



Kieran Jordan Dance
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Keeping It Reel

The jig is up for Irish dancer Kieran Jordan's freelance career: After spending 15 years teaching at studios across Massachusetts and Rhode Island, the Dorchester resident can finally stretch her legs in her own space. **Kieran Jordan Dance** celebrated its grand opening just outside Hyde Park's Cleary Square last month, debuting a single-room studio in which the award-winning dancer and choreographer teaches teens and adults a variety of Irish step dancing styles. There's the technical step dancing à la *Riverdance*, social set dancing done in groups of eight and sean-nós, an improvisational old-style Irish dance Jordan was among the first to teach in America. "It's more like free-form foot percussion, and it's grown to be hugely popular in Ireland and now gaining a lot of popularity throughout the U.S.," she says. "It's a great one for people who want something a little lower impact, because there's not a lot of jumping or leaping in that style. It's close to the floor and it's really about expressing your own rhythmic response to the music."

With the freedom of her own space, Jordan can also expand programming to include classes like Floor and Core—a meditative fitness class set to traditional Irish music—as well as opportunities to support other artists

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in the community. "I think of it first as a teaching space for dance classes and a creative space for my dance company choreography," she says, "and, finally, as a community space for informal gatherings for live music, mini art exhibitions, readings and talks." Her husband, Vincent Crotty, an Irish-born artist who painted the signs that hang outside the

studio, will host a pop-up gallery night displaying some of his new oil paintings in the studio on March 26.

But Jordan's primary focus remains on dance and celebrating Irish culture. The BC alum studied abroad in Cork as an undergrad and returned to earn a master's in dance at the University of Limerick, where she studied contemporary dance and sean-nós. While she was first introduced to Irish dancing as a child—her father's family has roots in Éire—Jordan says her students find a number of reasons for wanting to learn, even later in life. "A lot of people get drawn in just from hearing the music. It's so joyful, rhythmic. It's just a happy sort of music that really encourages participation," she says, adding that many enjoy the raw, old-fashioned feel of the music and movements. "I love that what I do is very low tech, or no tech. It's about live music and moving your body in a space together with other people, and I think there's kind of a primal joy that goes along with that." / *Meghan Kavanaugh*