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For Immediate Release

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Asolo Rep to Host Annual Gala: *Old Hollywood at Coconut Grove* on Saturday, March 3 at Art Ovation Hotel; *Evita* Star Ana Isabelle to Perform

(SARASOTA, February 2, 2018) — Asolo Rep's Annual Gala: *Old Hollywood at Coconut Grove*, will be held on Saturday, March 3, 2018 at Art Ovation Hotel in downtown Sarasota. The largest fundraiser of Asolo Rep's season, chaired by Susan Malloy Jones, Elizabeth Moore, Jules Price and Michelle Senglaub, will begin at 6pm with a cocktail reception and silent auction, followed by a seated dinner, paddle raise, live music and dancing. It will celebrate the famed Coconut Grove lounge and nightclub in Old Hollywood's Ambassador Hotel – a mecca for movie stars and synonymous with the glitz and glamour of Hollywood's Golden Age.

The Gala will feature a special musical performance by Puerto Rican recording artist Ana Isabelle, who wowed audiences as Eva Perón in Asolo Rep's sold out 2017 production of *Evita*. Musical entertainment features headliner Warren Priske and his *Old Hollywood Jazz Band*. Priske delivers classic standards from the 1940s with the style and sophistication that made the swing era so irresistible. Joey Panek, Senior Producer of ABC7's *Suncoast View*, will return as emcee of the event.

"This is the first Gala to be held at the brand new Art Ovation Hotel. The venue is giving us so much to work with design-wise and, as always, I like to mix the old with the new," said Asolo Rep's Special Events Manager Laura Stuart Wood. "Guests can expect to see some of the entertainment and design inspiration come from present day's Academy Awards®, but also from the original Coconut Grove lounge, which hosted the Oscars® six times throughout the 1930s and 40s and attracted some of the biggest names in Old Hollywood (some of whom you *might* see at the event). We want all of our guests to feel like VIPs stepping onto a red carpet at the most exciting and glamorous award show."

"With our determination to celebrate the arts in all of its forms, we are honored to be the host venue for the Annual Asolo Repertory Theatre Gala," said Art Ovation Hotel's General Manager Matthew Simone. "As Art Ovation Hotel nears completion, we are working around the clock to finalize the last stages of construction and property details to provide a memorable experience for their biggest fundraiser of their season."

All Gala proceeds will support the artists in Asolo Rep's 2017/18 season and the theatre's award-winning Education and Community Outreach 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.

"For decades, Cocoon Grove hosted well-known entertainers, such as Frank Sinatra, Judy Garland, Bing Crosby, Nat King Cole, and more. From the moment you arrive you will truly experience and enjoy the glamour of this magical time in history," said Gala Co-Chair Jules Price. "Our exciting live auction and raffle yield two unparalleled LA experiences: a luxury 14-day first-class Crystal Cruise and an amazing 3-night romantic stay for two with an incredibly special chef's dinner and private custom LA tour. There's no better way to support the dazzling Asolo Repertory Theatre than to attend this spectacular evening filled with lights, camera and action!"

The theatre is also promoting a Hollywood-themed raffle, which includes a 3-night stay for two, 5-course dinner, a custom tour of LA, airfare and more. Raffle tickets are \$100 each and will be sold during the gala and before the gala at www.asolorep.org/annualgala. Winners will be selected on the evening of the Gala. Gala attendance is not required to participate in the raffle.

Immediately following the gala, the theatre will once again host a late night after party at Louies Modern from 10:30pm - 1:30am. Tickets are \$40 and include a complimentary specialty drink, discounted cash bar, light bites, DJ and entertainment.

There are still a limited number of tickets/tables available for the Gala. Tickets range from \$300 - \$1,000 and tables range from \$3,000 - \$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. More information and online tickets are also available by visiting <http://www.asolorep.org/ANNUALGALA>.

ABOUT ANA ISABELLE

ANA ISABELLE is a Puerto Rican American actress, singer/songwriter who recently starred as Eva Perón in Asolo Rep's sold out production of *Evita*. She won Univision's *Viva el Sueño* with over 30 million votes and was hailed as "An Artist to Watch" by *Billboard* Magazine. Ana has released three highly successful albums, including "*Mi Sueño*", which debuted #3 on Billboard Top Latin Chart. Upcoming Films: *Imprisoned*, *Sol De Medianoche*, *Shot Gun* and currently in theatrical release the Remake of Francis Ford Coppola's *Dementia 13*. TV: *Big Dogs*, *Seasons of Love*. NY Theatre: Off Broadway: *I Like It Like That* with Tito Nieves. Duets with Plácido Domingo, José Feliciano, Luis Fonsi, and Gilberto Santa Rosa. Ana has performed to sold-out audiences throughout Puerto Rico and U.S., including Carnegie Hall. As the first Latina artist, she starred with Chazz Palminteri in the TNT opening of NBA All Star Games. Ana was named Best New Artist at Premios Texas and nominated as Best New Artist in Premios Lo Nuestro.

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About Asolo Repertory Theatre

Now in its 59th 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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