

Loading Dock, a swinging night spot on the water in Stamford, Connecticut was transformed into an India of the imagination—swaths of pink and mango-hued fabric, golden goddesses, pots full of floating rose petals and a huge presiding Ganesha, not to mention an Indian bazaar and Bollywood martinis. Montages from Bollywood movies played on the big screens as henna artists painted the hands of guests and sitar and tabla players did their magic. This fantasy evening was **Bollywood Gala**, the biennial fundraiser to support the cause of HIV/AIDS by Red Ribbon Foundation which is one of the top 25 grantmakers for HIV/AIDS organisations worldwide. It had been founded by Florence and Karl Suerig in memory of their son Michael Faerman who had died of HIV/AIDS. Americans had gone Indian for a day and there were enough turbans,



Philip Lienthal, Dr Jeffrey Laurence, Nicole Hazard



Anastasia & Nick Brien



Khola Sheikh, Carly Risman

kurtas and jewels to outfit a Bollywood production as over 250 guests clad in Indian outfits and headgear, danced to the music of *Om Shanti Om* and

Slumdog Millionaire's *Jai Ho* with the Bollywood Axion dancers. One of the most eye-catching sights was the Imperial Court, a fundraising group for gay

and lesbian charities, fabulous entertainers resplendent in over-the-top Indian finery and jewels, clad in saris for the first time. The headliner for the evening



The Imperial Court, a fundraising group for gay & lesbian charities



The Levison Party in all its colours & glory



A miniature elephant idol gives an Indian flavour



Deborah & Chetan Bhandari

was singer/songwriter Ryan Star who performed from his album. Stamford's movers and shakers had come out in full force to try the Indian delicacies from Coromandel and dance to the music of deejay Kucha and enjoy the India recreated by Elegant Affairs. A vibrant auction by Sotheby's auctioneer helped

toward raising US\$350,000 for programmes combating HIV/AIDS. Nicole Hazard, Director of Red Ribbon, said, "Demonstrating our commitment to combating the increasing presence of HIV in India, we are delighted to have Children's Hope India as Red Ribbon's newest funded programme." As memory of their

Indian evening, guests took home bangles, bindis and an auspicious Ganesha in an ornate organza bag.

Venue: Loading Dock, Stamford, Connecticut

Buzz: Indian fiesta rocked the night.

TEXT: LAVINA MELWANI

Hi! BLITZ



A Bollywood dance performance