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**NYC DEPARTMENT OF RECORDS' PUBLIC ARTIST IN RESIDENCE KAMERON NEAL DEBUTS FILM INSTALLATION "DOWN THE BARREL (OF A LENS)"**

*"Down the Barrel (Of A Lens)" marks the culmination of Neal's residency with the Department of Records, where he examined digitized NYPD surveillance footage from the 1960s, 70s, and 80s.*



**New York, Friday, June 16, 2023** — The NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, NYC Department of Records and Information Services (DORIS), and Public Artist in Residence Kameron Neal have announced the debut of *Down the Barrel (Of a Lens)*, a film installation at the Brooklyn Army Terminal's Annex Building. The program is free and will run from June 16, 2023 through June 18, 2023. More information and RSVP is available [here](#).

Kameron Neal, [Public Artist-in-Residence \(PAIR\) with the NYC Department of Records and Information Services from 2021-2022](#), created *Down the Barrel (of a Lens)* - an archival film installation using digitized historical NYPD surveillance footage available in the City government's public archives. The installation represents the culmination of Neal's residency at DORIS.

*Down the Barrel (of a Lens)* (2023) is a film installation informed by a collection of NYPD surveillance films from the city's Municipal Archives. Mostly shot by plainclothes officers from 1960-1980, these black and white, 16mm films capture a tumultuous time in the City's history. The films largely document political demonstrations and contain footage of the Civil Rights

Movement, labor strikes, the Black Panthers, Earth Day celebrations, Vietnam War protests, and even footage from inside the NYPD's Photo Unit. The installation focuses on a constellation of moments in the film collection when people stopped to look back, directly into the camera lens; acknowledging they were being surveilled. The films were recently digitized with a grant from the New York State Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund.

Designed as a two-channel film installation, one channel contains footage of civilians looking directly into the camera, while the other creates an abstracted portrait of the NYPD through jittery shots of their shadows, trench coats, and shoes. The two channels face one another as a symbolic reimagining of these police encounters, and what it means to be surveilled while exercising First Amendment rights. The result is a complex yet hauntingly beautiful series of portraits of the people of New York that looks to our past to pose questions about our contemporary relationship to policing and the ever-intrusive surveillance state.

This project was developed by Kameron Neal, during his time as a Public Artist in Residence (PAIR) in the city's Department of Records and Information Services (DORIS) which preserves and provides public access to historical and contemporary records of New York City government. PAIR is a municipal residency run by the Department of Cultural Affairs that embeds artists in city government to propose and implement creative solutions to pressing civic challenges.

"I am excited at the novel approach to using film from New York City's Municipal Archives in artist Kameron Neal's multi-media installation. I am thankful for the assistance of the Economic Development Corporation in making space available to show this innovative use of historical materials which hopefully will both inform and inspire others to explore our rich collections," said **Department of Records and Information Services Commissioner Pauline Toole**.

"Our Public Artists in Residence program is based on the idea that artists can help us see the world in a new light, and in the process, we can imagine new ways of working toward our shared future" said **Department of Cultural Affairs Commissioner Laurie Cumbo**. "Kameron Neal, working with our partners at the Department of Records and Information Services, has used archival video footage to create something new and revelatory. Cameras have become an almost invisible part of our daily lives, and Neal highlights key moments where this new reality was taking shape. I invite all New Yorkers to engage with this fascinating, original look into our public archives."

*Down the Barrel (of a Lens)* will move to Lincoln Center this fall (tentatively: September 29 - October 3).