

Why It Needed To Burn

The story behind C-90's short film "What a Lovely Way to Burn"

March 2, 2021 — FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Most of us would agree that 2020 was a complete rip off.

The year brought terrible losses — the loss of life, the loss of leadership, and the loss of civility. The foibles of human nature were on full display, and all the while this was happening, we were missing many of the things that make life meaningful. We weren't able to hang out with friends, go to games or concerts, travel, or visit our favorite coffee shop or bar. Even hugs and handshakes became a rarity.

"At C-90, we realized we needed to find a creative response for our team to begin healing from such a turbulent year," says Emmit Jones, Co-Founder/Creative Director of the Cincinnati-based creative agency.

"That's what we do," added Chris Ritter, also a Co-Founder/Creative Director at C-90. "We seek to creatively reimagine opportunities, and sometimes, that might take an iconoclastic approach."

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ABOUT C-90

C-90 is a multidisciplinary creative agency that believes if you're not interesting, you're irrelevant, because interesting places are where human attention goes and most brands fear to tread.

C-90 specializes in campaign development, creative content, consumer experiences, and visual identity. They serve clients who need to be noticed, refuse the status quo, and need co-conspirators. Their experience ranges from local businesses to some of the world's most valuable brands.

"WHAT A LOVELY WAY TO BURN" VIDEO CREDITS

Directed and Produced by: C-90
Director of Photography: Rudy Harris
Additional Video Editing: Griffin Christensen
Costume Design: Emily Hines
Special Thanks: Adam Miller/Adam Miller Homes, Eli Williams, Western Hills Photo & Hobby

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(CONTINUED)

The team at C-90 chatted, conspired, and eventually decided on a direction. "The only thing to do was just burn the whole thing down," says C-90's Head of Strategy Theo Erasmus.

The act of burning would be a cathartic, unifying, and symbolic act for the creatives at C-90.

But what to burn?

C-90's love of all things Tarkovsky and Kubrick (especially 2001: A Space Odyssey) led the to settle on building a monolith 6 foot wide and 13 1/2 feet tall, with the letters MMXX etched into it. Interestingly, this process began before the mysterious appearance of the famed internet monolith in southeast Utah.

With a shoestring budget, the team at C-90 got to work constructing the monolith and hauling it awkwardly to a remote hill. They made collages that artfully interpreted key topics from from the year, including kids in cages, George Floyd, and even poking at the power of billionaire Jeff Bezos. Costumes were stitched together and music was scored, all by the team at C-90—dogs, kids, partners, and friends included.

"We filmed from every angle, edited and debated, then added music and words until it was glorious enough to share." added Erasmus.

"The greater question here is... what is important to us as a community? What do we value? What new things will rise from the ashes?" says Ritter.

"We feel better already." says Jones. "Dealing with challenges in creative and interesting ways is vital to our team. It's how we see the world, it's where peoples' attention goes, and where most businesses fear to tread."

See the video at c-90.com.