

Bollywood comes to Daybreak showcasing Indian culture

Festival » South Jordan resident's fascination with the country spawns idea to expose others to its cuisine, yoga, music, henna tattooing and, of course, a film.

By **AUTUMN THATCHER**
Special to The Tribune

South Jordan resident Kristen Peterson Ford has dedicated years to hosting events that celebrate Indian culture. Her appreciation was sparked through friendships developed growing up in Utah and deepened during stints in Africa, where her husband was working in foreign services.

"In Africa, there is a very large Indian population of very successful business people who have been there for multiple generations, as well as some first-generation Indians," Ford said in a phone interview. "I got to know them and found that they were a group of people that liked to go out, liked to get together and liked to socialize — all the things that I liked to do."

Tonight, in collaboration with several others involved in Utah's Indian community, including Mia Prazen, Swathy Mahasenan, Alice Davé and Paki Misra, Ford will help host her biggest event to date: Bollywood Comes to Daybreak takes place from 4 to 10 p.m. in the South Jordan residential community.

"Bollywood started out in reference to the movie industry in Mumbai," Peterson said. "The Bollywood films spawn many industries — music, dancing, fashion — in India and the surrounding region. Bollywood is actually bigger than Hollywood as far as viewership and how many movies are put out. That appeal is starting to come over here and more



STEVE GRIFFIN | The Salt Lake Tribune

Pakhi Misra, Mia Prazen, Kristen Ford, Swathy Mahasenan, Alice Davé and River the dog — shown at Daybreak in South Jordan — are organizing the Bollywood Comes to Daybreak event.

people are getting to learn about the wonderful films, the music, the fashion and everything associated with it."

Bollywood Comes to Daybreak is a family-friendly event that features — among other activities — three free yoga sessions, an array of Indian food, musical performances, art, an opportunity to engage in a color throw, Bollywood makeovers, henna tattooing and a film screening under the stars. "We want to celebrate all things India to let people know about this culture," Ford said. "We wanted to have that street-festival feel that is open for everybody and for whom ever wants to attend. It's a really good slice and celebration of all things Indian."

While in Africa, Ford collaborated with friends in the local Indian community to

host events that featured music, food, dance and film at her home. The events became a tradition that grew in size with each one.

"I saw that genuine community amongst [my friends] where they loved to get together. They loved to visit, to dress; they were so open with their culture and their festival," Ford said. "I loved that they would invite us to everything from their religious [events] to more celebrating fun festivals. There was that feeling of community that was created behind it."

After returning to Utah, Ford brought with her the passion she developed for what she describes as an eclectic and vibrant culture. Once settled in Daybreak, she picked up where she left off. Her first series of events took place in her home,

hosting company comprising diplomats, expats and foreign nationals. The parties grew, and eventually, Ford used them as a way to get to know her neighbors.

Rangoli artist Shaily Pandya sees the Daybreak festival as an opportunity to showcase her art while educating festivalgoers on the history of the Rangoli tradition.

"Rangoli is an art form native to India and Nepal in which patterns are created on the floor in living rooms or courtyards using materials such as colored rice, dry flour, colored sand or flower petals," Pandya said. "It is usually made during Diwali [festival of lights] and other festivals. The designs are passed from one generation to the next, keeping both the art form and the tradition alive."

Ford is encouraged by the interest Utahns have in the Indian culture, noting the widely attended Festival of Colors at the Holy Krishna Temple in Spanish Fork.

"I think there are a lot of similarities in the Indian culture and in Utah where there is a big interest in family and community and celebrating things," she said.

Pandya agrees.

"I see so many similarities between the Utah culture and Indian culture," she said. "The desire to learn great things

Bollywood Comes to Daybreak

When » Today, 4 to 10 p.m.

Where » SoDa Row, 11241 S. Kestrel Rise Road, South Jordan

Admission » Free

Schedule of events

4 p.m. » DJ music

5 p.m. » Siddhi: Bollywood Golden Oldies

5:15 p.m. » Dance group

5:30 p.m. » Sumits hot yoga class

5:50 p.m. » Taal Dance Group

6 p.m. » Bollyversity: Kathak & Fusion

6:10 p.m. » Rhythm & Soul: Balam Pichkary

6:20 p.m. » The Divas: Bollywood Latkas & Jhatkas

6:30 p.m. » Divya School of Dance

6:40 p.m. » Bollyversity: Bhangra

6:50 p.m. » South Asian Sensation: Dhamakedar Bollywood

7 p.m. » DJ music; Camron Wright: "Orphan Keeper" book signing

7:20 p.m. » Pistahs

7:30 p.m. » Shishir & Sonali: Interactive dance

8 p.m. » Candlelight Yin

8:10 p.m. » Aarush & Amishi Rohaj

8:20 p.m. » Desibels

8:30 p.m. » Sumits Hot Yoga: Candlelight Yin

8:45 p.m. » DJ music

9 p.m. » "Dawaat-e-Ishq" (Bollywood movie)

about other cultures to blend it within our day to day life for the betterment, pulls Utahns towards Indian culture. As per my understanding, I feel in India the culture is not just religion but it is the way of life," which you practice every single day from morning to night.

As she gears up for the event, Ford said the most important aspect of Bollywood Comes to

Daybreak is the element of engaging with individuals from other cultures and learning more about one another.

"When you get to know other people, it provides a different awareness and understanding," she said. "I think if people could understand other people and really see where others come from, then there would be a lot more acceptance."

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