NEWPORT MANSIONS | The Preservation Society of Newport County

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AMERICA'S FIRST MULTI-SENSORY HOUSE MUSEUM EXPERIENCE, "THE ELMS EXPERIENCE," WILL OPEN AT NEWPORT MANSIONS ON NOVEMBER 16, 2026

- **Created in partnership with Emmy®-winning global creative studio Digital Kitchen**
- **Experience will incorporate video projection, sound design, character and narrative dialogue, soundtrack, physical displays and scentscape**
- **Tickets for "The Elms Experience" are now available for purchase**



NEWPORT, R.I. – Marking one of the most significant moments in The Preservation Society of Newport County's (Newport Mansions) history, **"The Elms Experience"** will open to the public on November 16, 2026. Preservation Society Members have exclusive access to Member Preview Days, November 12-14, 2026. Tickets are available for purchase now at NewportMansions.org/the-elms.

The multi-million-dollar project is set to become America's first multi-sensory house museum experience, bringing the Gilded Age property to life as never before.

Subtle, seemingly magical transformations, created in collaboration with the Emmy®-winning global creative studio **Digital Kitchen**, will enhance the already stunning mansion with meaningfully engaging, site-specific elements. For the first time, guests will be able to step directly into the visual splendor and complex experiences that defined the era, much of which directly informed Julian Fellowes' **"The Gilded Age"** for HBO.

As guests navigate from one room to the next, they will encounter a series of story activations, each inspired by diligent scholarship and research into the people, events and objects that defined the era. Guests will hear conversations, view video installations, be enveloped by sound and encounter custom scents reminiscent of a busy, bustling turn-of-the-century home.

Accessible throughout the space via scannable QR codes, the Experience's mobile companion will allow guests to dive deeper into The Elms' stories and history before, during and after they visit. Initially designed as a location to cite the primary resources behind the Experience's research, the mobile companion will offer approachable scholarship, allowing for further engagement through educational content.

Throughout the nearly three-year design process, the extraordinary architecture, design and collections of The Elms have been carefully considered. New and revealing research has been conducted by the Preservation Society's team, providing greater insight to the people, place and historic period. As The Elms is a National Historic Landmark, the highest standards of historic preservation have been followed every step of the way, in accordance with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Creation of "The Elms Experience" is supported by founding partner BankNewport.

Trudy Coxe, CEO and Executive Director of The Preservation Society of Newport County, said: "The opening of 'The Elms Experience' is a watershed moment, not only for Newport Mansions but for the field of preservation at large. At a time when attendance is softening at many of our country's cultural and historical institutions, the Preservation Society is continuing to expand through our commitment to interpreting the stories of our properties in ways that connect with modern audiences. 'The Elms Experience' is creating another pathway for us to advance the house museum experience, broaden our audience and drive increased engagement with the properties we care for and the community we call home."

Leslie B. Jones, Director of Museum Affairs and Chief Curator of The Preservation Society of Newport County, said: "As their home was built for private use, the Berwinds could not have imagined what the future held for this important building and its contents. Many of the family's private documents and communication were not saved, so our team followed previous findings to both confirm and reveal new information on the building, objects, family, designers and staff who made this one of the most significant sites of Newport's Gilded Age. The result of this in-depth effort is a better understanding of the nuance behind each lived experience of the era — something we can all relate to. Digital Kitchen's presentation of these narratives allows for a true connection to the past, supported by our high standards for research and educational communication."

Andrew Julien, Creative Director at Digital Kitchen, said: "By combining our background in world-building and cinematic storytelling with extensive research, in collaboration with the

Newport Mansions curatorial team, we've created a varied guest experience that elevates what a house museum can be. Every element, from immersive films and sound design to physical installations, is authentically rooted in the history of the house and inspired by the fascinating and diverse human stories of the staff, guests, designers and hosts who shaped life at The Elms. We were careful to respect the physical environment and historic architecture while integrating technology in a way that feels seamless rather than intrusive. The result is a delicate balance between education and emotion, capturing the soul of place and bringing the past to life in a vivid way that feels timeless."

The Elms was the summer residence of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Julius Berwind, whose fortune was first made in the coal industry. Architect Horace Trumbauer modeled much of the home after the 18th-century Château d'Asnières located outside Paris. Construction of The Elms was completed in 1901 at a reported cost of approximately $1.4 million. The interiors and furnishings were designed by Allard et Fils of Paris and New York and were the setting for the Berwinds' collection of Italian Renaissance ceramics, 18th-century French fine art, 17th-century Venetian paintings and Chinese jades.

The Elms has been closed to the public since Aug. 10 in preparation for "The Elms Experience." The museum café, The Carriage House at The Elms, remains open daily while the house is closed. Café hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., with last seating at 4 p.m. The Carriage House is open only to Preservation Society members and guests with any Newport Mansions house tour ticket.

ABOUT NEWPORT MANSIONS | THE PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF NEWPORT COUNTY

The Preservation Society of Newport County is Rhode Island's largest cultural organization, protecting, preserving and presenting the best of Newport County's architectural heritage. As a nonprofit organization accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, the Preservation Society's 11 historic properties – seven of them National Historic Landmarks – span more than 250 years of American architectural and social development from the Colonial era to the Gilded Age.

Through its historic properties, educational programs, and related activities the Preservation Society engages the public in the story of America's vibrant cultural heritage. Today, these "Newport Mansions" are an integral part of the living fabric of the city in which they stand.

For more information, please visit NewportMansions.org.

ABOUT DIGITAL KITCHEN

Digital Kitchen is a global creative studio that merges Emmy®-winning storytelling, design, and content to captivate audiences. Renowned for bringing worlds to life through iconic main titles, multimedia content, imaginative experiences, and immersive spaces, Digital Kitchen has worked with prestigious clients such as Warner Bros., Netflix, Apple, HBO, Canada Goose, and Amazon. For more information, visit thisisdk.com.

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