

Principally working with photography, Allan Sekula (1951) is also widely recognised as a filmmaker, writer, teacher and activist. Coming from a background in conceptual art, and like many of his generation politicised by the Vietnam War, he has gone on to substantially extend the repertoire of documentary photography. In his practice Sekula has consistently addressed questions of class and the conditions of labour, in tandem with a spirited and rigorous critique of contemporary capitalism. His work avoids the heroic, favouring instead sequences of images which plot complex economic and social processes.

During his career, Sekula has repeatedly returned to the theme of maritime space, through a number of interrelated books, films and exhibitions including *Fish Story*, *TITANIC's wake* and *Lottery of the Sea*. The current exhibition, *Ship of Fools*, continues the artist's investigation into the sea as a forgotten space that binds together shifting sites of production with markets and consumers around the world. It features the voyage of the *Global Mariner*, a ship that circumnavigated the globe between 1998 and 2000, carrying an exhibition detailing the conditions of workers in the shipping industry. Sekula's portraits of seafarers, dock workers, port cities and their industrial hinterland register the affects of globalisation on people's lives. By presenting this ensemble of work, the artist counters the myth that underpins neoliberal ideology of painless flows of goods and capital that constitute international trade.

*(This document was automatically generated by Contemporary Art Library.)*