

ARTS & CULTURE

July 26th, 2018

Boston Children's Museum hosts Youth Dance Festival

**Celina Colby**

Celina Colby is an arts and travel reporter with a fondness for Russian novels... [VIEW BIO](#)

On Sunday, July 22, the Boston Children's Museum hosted the second annual Boston Youth Dance Festival in partnership with [Urbanity Dance](#). The festival included performances by Chhandika, Chu Ling Dance Academy, Hyde Square Task Force, Jean Appolon Expressions and Urbanity Dance, among others, as well as free dance lessons from each group.

"One thing we wanted to do was to bring the community together through dance," says Steve Schroth, culture and performing arts educator at the Children's Museum. "One of the ways we're doing that is by putting youth in arts leadership positions." The performers range from age 7 to 18 and the event intentionally highlighted different styles of dance from various cultures.

Dancers performed in two groups, ages 11 and under and ages 12 and up. Afterward, a performer from each group hosted a workshop showing the audience how to dance some of the moves from the show.

Amid the company performances, the festival offered something really special. Ambassadors from each dance group have been meeting over the last three weeks to choreograph a unified piece, merging all their styles. That's right — Irish step dance and hip-hop found a way to not only coexist, but to work in harmony. The unified dance merged cultures physically and metaphorically, illustrating through art how fruitful it can be to work together. The dance was performed twice during the festival.

"Performing arts programming is an opportunity to share each other's stories," says Schroth. All performances during the festival were free with admission to the museum and performed on the KidStage in the first floor of the building.

Urbanity Dance is a community-oriented dance school and professional company seeking to engage the public through movement. They're also the Boston Children's Museum's official dance school. Urbanity leads free dance classes at the Children's Museum every Thursday during the summer. The classes are held outside on the waterfront with a Boston skyline backdrop. The group offers a number of other programs at the institution throughout the year.

Schroth hopes that the festival and the collaboration between the Museum and Urbanity will encourage people of all ages to pop their best moves and to use dance to build community. "Dance is a way of expressing yourself that's available to everyone," says Schroth. "Anyone can do it."

Boston youth, dance