave.

One of the last remaining FANS of team white peers over the edge of the pit.

Darkness. Echoes. The sound of shovels digging and scraping.

The FAN tosses his white flag into the pit.

THE FLAG falls through the void.

He walks away.

EXT. DESERT - DAY - MUCH LATER

The sun sits low to the horizon.

The desert is still.

THE SOUND OF A CHEERING CROWD STARTS TO BUILD
IN THE DISTANCE.

The ground rumbles.



Long shadows appear, followed by the return of the CROWD; united now wearing checkerboard uniforms, and carrying checkerboard flags.

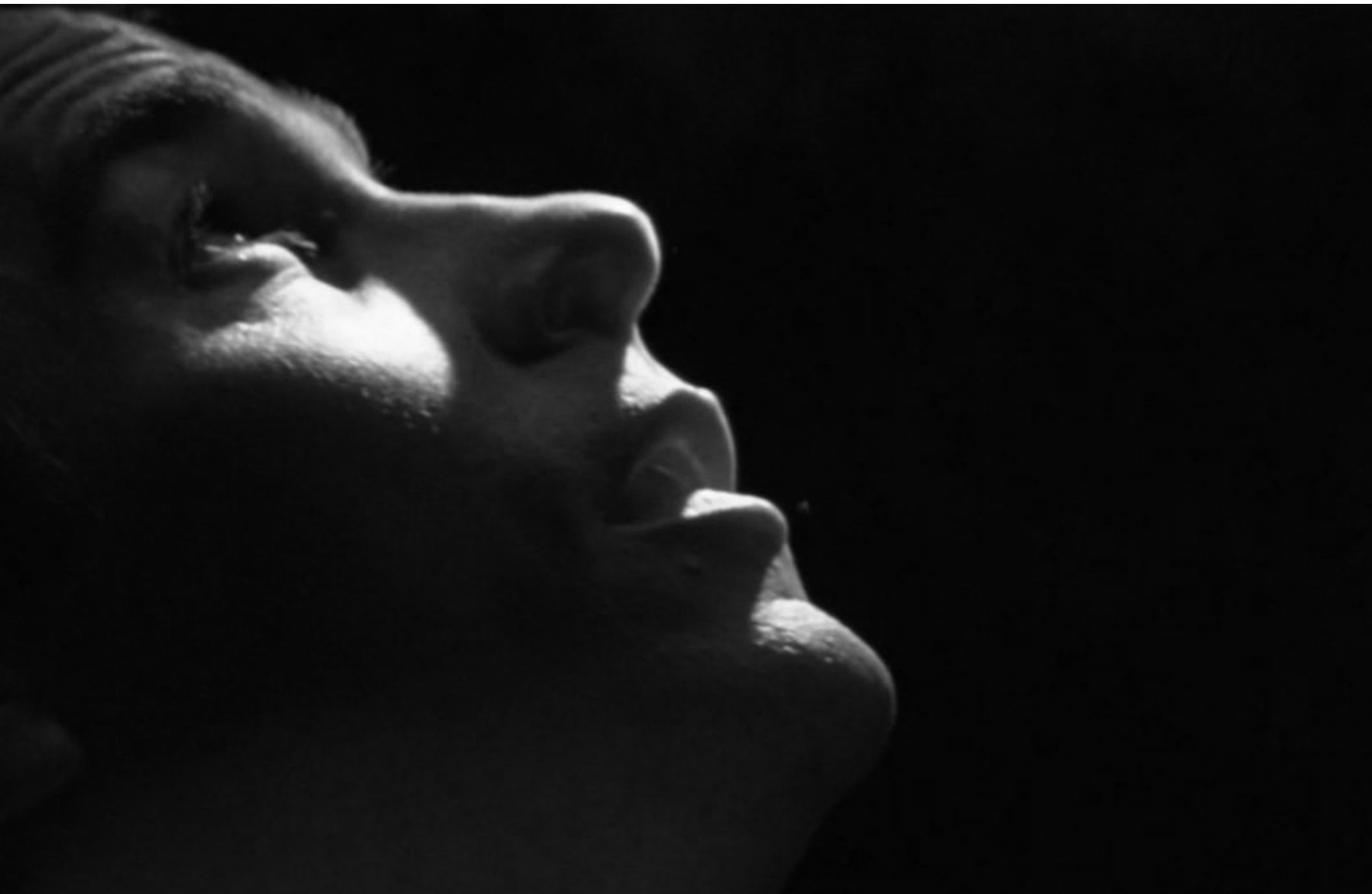
They march beside a BULLDOZER adorned with the same insignia, reminiscent of soldiers marching into battle with a tank.



INT. HOLE

The exhausted athletes pause as they hear the roar of the crowd far above them.

They are re-energized by the sound and they continue to dig.





EXT. DESERT

The bulldozer scoops up a pile of dirt.

The CHECKERBOARD WEARING MOB goes wild.

INT. HOLE

One of the diggers hits something hard. His team mates stop.

This is it.

They have hit rock bottom.

Smiles. Hugs. Pride. Tears of joy.

They look toward the light above them.





EXT. DESERT

The bulldozer raises its scoop filled with
dirt...

Drives to the edge of the pit...

And dumps the soil...

BLACK.

WE HEAR THE SOUND OF THE CROWD
CHEERING...

...AND THE SOUND OF THE BULLDOZER
WORKING.



EXT. DESERT

The bulldozer grades over the freshly covered pits.

The crowd celebrates in the bleachers.

The mob raises a checkerboard flag.

The flag waves in the breeze.

THE END.

ANALYSIS

Rock Bottom isn't the end...

...it's the foundation for collapse.

"Race to the Bottom" reflects how internal conflict and shortsighted competition can undermine shared foundations, making systems vulnerable to external threats.

When groups prioritize rivalry over collaboration, they weaken themselves and create opportunities for destructive forces to take control.

It serves as a cautionary tale about the dangers of division, self-destruction, mob-mentality, and the failure to address systematic vulnerabilities.

In short...

Fighting ideological battles can result in the destruction of the very system both sides aim to protect.

EXECUTION

Keep it simple...

...Stupid.

The holes should be excavated prior to shooting, at a location large enough to accomodate three identical sets which we will cheat....

1. The undisturbed ground.
2. The holes halfway dug.
3. The holes dug deep.

We can shoot the sets sequentially and simply move the bleachers and redress the set as we progress.

Tecnocrane will allow for maximum flexibility and effeciency of camera placement.

Players:

Talent. Camera. Grip. Electric. Costumes. Makeup.
Sound. Extras. Catering.

Location :

Desert / Field where digging is permitted. Clear horizon a must. On site parking / staging required.

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