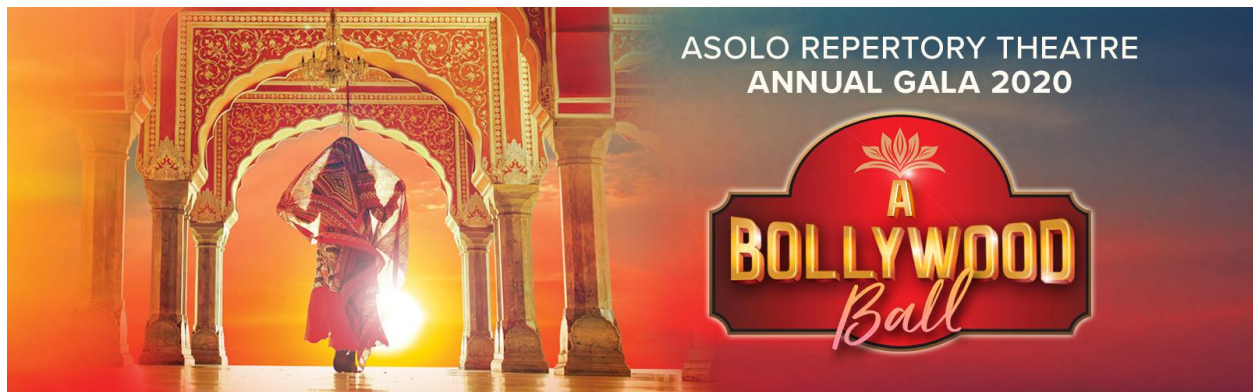


Click [here](#) for high-res photos of Shivali Bhammer and Navin Kundra.

**\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\*\***

**February 13, 2020**



**Asolo Rep to Host Annual Gala: A Bollywood Ball  
on Saturday, March 7 at The Ritz-Carlton Sarasota;  
Shivali Bhammer and Navin Kundra to perform**

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(SARASOTA, February 13, 2020) — Asolo Rep's Annual Gala: **A Bollywood Ball** will be held on Saturday, March 7 at The Ritz-Carlton Sarasota. The largest fundraiser of Asolo Rep's season, chaired by Mary Braxton-Joseph, Tammy Karp, Donna Koffman, and Elisabeth Waters, will begin at 6pm with a cocktail reception, silent auction and raffle, followed by a seated dinner, paddle raise, live music and dancing.

This year's theme celebrates *Bollywood*, the Indian film industry known for its melodramatic plots, colorful scenery, lively music, dance and romance. It's one of the largest centers of film production in the world and is based in the vibrant city of Mumbai.

"Bollywood, as a theme, is so visually stunning. It's hard to capture everything in just one evening, but our goal is to give guests a glimpse into this exciting world" said Asolo Rep Special Events Manager Laura Stuart Wood. "Guests can expect to see bold colors, grand performances, and even a custom Indian-inspired menu created by The Ritz-Carlton Sarasota's Banquet Chef Saravanan Appadurai. We want to present an authentic experience that celebrates Indian culture."

The musical entertainment will feature a **Bollywood-inspired show** with dancers and performers, along with the Atlanta-based 5-piece Indian band **Jashn**. Jashn delivers Bollywood classics while showcasing an ancient form of Indian classical music. This year's guest artists include **Shivali Bhammer** and **Navin Kundra**. Shivali is the UK's biggest devotional singer, and the only one to have been signed by major record label Sony Music in 2009. Navin is an award-winning artist, with music that combines Eastern and Western influences together with a contemporary and edgy sound that is uniquely and commercially progressive. He recently starred in a supporting role for a new Bollywood Action Feature Film, "COBRA."

All Gala proceeds will support the artists in Asolo Rep's 2019/20 season and the theatre's award-winning Education & Engagement programs, which help students develop an appreciation for the arts while gaining empathy and insight into the lives of others through experiencing, discussing and creating live theatre.

"My co-chairs Mary Braxton-Joseph, Tammy Karp, Elisabeth Waters and I hope you will join us for this year's event," said Gala Co-Chair Donna Koffman. "We have an entertaining evening planned with many opportunities for everyone to get involved. Whether you buy a raffle ticket, contribute to the paddle raise, or bid in the silent or live auction, your donation will support Asolo Rep's Education & Engagement programs. It's an honor to help ensure theatre arts education continues for future generations."

The theatre is also promoting two high-end raffle items including a private dinner for 8 people at Tandoor Fine Indian Cuisine and a Women's White Gold Diamond Watch. Raffle tickets are \$100 each or 3 for \$250 and will be sold during the Gala and before the Gala at [www.asolorep.org/annualgala](http://www.asolorep.org/annualgala). Raffle winners will be selected at random on the evening of the Gala. Gala attendance is not required to participate in the raffle. Guests attending the Gala will be able to bid on one Live Auction item, a European Cultural Cruise sailing from Amsterdam to Barcelona in August. This experience was donated by Admiral Travel and Crystal Cruises, and is valued at nearly \$15,000.

Immediately following the Gala, the theatre will host a late-night After Party at Lemon Tree Kitchen in downtown Sarasota from 10:30pm - 1am. Tickets are \$50 and include a complimentary specialty drink, discounted cash bar, light bites, music and Bollywood dance lessons from DJ Pram and Priya.

There are still a limited number of tickets/tables available for the Gala. Tickets range from \$400 - \$1,000 and tables range from \$4,000 - \$10,000. For tickets and information, please contact Asolo Rep Special Events Manager Laura Stuart Wood at 941.351.9010 ext. 4712 or [Laura\\_Wood@asolo.org](mailto:Laura_Wood@asolo.org). More information and online tickets are also available by visiting [www.asolorep.org/annualgala](http://www.asolorep.org/annualgala).

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## ABOUT SHIVALI BHAMMER

**Shivali Bhammer** was born in London. Having studied Economics and Philosophy, she embarked on a career in Investment Banking at Goldman Sachs but quickly left to pursue her artistic passions. She was the youngest artist and only artist to ever be signed to Sony Music BMG for Bhajans and has released two devotional albums, *The Bhajan Project* and *Urban Temple* which reached number one on the iTunes World Chart. She was nominated for two global Indian Music Awards at the age of 23 and was listed as the Top 25 under 25 South Asian Artists in England. Shivali has performed globally for corporate, public and private concerts. She also holds a diploma in Acting, Kathak (classical Indian dance) and Ballet. As a writer, she has published for newspapers such as *The Financial Times*, *The Orange County Register*, *Science & Spirituality*, *Spirituality & Health*, *Hinduism Today*, *Spiritual Directors International*, and *India Link* on topics of philosophy and faith. Shivali is also an award-winning playwright and founder of A Conscious Stream Productions. She is an active public speaker globally on Vedanta, Karma Yoga, Jyana Yoga and Bhakti Yoga. Shivali has done documentaries and recordings for BBC Television, BBC Radio and other radio channels in both India and the United States. Shivali is currently living between New York and London. Shivali will be releasing her third album, *The Bhajan Project 2* by Sony Music in 2020.

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## ABOUT NAVIN KUNDRA

**Navin Kundra** is an extraordinarily talented singer, gifted songwriter, exceptional actor and an electrifying live performer. An award-winning artist, his music combines Eastern and Western influences together with a contemporary and edgy sound that is uniquely and commercially progressive. He utilizes his ability to effortlessly flip from singing and writing in Hindi to English to Punjabi whilst playing the guitar or piano to create an unforgettable musical experience. He has established himself as one of the strongest forces in the British Asian music industry today, with achievements including: three consecutive top 20 singles on the UK Urban Charts; six number one hit singles in the Asian Charts; a cameo appearance in BBC soap 'Doctors' featuring hit song "Mehbooba;" and a supporting role for new Bollywood Action Feature Film, "COBRA." He performed for Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the British Prime Minister at Wembley Stadium for over 60,000 people, and for the UK Royal Family at St James's Palace. He was the winner of the "Entertainer of the Year" Award in the Houses of Parliament in 2013 and winner of the "Best Urban Singer" Award at the UK Bhangra Awards in 2016. With an on-screen charisma that is undeniable and a flair for acting and performing, Navin Kundra is ready for his big break in mainstream entertainment.

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**ABOUT ASOLO REP**

Now in its 61st season, Asolo Repertory Theatre is recognized as one of the premier professional theatres in America and one of the largest in the Southeastern United States. One of the few select theatres in the nation that performs in true rotating repertory, Asolo Rep's highly skilled acting company and extensive craftsmanship bring to life this unique performance method that gives audiences the opportunity to see multiple productions in the span of a few days. Asolo Rep presents up to 10 productions each season including contemporary and classic works and provocative musical theatre experiences. A theatre district in and of itself, Asolo Rep is committed to expanding its reach into the community, furthering its collaboration with the best theatre artists working in the industry today and cultivating new artists through its affiliation with the FSU/Asolo Conservatory for Actor Training. Under the leadership of Producing Artistic Director Michael Donald Edwards and Managing Director Linda DiGabriele, Asolo Rep's ambitious theatrical offerings and ground-breaking education and community programming engage audiences and ensure its lasting legacy for future generations.

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