



JAN DILENSCHNEIDER  
NATURE, DIVINE  
PRESERVING ECOLOGY THROUGH COLOR

SEPTEMBER 5-30, 2019

AT MYSTIC AQUARIUM'S  
MILNE OCEAN SCIENCE AND CONSERVATION CENTER



MYSTIC  
AQUARIUM



Main Entrance to the Milne Ocean Science and Conservation Center. Photo: Cheryl Miller, Mystic Aquarium.

# MYSTIC AQUARIUM'S MILNE OCEAN SCIENCE AND CONSERVATION CENTER

## OUR MISSION :

To inspire people to care for and protect our ocean planet through conservation, education and research.



Inspiration comes in all forms. At Mystic Aquarium, we believe art is an important catalyst to accomplish our mission to inspire others.

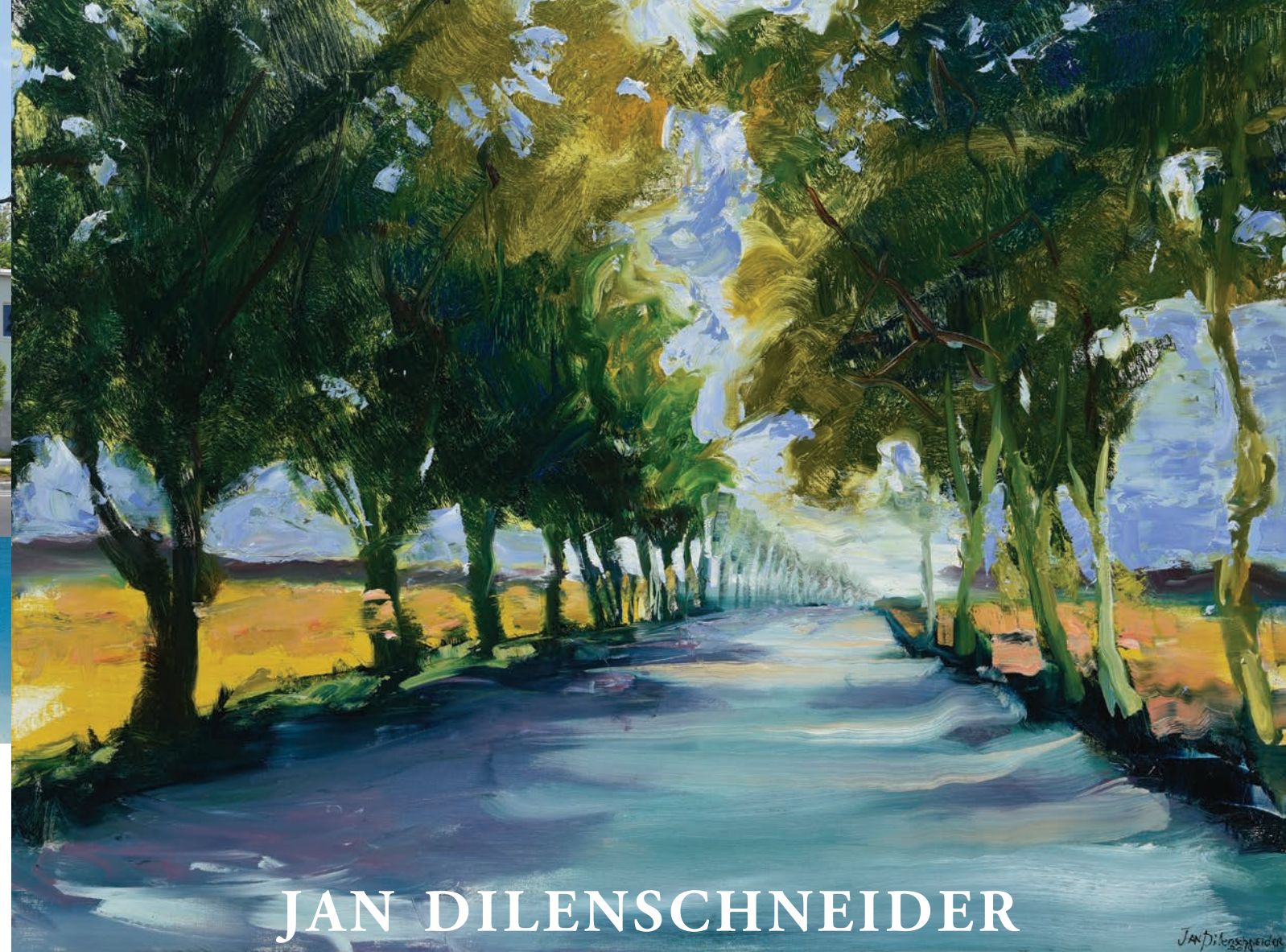
We incorporated a gallery space in the Milne Ocean Science and Conservation Center to celebrate nature through art. Additionally, state-of-the-art classrooms, an aquaculture lab and an auditorium and lecture hall promote the promise of groundbreaking opportunities for us here at Mystic Aquarium—for those we serve now and in years to come.

Jan Dilenschneider has long been a stalwart supporter of Mystic Aquarium and its multifaceted mission of ocean conservation, contributing her talent and philanthropy to support the Aquarium over many years.

We are incredibly proud to host a gallery showing of her internationally renowned work.

—Dr. Stephen M. Coan  
President & CEO, Mystic Aquarium

Cover and insets: Jan Dilenschneider, *My Favorite Beluga Whale*, 2019, oil on canvas, 36 x 36".



# JAN DILENSCHNEIDER

## NATURE, DIVINE

PRESERVING ECOLOGY THROUGH COLOR

By Susan Hodara

*Nature, Divine* is on view September 5–30, 2019, at Mystic Aquarium's Milne Ocean Science and Conservation Center, 55 Coogan Blvd., Mystic, CT. [mysticaquarium.org](http://mysticaquarium.org) or (860) 572-5955.

On October 17, 2019, the show will open at the Meigs Gallery at the Marine Biology Laboratory, 5 North Street, Woods Hole, MA; [artlabllc.net/naturedivine](http://artlabllc.net/naturedivine) or (508) 289-7423.

Jan Dilenschneider, *Provence*, 2019, oil on canvas, 36 x 24".



**J**an Dilenschneider is a careful observer of the natural world. The paintings that result are paeans—reverent and exuberant, with shoreline grasses pulsing with pinks and purples and golds, sun-dappled allées of poplar trees reaching toward the horizon, and fish slithering in murky depths.

This month, 26 of Dilenschneider's newest works are on view in *Nature, Divine: Preserving Ecology Through Color* at Mystic Aquarium's Milne Ocean Science and Conservation Center. From earthy vistas, to tranquil skiescapes, to glimpses of subaquatic life, her settings are lush and alluring. Indeed, spending time with Dilenschneider's paintings may just change the way visitors see the world around them.

**"I WANT PEOPLE TO FEEL THE WAY I DO ABOUT NATURE, TO STOP AND LOOK AND APPRECIATE IT, TO FALL IN LOVE WITH IT AGAIN."**

Which would please Dilenschneider. "I want people to feel the way I do about nature," she said, "to stop and look and appreciate it, to fall in love with it again."



Jan Dilenschneider, *Birch Trees Along Pale Grasses*, 2019, oil on canvas, 36 x 24".

An internationally exhibited artist who is represented by Galerie Pierre-Alain Challier in Paris, Dilenschneider lives in Darien, CT, where her studio overlooks the Long Island Sound, a boundless source of inspiration. Prior to *Nature, Divine*, she had two summer exhibitions in France: one at her gallery, in Paris, and the other at Abbaye Saint-André, in Avignon.

Stylistically, Dilenschneider's influences include the play of light of the Impressionists, the bold colors of the Fauvists, and the dramatic mark-making of the Abstract Expressionists, yet Dilenschneider considers herself an Expressionist. With each painting, she said, "I am making a statement. Whatever my subject, I want you to know how I feel about that subject."

To accomplish this, Dilenschneider relies on two critical and complementary elements: gesture and color. Gesture refers to the dominant lines that define the composition – lines, she said, that angle and swirl and direct the eye around the canvas. In *Which Way To Go?*, for example, a meandering path draws the viewer deep into a forest. In *A Pattern of Green and Pink*, the leaves of a flowering plant are animated by brushstrokes that rise and curl from one to the next. "Gesture," Dilenschneider said, "is the painting's passion."

Dilenschneider's use of color is prompted by the theory of simultaneous contrast, which is the effect one color has on another when the two are placed side by side. "Each color enhances the

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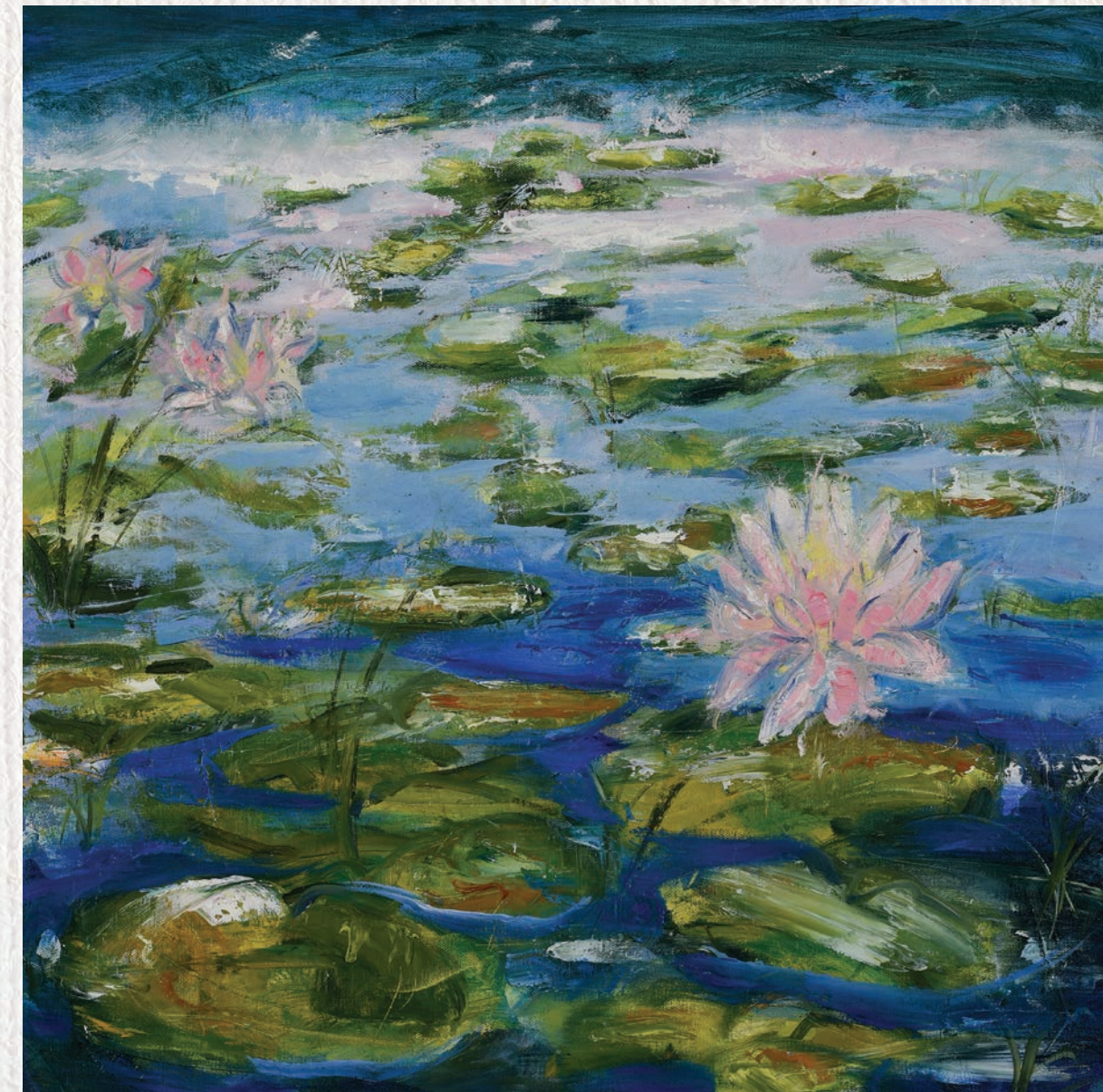
Jan Dilenschneider, *Pond Lilies*, 2019, oil on canvas, 24 x 24".

## SHE CALLS IT "COLOR SINGING".

other," said Dilenschneider, who described herself as a colorist. "That's why in my paintings you'll frequently find a little purple thrown in, next to, say a yellow or a rosy pink. It excites the eye. The colors pop." She calls it "color singing."

Colors sing throughout *Nature, Divine*. In *Birch Trees Along Pale Grasses*, the white bark is splashed with turquoise and mauve. In *Pond Lilies*, the lily pads are a mix of greens, rust, and ivory and pale pink, blooms sprout against the aqua hues of the pond. The nearly abstract *Sunrise on the Water* holds a complex spectrum of yellows, corals, indigos and blues.

While Dilenschneider's paintings glorify the beauty of nature, they are also a quiet call to action, a plea to protect an environment increasingly threatened by deforestation, pollution and climate change. "People worry about terrorism or nuclear devastation," she said, "but we are creating our own holocaust right here."



In preparing for her show, Dilenschneider visited the Marine Biology Laboratory in Woods Hole, MA, where *Nature, Divine* will be exhibited in October. There, she said, “I was reminded that the planet is nearly 75 percent water, and that the health of the ocean is every bit as important as the health of the land and the flowers and the leaves and the trees.”

So she began to paint aquatic creatures: turtles on a downed log, an octopus waving its tentacles as if dancing. One of her favorite pieces in *Nature, Divine* is *My Favorite Beluga Whale*, a happy white whale lifting its head and tail out of the water. Dilenschneider said she hopes children visiting the shows will be curious about these animals; she wants to encourage them to start thinking and talking. “After all,” she said, “it’s their generation that is going to save the world.”

**DILENSCHNEIDER’S PAINTINGS ARE ALSO A QUIET CALL TO ACTION, A PLEA TO PROTECT AN ENVIRONMENT INCREASINGLY THREATENED...**

Along with being an avid environmentalist, Dilenschneider is a philanthropist who cares deeply about freedom of expression. “People have to realize that the arts need help,” Dilenschneider said. “There aren’t any Medicis these days.”

In 2014, she established the Janet Hennessey Dilenschneider Scholar Rescue Award in the Arts to provide fellowships to scholars of the visual, performing or literary arts living under war-torn or repressive regimes. The award, which is administered by the Institute of International Education, a not-for-profit exchange organization, brings these scholars to colleges and universities where they can pursue their work. To date, fellowships have been granted to residents of Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Ethiopia, and Bangladesh.



Jan Dilenschneider, *Intricate Leaf Shapes #2*, 2018, oil on canvas, 30 x 30".

**MEANWHILE, DILENSCHNEIDER HOPES HER CONCERNS ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT ARE CONTAGIOUS.**

More recently, Dilenschneider developed a two-week residency at the Silvermine Arts Center, in New Canaan, CT, open to Fulbright scholars. The program, also administered by the Institute of International Education, was initiated in June 2019, with the next residency planned for January 2020.

Meanwhile, in her studio, Dilenschneider hopes her concerns about the environment are contagious. She said she doesn’t want to admonish people or tell them what to do. Yet she does believe that as an artist, she has a responsibility. “I want to use my platform to say something, to do something about the future of the earth,” she said. “If I can add a little bit to people’s awareness, then, maybe, they will think differently about the choices they go on to make.”



Jan Dilenschneider, *Sunrise on the Water*, 2019, oil on canvas, 30 x 24".



Jan Dilenschneider, *Lazy Stream*, 2019, oil on canvas, 36 x 24".

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For more information, sales and consignment inquiries, please contact Jan Dilenschneider: 203.273.2068 | [jmdilenschneider.com](http://jmdilenschneider.com) | [jan@dgi-nyc.com](mailto:jan@dgi-nyc.com)

THROUGH THESE PAINTINGS I WANT PEOPLE TO FALL IN LOVE WITH THE BEAUTY OF NATURE AGAIN. —Jan Dilenschneider

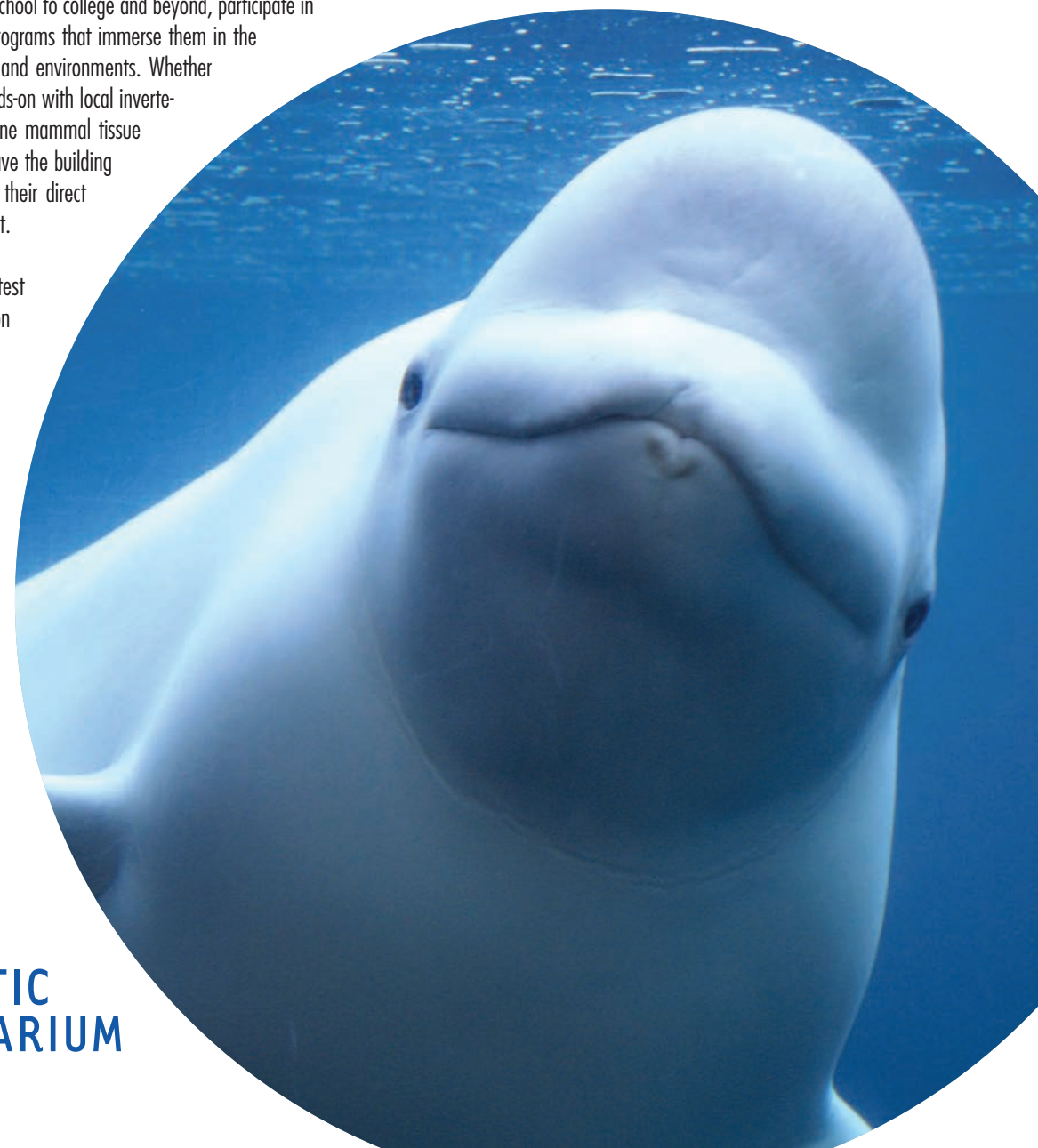
*Nature, Divine* will feature 26 works specially created in support of Mystic Aquarium's mission.

Helping families connect with and enjoy nature has always been a priority for the Aquarium's Education and Conservation program. Mystic Aquarium plays a pivotal role in connecting children and families to nature through field trips and educational classes, Ocean Ambassador and Citizen Science community engagement—all with the goal of inspiring the next generation of conservationists.

Earlier this year, as part of its "One Ocean, One Mission" strategic plan of integrated conservation, education and research initiatives, the Milne Ocean Science and Conservation Center opened providing integral access and collaboration in animal care, further development of conservation research, and yet further expansion of educational reach.

Students at all levels, from pre-school to college and beyond, participate in dynamic experiential learning programs that immerse them in the conservation of marine species and environments. Whether it is getting up close and hands-on with local invertebrate species or analyzing marine mammal tissue samples, learners of all ages leave the building with a better understanding of their direct connection with our ocean planet.

Recently, over 100 of the greatest minds in beluga conservation gathered here for the second International Workshop on Beluga Whale Research & Conservation to share expertise and establish new collaborations with the goal of better informing conservation and management decisions of belugas around the globe.



MYSTIC  
AQUARIUM

SO MUCH TO SEA AND DO.  
SEA MYSTIC. SEA EVERYTHING.  
START AT MYSTIC AQUARIUM.

Only in Mystic, CT can you go back in time and live in the moment; sail the salty waters, meet the animals of our oceans and explore the depths of our seas. Stroll the quaint boutique store fronts, marvel at modern art or simply relax on the shoreline. You can do it all in Mystic.



## MYSTIC AQUARIUM

### DIRECTIONS

Mystic Aquarium is located in Mystic, CT just off Exit 90 on Interstate 95, about 10 miles east of New London along Connecticut's southeastern shore. Parking is always free.

55 Coogan Blvd., Mystic, CT  
860.572.5955 | [MysticAquarium.org](http://MysticAquarium.org)

