

## Art students enhance their ocean literacy

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Marine Art was a project where art students were brought into contact with marine scientists. The aim was to enhance the art students' ocean knowledge and observation skills, to stir up curiosity for seas and the ocean, and to give inspiration to the creative process. The enthusiasm of 1 250 participants resulted in 65 workshops and an exposition with more than 300 art works. 8 000 people visited the exposition.

In the project (October 2012 - February 2013 in Ghent, Belgium) the Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ) brought art students of the Academy for Visual Arts Ghent into contact with the world of marine researchers from the Marine@UGent consortium of the Ghent University. By means of a presentation about their research, a dialogue about an ocean issue or a visit to the lab, the art students learned about the status of the ocean and about marine scientific work.

Aim was to enhance the art students' ocean literacy, which is all about understanding the ocean's influence on people and the influence of people on the ocean. It is also about assessing what people know, want to know and should know about the ocean.

1 250 participants (between 6 and 70 years old) followed one or more of the 65 workshops organised. This resulted in more than 300 drawings, paintings, graphics, sculptures, mixed media work, illustrations, photographs and animated films. End-point of the project was an exposition for the public at large (2 – 6 February 2013), where the art work was confronted with the science that gave the initial inspiration to it. About 8 000 visitors came to admire the 2 000 square meters of art expo.

The free publication 'Marine Art - marine science sets sail to the art world' illustrates this process, the interpretation by the art students, the work-in-progress and the resulting art expo; complemented with quotes and pictures of participating art students, teachers and scientists.

The publication can be downloaded as a pdf or browsed through online. More pictures and videos of Marine Art workshops and the exposition can be found on the photo and video gallery [www.vliz.be/MarineArt](http://www.vliz.be/MarineArt).

### References

Goffin, A.; Fockedey, N.; Seys, J.; Tavernier, I. (Ed.) (2013). Marine art: Marine science sets sail to the art world. Flanders Marine Institute/Ghent University: Oostende & Gent. 143 pp.