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## **A Win for Boston Arts: Urbanity Dance Takes Ownership of ArtBlock Gallery at 725 Harrison**

Urbanity Dance, a Boston-based nonprofit dance organization, has announced that it recently took ownership of the Gallery unit at ArtBlock, 725 Harrison Avenue, in Boston's South End. The new space is the result of a creative three-way transaction between Urbanity Dance, a donation by ArtBlock developer Peter Roth, and a transfer of ownership by the City of Boston.

The addition marks the third location for Urbanity Dance in the South End. The other two locations, at 1180 Washington and 111 W. Concord, are both leased. "Our mission at Urbanity is to serve our community, and the number one thing that seemed to be impeding our mission was enough space," says Graves. "I am thrilled that the additional space that we now own will allow us to offer more classes to

more students, and better fulfill our mission. I look forward to working with our neighbors, and strengthening our programs to make an even greater positive impact on our community.”

Peter Roth, developer and resident of the ArtBlock community, made a generous donation and facilitated a transaction with the City of Boston to make Urbanity’s dream come true. Roth notes, “I have strived over the years to find ways to bring more arts-related activity to our corner of the SOWA district. I was thrilled to discover the opportunity to support Urbanity Dance, effectively recommitting our wonderful space to a community arts mission for the foreseeable future. My family and I are very excited to see the Roth Family Gallery for Community Dance develop as a meaningful new resource for the arts in the South End.”

The City of Boston’s Chief of Arts and Culture, Julie Burros, says that this is a win for the Boston arts sector. “Lack of space has been a vexing issue and something I hear time and time again as a top priority for nonprofit arts organizations in Boston. This successful three-way partnership between Peter Roth, the City of Boston, and Urbanity Dance is a shining example of what could be possible for other arts organizations.”

The space will allow Urbanity to further fulfill its mission of engaging, inspiring, and empowering the community through dance and movement. With active partnerships with United South End Settlements, South End Community Health Center and Women’s Lunch Place, Urbanity is committed to collaborating with nonprofits to bring dance programs to community centers. Graves states, “Dance needs to be at the heart of social change. It has tremendous power to heal individuals and communities, and to bring people together. The acquisition of this space is a game changer for Urbanity. This gift helps secure our future and is an important investment in our community.”

Director Betsi Graves founded Urbanity Dance with a vision to offer high-quality contemporary modern, jazz, and hip-hop programs, and a goal to activate and bring the neighborhood together through dance. Today, Urbanity serves 800 students at its two studios. As the largest independent presences of dance in Boston Public Schools, the organization reaches 500 youth weekly through its Urban & World Dance Program. Urbanity’s Movement Mends program includes biweekly Dance with Parkinson’s classes, and dance programming for the most marginalized, including incarcerated youth and homeless women.

There will be a Community Open House held on June 6th 5-7pm at 725 Harrison. To attend or learn more, please RSVP to [stephanie@urbanitydance.org](mailto:stephanie@urbanitydance.org) by June 4, 2018.