

UNDER THE ARCH

Nine-channel synchronized video installation

Duration: approximately 30 minutes (real-time) First exhibited: Munich, 2025

Artist's Statement

Under the Arch transforms the surveillance apparatus of state power into a tool for public accountability. Composed entirely of NYPD body camera and aerial footage obtained through legal discovery, the installation presents approximately thirty minutes of the May 29, 2020 protest at Brooklyn's Barclays Center—the first large-scale gathering following George Floyd's murder—across nine synchronized monitors.

The work refuses editorial authority. No footage has been cut or rearranged. Viewers encounter multiple simultaneous perspectives unfolding in real-time: the ebb and flow of crowd anger, police officers illegally beating protesters, pepper spray deployed indiscriminately, water bottles tossed at police from the crowd, helicopter surveillance from above, and the surreal aftermath of officers retreating to arena bathrooms after pepper spraying each one another. The totality cannot be absorbed at once. Visitors must navigate the installation physically, constructing their own spatial understanding of events—much as participants experienced the chaos itself.

This methodology inverts conventional documentary practice. Rather than imposing narrative structure on events, *Under the Arch* distributes institutional documentation across physical space, allowing the evidence to speak through its own contradictions and revelations. The footage was obtained through collaboration with the National Lawyers Guild on civil rights litigation that resulted in settlements for protesters—connecting the installation to ongoing legal accountability for the police violence it documents.

The work extends my practice in spatial journalism, which examines how perspective shapes understanding of complex events. Where traditional documentary employs editorial selection to construct meaning, *Under the Arch* uses spatial distribution and synchronization to create immersive encounter with primary evidence. The nine-monitor format functions as a kind of embodied mapping—viewers physically navigate multiple viewpoints, experiencing the limitations and partialities of any single perspective while glimpsing the larger pattern of institutional behavior.

The NYPD's actions during that week of protest strained relationships with New Yorkers and cost the city millions in ongoing lawsuits and settlements. *Under the Arch* preserves this evidence as both historical document and spatial experience, inviting viewers to witness what the institutions of power recorded about themselves.

Jon Nealon is an award-winning journalist and documentary filmmaker whose work focuses on human rights documentation and spatial analysis. His investigations include "Crime Scene

Bucha" for FRONTLINE/PBS (Emmy and Peabody nominations) and ongoing collaborations with SITU Research, Human Rights Watch, and the Associated Press.

Under the Arch is available for exhibition. Contact: jnealon@gmail.com