

● BROOKLYN MUSEUM ●

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The Brooklyn Museum Presents *Oliver Jeffers: Life at Sea*

The interactive exhibition, opening in the Museum's Education Center, invites visitors of all ages into an illustrated seascape inspired by one of Oliver Jeffers's beloved children's books.



Oliver Jeffers. Spread from *Here We Are: Notes for Living on Planet Earth*. (Philomel Books, 2017). © and courtesy of the artist

This fall, the Brooklyn Museum will open *Oliver Jeffers: Life at Sea* in the Toby Devan Lewis Education Center. Transporting visitors into the whimsical world of Jeffers's bestselling 2017 children's book, *Here We Are: Notes for Living on Planet Earth* (Philomel Books), the exhibition features an underwater world that begins, when the show first opens, as sparsely populated. Over the course of the presentation, visitors will bring this ocean to life by creating and adding sea creatures to imagine an abundant future. *Life at Sea* opens on September 19, 2025, and will be on view until April 26, 2026.

Based in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and Brooklyn, Oliver Jeffers is an award-winning artist, illustrator, and writer who uses storytelling to advocate for the environment. His first nonfiction book, [*Here We Are:*](#)

[Notes for Living on Planet Earth](#), was written as a guide for his newborn son on how to navigate the world with kindness and an appreciation for the world around him. Grounded in Jeffers's signature humor and playfulness, his Brooklyn Museum exhibition similarly prompts visitors to explore their relationship with the Earth and the climate—this time by collaboratively creating an ocean environment. Through the run of the exhibition, visitors of all ages will decorate and install fish and other sea creatures throughout the underwater landscape. During drop-in activities, attendees are invited to build coral structures using recycled sea plastics to populate the gallery's ocean floor. Through many kinds of community interactions, the deep blue oceanic mural—specially designed by Jeffers for the Education Center—will transform from a lonely expanse into a vibrant biome full of sea life.

The site-specific installation will include a sunken ship-inspired reading nook with a selection of books chosen by Jeffers, featuring writers who inspire imaginative thinking about the importance of caring for the environment. In addition, the Museum's Education team will host a series of creative workshops throughout the run of the exhibition. These workshops will focus on topics such as learning about different types of fish and birds as well as the reuse of single-use plastics.

"We're thrilled to be working with Oliver Jeffers to bring his distinctive approach to art and storytelling into our galleries and to engage visitors on this timely topic," says Sharon Matt Atkins, Deputy Director for Art. "His invitation to consider how we can care for our planet together, along with the opportunity for collective creativity and play, will spark joy and hope for all who visit."

"I first showed a painting at the Brooklyn Museum over a decade ago, and I've hoped to return ever since," says Jeffers. "*Life at Sea* is that return—and it's more than an installation. It's an invitation. By building this underwater world together, visitor by visitor, we're imagining what communities can do when they collaborate. It's about the oceans, yes—but also about fun, beauty, hope, and how the stories we shape might shape the future. I'm grateful to be doing this with a national institution that shares the values and beliefs that I do."

Visitors can enhance their experience of *Life at Sea* with the Museum's Member Kids' Club, a brand-new Membership add-on designed specifically for families with children. Available to both current and new Members, Kids' Club grants access to the Museum's monthly family-focused programming, featuring hands-on art-making, guided tours, and other interactive experiences tailored to children and their caregivers. Kids' Club Members receive an exclusive welcome bundle that includes an activity sheet inspired by Jeffers's storytelling, a Junior Membership Card designed by Jeffers, and a specially designed merchandise item.

Known for his whimsical illustrations and children's books, Jeffers incorporates painting, bookmaking, illustration, collage, performance, and sculpture to tell stories that spark dialogue about our changing world. Following his beloved debut, *How to Catch a Star* (Philomel Books; 2004), Jeffers has written and illustrated a collection of award-winning and bestselling picture books that have been translated into over forty-nine languages. He is also an internationally recognized painter and sculptor. Beyond his artistic endeavors, Jeffers uses his platform to advocate for collective action aimed at preserving and nurturing our planet. He has spoken on prominent global stages, including [COP26](#), [TED](#), and the Clinton Global Initiative. By telling stories with creativity and humor, Jeffers inspires audiences of all ages to see the world from new perspectives and consider their role in shaping its future.

Oliver Jeffers: Life at Sea is the second special exhibition hosted in the Education Center since its renovation was completed in 2024. The Education Center's inaugural project, *Artland: An Installation by Do Ho Suh and Children*, welcomed visitors that same year.

Oliver Jeffers: Life at Sea is organized by Sharon Matt Atkins, Deputy Director for Art, and Keonna Hendrick, Deputy Director for Learning and Social Impact.

ABOUT THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM

For 200 years, the Brooklyn Museum has been recognized as a trailblazer. Through a vast array of exhibitions, public programs, and community-centered initiatives, it continues to broaden the narratives of art, uplift a multitude of voices, and center creative expression within important dialogues of the day. Housed in a landmark building in the heart of Brooklyn, the Museum is home to an astounding encyclopedic collection of more than 140,000 objects representing cultures worldwide and over 6,000 years of history—from ancient Egyptian masterpieces to significant American works, to groundbreaking installations presented in the only feminist art center of its kind. As one of the oldest and largest art museums in the country, the Brooklyn Museum remains committed to innovation, creating compelling experiences for its communities and celebrating the power of art to inspire awe, conversation, and joy.