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Animal Rescue League of Boston Hosting Major Public Art Debut May 31 Retired Art Teacher and Renowned Sculptor Form Fast Friendship While Creating Historic Gift

Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino to speak. Public welcome.

Boston, MA – A retired public school teacher is giving a very creative and impressive gift to the Animal Rescue League of Boston on May 31. Brookline artist and resident Tony Lopes, who taught art in the Framingham public school system, commissioned a sculpture that combines his two passions: art and animals. The 12-foot tall stainless steel and bronze sculpture, designed by Medford-based artist David Phillips and titled “Dancing with Spheres,” will be unveiled at the League’s dog play yard at 10 Chandler Street on Friday, May 31 at 2 p.m. Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino will speak in support of this momentous event in the League’s 114-year history.

About “Dancing with Spheres” and its significance to the League and to Boston:

“The Animal Rescue League of Boston is incredibly honored to receive this major gift that celebrates why we do what we do,” said League President Mary Nee. ““Dancing with Spheres’ evokes the delight that we see at the League every day when the animals in our care get to interact with loving humans. It stands on its own as a magnificent piece of public art that enhances the South End community and the city of Boston, and will hopefully inspire more people to adopt more animals from us and experience even greater joy.”

This is the first time in several years that a large sculpture will be unveiled in Boston. Billed as “Boston’s newest icon” and “a place where art and animals come to play,” the sculpture fits perfectly into the atmosphere of the dog play yard. The South End will receive a new sculpture in an area that does not have a lot of art and that is undergoing a renaissance in the adjoining Ink Block redevelopment. All involved hope the sculpture will attract more art and animal lovers to the neighborhood.

Spheres are incorporated throughout the work to link the various animals in motion and as a reference to playing fetch with a dog. Some elements have personal meaning for Phillips, such as a dog holding an ice cream cone that was inspired by his niece’s ice cream business and her dearly departed dog Scoop. A bronze feline was inspired by the artist’s 19-year-old cat Luna. Another unique part of the sculpture is its production: rarely does a sculpture go from conceptualization to completion under one roof. Phillips did the bronze casting and stainless steel fabrication at his studio, Hillside Sculpture Studios, in Medford.

About the donor and artist and why they are making this gift:

Lopes, who continues to paint at his home in Brookline, was eager to find an artist who could recreate the sense of awe and happiness he feels when looking at an exceptional piece of public art. He reached out to Phillips, whose work he had followed for many years, and discovered they shared a deep love for animals. Malcolm McDonald, who chairs the League’s Board of Directors, was instrumental in stewarding the relationship between the League, donor and artist.

Phillips is an award-winning artist known for his sculptures which can be found throughout the United States and Japan. His distinguished portfolio of public art includes the frogs at Boston Common’s Tadpole Playground and the snails of Quincy Square Park in Cambridge, as well as many other installations across Greater Boston.

“Through its many programs and services, the Animal Rescue League of Boston has brought countless joy to animal lovers for endless years. For me, they were the obvious choice to ask David Phillips to create a work for in order to celebrate that joy,” Lopes noted. “In ‘Dancing with Spheres,’ his joyful sense of whimsy imbued his creatures with a feeling of majesty and grace that is captivating. It was an honor to have been able to play a small part in bringing this iconic work to the League and to animal and art lovers everywhere.” Through this installation, Lopes will be able to continue to teach people about art and animals for decades to come.

“‘Dancing with Spheres’ is here to remind us of the love and care animals add to our lives,” added Phillips. “The idea to give a new public art work to the city came from Tony Lopes, with no conditions. Tony approached me as a stranger, and with his enthusiasm, generosity and devotion to animals, we have this sculpture and I have a great friend. Our shared devotion to our pets led us to the doors of the Animal Rescue League of Boston with this gift.”

About the event:

Several private and corporate sponsors have stepped forward to support the big debut on May 31, including Lead Sponsors Boston Private Bank & Trust Company and Kelly McKernan, League Board Member and Senior Vice President Portfolio Manager at BPB&TC.

When:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Friday, May 31, 2013 from 2- 4 p.m. with light refreshments in the adoption shelter auditorium after the unveiling, and displays of the League’s various programs and services that are made possible by its supporters.
Where:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Animal Rescue League of Boston’s dog play yard at the 10 Chandler Street shelter. The dog play yard looks out onto the intersection of Arlington, Herald and Tremont Streets
More:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited-edition art work by Boston artist Paula Ogier will be on display and for sale, with 50% of the proceeds benefiting the League.

Additional details about the event are available at www.arlboston.org/dancingwithspheres.

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About the Animal Rescue League of Boston: Founded in 1899, the Animal Rescue League of Boston is dedicated to rescuing domesticated animals and wildlife from cruelty, abandonment, and neglect. In addition to the organization’s animal rescue, law enforcement, shelter, and veterinary headquarters in Boston, the League operates shelters in [Dedham](#) and [Brewster](#), Massachusetts; the [Pine Ridge Pet Cemetery](#)—the nation’s oldest pet cemetery—in Dedham; a fleet of animal ambulances, and a mobile [Spay Waggin’](#) that provides subsidized spay/neuter services throughout Massachusetts’ South Shore and Cape Cod. The Animal Rescue League of Boston relies solely on the generosity of our supporters to help animals in need. We do not receive government support. Please [support us](#) online and learn more about us at home.arlboston.org.