



100 Life-Sized Indian Elephant Sculptures Embark on Symbolic U.S. Journey in “*The Great Elephant Migration*”

Starting in Newport, The Public Art Project Aims to Raise Millions for Conservation Efforts Around the World



Elephants at Sunset, England 2021.

NEWPORT, RI (June 13, 2024)— Elephant Family—an international non-governmental organization (NGO) dedicated to protecting Asia’s magnificent wildlife—is today unveiling the **U.S. phase of The Great Elephant Migration**. This marks the first time the traveling public art exhibition and fundraising initiative will arrive stateside, with a 3,500-mile Migration of 100

elephant sculptures set to travel to **Newport, New York City, Miami, Blackfeet Nation, Buffalo Pastures in Browning, Montana,** and **Los Angeles** through 2025.

An international collaboration between Indigenous artisans, contemporary artists, and cultural institutions, The Great Elephant Migration aims to support Indigenous-led conservation efforts and inspire peaceful human and animal coexistence.

Each elephant in the 100-strong herd has been created by **The Coexistence Collective**, a community of 200 indigenous artisans from the Bettakurumba, Paniya, Kattunayakan and Soliga communities of India's Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, Tamil Nadu. The collective has recreated every elephant they live alongside in intricately detailed sculptural form. The elephants are made from Lantana camara, one of the world's top invasive weeds, which encroaches upon over 40% of India's protected areas. Furthermore, each elephant is twinned with a conservation NGO in the USA and beyond whose work will directly benefit from the sale of their sculpture.

"In the last 40 years, the human population of India has doubled to 1.4 billion, which has coincided with an increase in the number of elephants, rhinos, lions, and tigers in the country," says Coexistence Collective Co-Founder and Elephant Family Trustee **Ruth Ganesh**. "The extraordinary success of this compassionate coexistence is a testament to the power of collective empathy. Our magnificent herd is here to tell its story, inspiring the human race to share space and be part of this transformative movement."

Following an expansive UK tour in the summer of 2021, which attracted **5 million spectators** in total, the herd is now set to embark on a one-year campaign across the United States, spreading joy and wonder, reaching new audiences with its messages, and engaging environmental partners along the way.

The U.S. Migration is presented by **Art&Newport**, a nonprofit art organization that brings international artists and art to Newport, founded by **Dodie Kazanjian**. The Migration will commence on **July 4th** in Newport alongside a series of multidisciplinary art installations by artist **Hadi Falapishi** and curated by Kazanjian. Falapishi will create an expansive body of work specifically for this project, which will be displayed at several of the town's most storied mansions and historic sites, including the Solarium at **Rough Point Museum**, the **Great Friends Meeting House**, and the great hall at **The Breakers**. The herd of 100 elephants will be dispersed and installed just outside these locations, creating a dialogue with Falapishi's work and a remarkable and immersive experience for visitors.

"The vision of 100 hand-made Indian elephants migrating across America, in my mind, is a monumental, cinematic, and moving work of performance art," says Art&Newport founder **Dodie Kazanjian**. "I could not think of a project more aligned with the mission and values of Art&Newport, and we are so honored to be the first location in the U.S. to engage with this work."

During July and August, a majority of the herd will be installed at **Salve Regina University**, accessible from the Cliff Walk, near historic McAuley Hall. Salve's student "Cliff Walk Ambassadors" will act as docents in the Cliff Walk area surrounding the campus to educate tourists about the initiative as part of their community immersion coursework.

After Newport, the elephants will migrate to New York City's **Meatpacking District**, arriving on September 6. Programming and activations will continue into late October, allowing visitors to experience the elephants at key gateways and plazas throughout the neighborhood. In December, in collaboration with **Faena Art** and **The Reef Line**, with support from **Xerjoff**, the Italian fragrance company, the elephants will make their way to Miami for Art Week, where further programming and artist interventions will take place, to be announced soon.

Following installations on the East Coast, the herd will make its way west for the final leg of the Migration from the Buffalo Pastures of Blackfeet Nation, Montana into Los Angeles. This journey will involve a convoy of 100 jeeps adorned with Indian lorry art, each towing a single elephant sculpture. From rugged mountains and breathtaking vistas to the vibrant streets of L.A., this journey will symbolize the experience of migratory animals in a human-dominated world.

The Great Elephant Migration is made possible with support from the Official Merchandise Partner and Sponsor of the Newport exhibition: **LOVE BRAND & Co.** The go-to purveyor of effortlessly chic beachwear for the family and with a greater purpose, LOVE BRAND & Co. will be supporting the Newport exhibition with a pop-up shop of elephant-themed clothing and merchandise. The Great Elephant Migration is also made possible by logistical support from **IBI International Fine Art Logistics**.

Elephants have matriarchal structures, with each herd led by an older, experienced female, so it is only natural that The Great Elephant Migration is a women-led conservation effort. **The Matriarchy** is a group of influential women across diverse fields, including environmentalists, philanthropists, storytellers and creatives, which will rally support for human-wildlife coexistence throughout the Migration. Members of the Matriarchy include **Cher, Kristin Davis, Dr. Sylvia Earle**, and more to be announced.

The Great Elephant Migration is supporting a large-scale initiative to shred vast areas of Lantana from India's Protected Areas and convert it into biochar. By the end of 2025, they will have sequestered 2625 tons of carbon and created more than 500 jobs for Indigenous communities through this effort. The total estimated carbon emissions for the creation, shipping and transportation of the herd is between 250 and 400 tons, depending on the exact vehicles used. A detailed carbon projection report will be available at the beginning of the Migration and a complete carbon emission and sequestration audit will be published at the end of the Migration.

The Great Elephant Migration supports conservation NGOs around the world who have found ways to live alongside lions, leopards, elephants, and some of the planet's most vulnerable animals.

The Headline Partners are: Coexistence Consortium, INDIGENOUS LED, and Lion Guardians. Other Partners Include: Elephant Family, Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund, Buffalo Field Campaign, Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, The Reefline, Free The Wild, International Wildlife Coexistence Network, The European Nature Trust, Save The Elephants, Save The Bay, One Earth, Think Elephants International, Network for Landscape Conservation, The Perfect World Foundation, Deep Hope, Rewilding Chile, Rewilding Argentina, Pangea, Wildlife Conservation Trust, Wild Bird Fund, The Real Elephant Collective, Roots & Shoots, and International Union for Conservation of Nature.

For more information about the Migration or to buy an elephant, please visit www.thegreatelephantmigration.org

####

The Great Elephant Migration Newport | Exhibition Information:

Rough Point | July 4 – August 25, 2024

680 Bellevue Avenue, Newport, RI

Outdoor Installation and Solarium Exhibition open Tuesday–Sunday, 10:00 am–5:00 pm

Great Friends Meeting House | July 4 – August 25, 2024

21 Farewell Street, Newport, RI

Outdoor installation open daily: sunrise to sunset

Exhibition inside the meeting house opens July 5th: Friday-Sunday, 12:00 pm–4:00 pm

Exhibition Closed July 19, 20, 21

The Breakers | August 31 – September 6, 2024

44 Ochre Point Avenue, Newport, RI 02840

Outdoor installation open daily, 10:00 am–6:00 pm

Exhibition inside The Breakers opens August 1st: open daily 10:00 am–6:00 pm

Salve Regina University | July 4 – September 2, 2024

100 Ochre Point Avenue, Newport, RI 02840

Outdoor installation open daily: sunrise to sunset, accessible via the Cliff Walk

Land Acknowledgement: The Great Elephant Migration will travel through the unceded traditional lands, waters, and territories of the Wampanoag, Narragansett, Lenape, Tequesta, Calusa, Miccosukee, Seminole, Blackfeet, Tongva, Tataviam, Serrano, Kizh, and Chumash Peoples. We acknowledge the painful history of genocide and forced occupation of their territory. In gratitude, we honor the wisdom of past, present, and future elders and community members and the enduring strength of their cultures and connections to the earth.

####

About Elephant Family

Elephant Family is committed to building landscapes that support human-wildlife coexistence. As human populations expand and natural habitats shrink, people and animals are fighting a deadly battle for food and space. We support a wide range of projects that find ways for humans and animals to live closer together than ever before. From securing a network of wildlife corridors which act as bridges between islands of forests, to relocating busy highways that slice through primary forest, these projects help humans and wildlife more effectively share space. [Website](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#)

About Art&Newport

Art&Newport aims to develop and host a series of city-wide visual arts presentations in Newport, Rhode Island. The goal is to put Newport, with its unique institutions and natural riches, on the map as a place to learn about and share the ideas and visions that only art and artists can provide.

[Website](#) | [Instagram](#) | [#Art&Newport](#)

About The Coexistence Collective

The Coexistence Collective is a community of 200 indigenous artisans from the Bettakurumba, Paniya, Kattunayakan and Soliga communities of India's Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, Tamil Nadu. The collective has spent the past five years replicating every elephant they live alongside in intricately detailed sculptural form. Like many indigenous cultures around the world, these communities have extensive knowledge of nature and wildlife based on generations of observation and experience.

About Love Brand & Co.

This is a love story. A love of island life, nature, wildlife, travel, adventure, and family forms the bedrock of LOVE BRAND & Co. Established in 2010 as a portal to island living, the founders, Oliver and Rose Tomalin, created the authority in resort wear for the discerning traveler.

Living in the Bahamas with a long family history in the islands has given LOVE BRAND & Co. the advantage in mastering island style. Refined over a decade, the brand offers a wide range of men's and children's resort wear. Produced in Europe; using only natural or recycled fabrics with an uncompromising attention to detail, focus on eco-conscious provenance and functional design.

About Xerjoff

Xerjoff, founded by Sergio Momo in 2003, epitomizes luxury perfumery. Blending opulent raw materials with old-world craftsmanship and contemporary artistry, each Xerjoff flacon is a masterpiece housing rare ingredients.

About the Meatpacking District

The Meatpacking District is a neighborhood like no other: a fusion of grit and glam, where old New York meets the frenetic pace of the 21st Century. The Meatpacking District Management Association is a business improvement district (BID). It is a not-for-profit that serves the businesses, residents, and visitors of the area with a common goal: to program, promote, and take care of the Meatpacking District. There is a broad community that makes the District distinct. The BID organizes community events and entertainment. It partners with the City to maintain and keep clean over 30,000 square feet of plazas and four Open Streets. And there are teams on the ground seven days a week sweeping the sidewalks and engaging with visitors. For more information, please visit meatpacking-district.com.

#####