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## East Brown Cow leases 2,126 s/f retail space to Rough & Tumble

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Portland, ME Rough & Tumble's flagship store has officially opened at 176 Middle St. The 2,126 s/f space, which Rough & Tumble leased last June through East Brown Cow, is located on the ground floor of Boyd Block, which was originally constructed in 1867 on the corner of Market and Middle Sts. overlooking Tommy's Park.

"We are thrilled to see such a nationally and internationally acclaimed Maine-based retailer fill this historic space," said Tim Soley, president and CEO of East Brown Cow. "Their success is a testament to the draw that the Old Port's unique small business storefronts have on visitors from around the world and a clear sign of this area's thriving future. We are excited to see the impact that Rough & Tumble will have on the charm and legacy of Portland."

The flagship store brings authentic, resolved, and trend-free design to a space vacated by Starbucks. Its opening adds to the chorus of a growing number of local and national brands that have opened their doors in the Old Port in recent years, including: Bella Funk, Madewell, Anthropologie, Athleta, Urban Outfitters, West Elm and others.

Rough & Tumble founder, Natasha Durham shares that she plans for the flagship store to serve as a base for partnerships with other Maine makers, designers, and artists through the brand's unique 'Be The Designer' custom process, which gives access to thousands of design and material combinations to customize a one-of-a-kind R&T handbag.

"The culture of this state is rugged fearlessness and a deep sense of community connection," said Durham. "My hope is that this extraordinary location serves as a beacon and source of profound inspiration for all Maine makers and creators. This space is a playground for that inner muse, and a truly unique shopping experience for every budding artist serving as a testing ground for new designs and materials as they explore the depths of their talent and creativity."

The store will also offer handbag designs that Rough & Tumble is most known for: the 1903, 1904 pack, Boho, Original City Safari, and Hobo Pack. Established in 2008, Rough & Tumble collections emphasize a feeling of rugged and understated luxury. Their products are sold nationally in partnership with Garnet Hill and Sundance Catalog and they have grown an international following of handbag collectors. Leathers are sourced primarily from France and Italy.

According to the U.S. Small Business Administration's 2023 Small Business Profile, Maine is home to 149,493 small businesses, with 41.3% of those businesses owned by women. Situated on the corner of Middle and Exchange streets, Rough & Tumble will benefit from consistently high levels of foot traffic due to the property's location.

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