

## Decade Long Time-Lapse Documents the Rebuilding of Ground Zero

*A webcam documents the site's transformation from rubble to landmark.*

*Rachel Pincus on May 23, 2014*

Though it took time and trials and tribulations and tears, believe it or not, the 9/11 Memorial Museum, in the underground space below what was once the Twin Towers, is open this week – and one camera has captured the entire process in a [time-lapse](#) series of photos. That camera was installed by Brian Cury of webcam network [Earthcam](#) just days after the attacks to record the hard work and perseverance of rescue workers, but as it remained in its spot, it went on to record the rebuilding of the site that began in 2004, along with several other cameras that were installed along the way.

To celebrate the opening of the museum yesterday, a video went up that featured 4,617 days' worth of time-lapse photos of the site from various angles. In the video's description on YouTube, he thanks the "super hardworking team" at EarthCam who kept the lenses properly trained and maintained, and he "honors the victims of 9/11 and is dedicated to their families and friends, with special gratitude to the first responders and the steadfast construction teams."



[Earthcam](#)

The winning memorial design that now has stood on the site for three years, Michael Arad's Reflecting Absence, has the dubious honor of being the most expensive memorial commissioned on U.S. soil, with a \$500 million budget, but at least it was able to open in time for the 10th anniversary of the attacks. Mashable has photos of the underground museum from Getty Images. You can get a glimpse of some of the emotionally charged artifacts, including an entire staircase that somehow stayed intact after the day of the attacks and allowed hundreds of people to escape the collapsing towers. Some who have lost friends and family on that day are offended by the entire idea of the museum, like BuzzFeed's Steve Kandell, and its commodification of the horrors of that day, but that would probably continue on that spot whether the museum opened or not (witness the street vendors who hawked unofficial guidebooks on the site for years).

Earthcam's camera remains installed on the spot, and on the 9/11 Memorial Website you can see either the pedestrians milling about or the streetlamps coming on. The story observed by the camera has gone from one of utter tragedy to a hopeful one of rebirth. Whether you can celebrate this remotely or in New York itself, the camera and video are an excellent device for connecting all of us.

[h/t] Time, Gizmodo, Mashable, Mashable (2), BuzzFeed, 911memorial.org, Timothy A. Clary/Getty Images