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East Brown Cow welcomes Free People to 4,101 s/f retail space at 121 Middle St.

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Portland, ME East Brown Cow and Malone Commercial Brokers said that Free People has signed a 10-year lease for a storefront at 121 Middle St., bringing another national brand to the retail corridor along the city's Middle St. The 121 Middle St. location will be Free People's first brick and mortar storefront in Maine.

The 4,101 s/f space that makes up suite #101, formerly occupied by Grove Collaborative, is housed within a historic property known as the Thompson Block, under renovation. The deal was brokered by Peter Harrington of Malone Commercial Brokers and Tim Duffy of The McDevitt Company.

"We've been working closely with our partners at Malone Commercial Brokers to carefully curate the growing retail mix in our properties throughout the Old Port," said Tim Soley, president and CEO of

East Brown Cow.

“Based on our current mix of both local and national retail tenants, and their success in these locations, we’re extremely confident that Free People will only continue this exciting trajectory and further activate the vibrant urban fabric of Portland’s unique downtown. We look forward to welcoming them to Maine.”

Free People, best known for offering an array of bohemian style products, is a Philadelphia-based retailer, currently available online worldwide and in top department and specialty stores across the country.

They join a growing selection of major national brands, including Madewell, Anthropologie, Athleta, Urban Outfitters, West Elm and others, as well as a list of local retailers on Portland’s historic Old Port. The new space will showcase Free People’s latest collections.

Originally completed in 1867, 121 Middle St. is a four-story, 37,847 s/f Second Empire style building that was designed by architect George Harding. Encompassing an entire block, this building has been managed by East Brown Cow since its acquisition in 2000. The exterior stays true to its historic roots with sandstone and brownstone detail, and a cast iron and carved wood storefront at street level that includes decorative columns and scroll-work.

In 2019, following extensive renovations, East Brown Cow announced the opening of a brand-new hospitality offering within the building. Now known as The Docent’s Collection, the upper floors of 121 Middle offer guests a suite of Urban Homes fusing the first-class hospitality of a hotel stay with modern, mobile-first service and personalized amenities more typically associated with a luxury residential rental. Taken altogether, the property offers a unique opportunity in a high visibility location for a dynamic retail tenant.

Harrington, a seasoned commercial real estate broker based in Portland, played a pivotal role in securing this location for Free People, leveraging his understanding of the brand’s vision and local market dynamics.

“Working with the team from East Brown Cow and Tim Duffy was a great experience and showcased the collaborative nature of this deal and the strength of these partnerships,” said Harrington. “It is fantastic to have Free People signed at 121 Middle St.. URBN is one of the best retail groups in existence and will now have three stores along Middle St. with Anthropologie and Urban Outfitters. I can’t think of any better tenant to have anchor the first floor of this historic and well-positioned property.”

The 121 Middle St. Free People is scheduled to open its doors this August.

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