



Shiamak Davar: Behind the Scenes of the Wedding of the Decade

With just a few more weeks to go until Bollywood's all-star Unforgettable Tour makes its way to Vancouver on August 17, the powerhouse Bachchan clan is busy rehearsing night and day with none other than Shiamak Davar.

Working with the legendary Amitabh Bachchan and newly-wed power couple Abhishek Bachchan and Aishwarya Rai Bachchan is a dream come true, says Davar, Bollywood's top choreographer. "I love working with people who want to be risky," says Davar, adding that the Bachchan family feels extremely comfortable pushing the envelope.

Davar, who is often credited with revolutionizing Bollywood routines by infusing traditional Indian dance with jazz and modern movement through his Shiamak Davar Institute of Performing Arts, has choreographed an extensive list of A-list Bollywood films, including Dil to Pagal Hai, Taal, Kisna and Taare Zameen Par.

For the first time, all three Bachchans will share the stage for the Unforgettable Tour, bringing the magic of Indian cinema live to Metro Vancouver audiences.

The family is worth an estimated \$170 million since Aishwarya joined the Bachchans. She and Abhishek were married in April of last year at her husband's family home on Juhu Beach in Mumbai.

Adorned with imported henna and gold bangles worth well above \$100,000, Aishwarya and her new husband made their way inside the Bachchan residence, which was draped in yellow and orange marigolds.

Glittering with gold from head to toe, Aishwarya was beyond stunning, says Davar.

"She was dressed in a beautiful gold gown with heavy embroidery," he says. "She was extremely beautiful."

Davar was one of the few lucky ones to be invited to what has been called the Wedding of the Century. Some of Bollywood's hottest stars were nixed from the list, including the top three Khans.

Patriarch Amitabh told the press he didn't invite Bollywood superstars Aamir Khan, Salman Khan and Shahrukh Khan (unrelated) because his mother Teji Bachchan wasn't well enough to play host to such a broad cast of Bollywood regulars.

Bollywood gossips, however, suggested Salman Khan's previous relationship with Aishwarya – which ended some years ago on a rather sour note – was the real reason for the high-profile snub.

To no one's surprise, Bengali actress Rani Mukherjee wasn't invited either. After all, her friendship with Aishwarya cooled considerably after Aishwarya reportedly passed some not-so-appreciative remarks about Rani's excessive makeup on the set of *Lagaan* in Switzerland.

Some of the lucky guests included Shammi Kapoor (aka the Indian Elvis Presley), award-winning action star Ajay Devgan, the beautiful Preity Zinta and her boyfriend Ness Wadia, heir to textile company Bombay Dyeing. Zinta, as Bollywatchers well know, is joining the Unforgettable cast on its global summer tour.

Filled with close friends and family, the mega-watt wedding was "a very quiet affair," says Davar.

Meanwhile, inside the palatial home an “Indian dream” was unfolding, says Davar. As the wedding procession made its way to the rear of the residence, Davar and Aishwarya greeted the small and intimate group of guests.

“I was standing next to Ash while she was greeting guests and I was about to walk away when she grabbed on to my arm and said, ‘Don’t go. Stay here with me,’” he says. “It was very nice.” Although the matrimonial festivities lasted three days, Davar says he could only attend the wedding ceremony because he came down with a bout of Delhi Belly.

As well as gearing up for the Unforgettable Tour, Davar is also in the midst of choreographing every dance scene in Aditya Chopra’s much anticipated film Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi, featuring the acclaimed actor Shahrukh Khan. The romantic comedy will be released this December.