

& (How to catch a lobster)

A film by Stephen Sewell

100 minutes / DCP / 1.85:1 / Stereo / USA / Not Rated
In English

Stills available at: www.stephensewell.com

Booking Contact:
Stephen Sewell
steve.sewell@gmail.com

Synopsis:

& (How to catch a lobster) is an experimental documentary examining the lobstering industry of Maine, USA. As one of the most lucrative organisms of the Atlantic Ocean, Homarus americanus (the American lobster) is crucial to the coastal communities of Maine. New England fishermen have embraced lobstering as a way of life and subsistence since the 1850s, and in recent years, record landings have contributed to the rapid expansion of the industry. However, the dwindling fisheries of southern New England, perpetually shifting trade agreements and rising costs suggest that the same forces that have contributed to the growth of lobstering may threaten its future.

Composed of audio interviews with over a dozen lobstermen and women, as well as industry experts and researchers, the film collages multiple points of view against a relentless montage of the sites and processes of lobstering, including footage captured with an underwater 360-degree camera. This highly subjective and, at times, disorienting perspective––featuring footage from all stages of the lobster supply chain––creates an immersive and visceral portrait of the industry, and underscores the contradictory effects of the competing demands of global trade, climate change, conservation efforts and ideology.

About the filmmaker:

Stephen Sewell is an artist, filmmaker and educator based in Brooklyn, NY. His films merge experimental and documentary techniques to present new ways of encountering and understanding the intersections and interactions of culture, politics and histories. His works have been presented at the Art of Brooklyn Film Festival (winner Outstanding Documentary Short), Harlem International Film Festival, Target Margin Theater and Artists Space; and he has lectured and participated on panel discussions at the University of Birmingham, University College London, University of Hertfordshire, Queens Museum and the Pacific Northwest College of Art. He is an alumnus of the Whitney Independent Study Program and Art & Law Program. He teaches film and media production courses as an Adjunct Assistant Professor at CUNY–Brooklyn College and Fordham University.

Credits:

Featuring:

David Cousens
Emily Cunningham
Michael Donihue
Jeff Eaton
Dan Gagne
Charles Gokey
Kolby Hardy
Rebekah Hodgson
Michael Myers
Andrew Pellechia
Micah Philbrook
Hugh Reynolds
Sadie Samuels
Krista Tripp
Richard Wahle
Leroy Weed Sr.

Locations:

Acadia National Park
Bar Harbor, ME
Beals, ME
Bucksport, ME
Blue Hill, ME
Deer Isle, ME
Jonesport, ME
Owls Head, ME
Portland, ME
Prospect, ME
Prospect Harbor, ME
Spruce Head, ME
Stonington, ME
Surry, ME
Tenants Harbor, ME

Shanghai, China

Directed, photographed, edited and produced by:

Stephen Sewell

Music by:

Stephen Sewell & Simon Grenier-Poirier

Sound design and re-recording mix by:

Simon Grenier-Poirier

Additional footage:

S. Abigail Johnson & Shenyue Li

Transcripts and subtitles:

Amna Farooqi

Thanks:

Chloe Acerra
Youree Choi
Ron Clark
Jim Conboy
Chris Devlin
Dakota Gearhart
Paul Krause
Steph Lindsay
Clarinda Mac Low
Jane McNichol
Ellen Pavey
Raf Richardson-Carillo
Daniele Sarti
John Wagner

With support from:

The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts, EFA Project Space, SHIFT Residency
Immediate Medium
New York State Council on the Arts
The Potato Farm Project
Zero Foothills Residency

2026