



# HG Insider

Volume 1 Issue 3 – July 2012

## From The President, HG

Dear Friends,

It is hard to believe that we are through half of the year 2012- the 6 months just flew by. I guess it is true that when you are busy and productive, time just flies.

Let me start with thanking Partha, our previous president, who did a phenomenal job of leading core elements of our mission and helped Hidden Gems raise more funds than previous years by delivering programs of high quality. While several initiatives were launched under his leadership, the two significant ones that come to mind are: 1. The 'Ready Song List', which rates singers and the songs that they performed, leading to emphasis and consciousness on quality performance and 2. Setting budget and funds aside for two critical aspects of our group's functioning- equipment and marketing. Thanks again Partha and congratulations on a job well done.

This year marks the 7th year of Hidden-Gems' existence and the 3rd year of our formal registration as a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. The Hidden-Gems have come a long way since our first show in January 2005. Having raised and donated in excess of \$100,000, our members are continually thinking of ways to make a difference both locally and globally. We should continue our search to find deserving organizations that do good humanitarian work, to which we can donate the funds we have raised. The other logical area of evolution for us would be to create and launch our own volunteering or service programs that serve the less fortunate members of our community. There are opportunities to serve fellow human beings both directly and indirectly and it will continue to be our goal to seek out and act on these opportunities.

As I've come to believe of late, whenever you are lost or are seeking an answer, HE provides subtle clues and messages. It is then just a matter of recognizing these messages, interpreting them and acting with whole hearted sincerity on them. May God bless you all.

Sincerely,  
Ramana Subramanian

## From the Editors desk

Congratulations to the new Core Committee members! They are Ramana Subramanian, Rajesh Chandrashekar, Bharat Parulekar, Pragnya Purohit & Rajesh Kulkarni!

This is our third issue of the year and we are happy to announce that we are getting a very good response to our newsletter.

In each issue, you have been meeting two gems and getting to know them. However in this issue, besides introducing our gems, we feel proud and fortunate to include some of their achievements as well. Congratulations to all of them once again!

Looking forward to your comments & feedback.

Yours sincerely,  
Editors  
[hqinsider2012@gmail.com](mailto:hqinsider2012@gmail.com)

## ABOUT HIDDEN GEMS

Hidden Gems is a group of passionate track singers who seek to channel their energies to the service of those amongst us who are under-privileged, facing tribulations, and who may have been hit with hardships due to circumstances beyond their control. Since coming together in January 2005 to raise funds for victims of the 2004 Tsunami, Hidden Gems has successfully performed several fund-raisers for a variety of other causes such as Katrina, Asha for Education, South Brunswick Public Library and CRY. In addition, Hidden Gems has performed numerous private events.

Our uniqueness lies in the fact that most of our proceeds are donated to charity.

<http://www.hidden-gems.org>



**Established in February 2005**

**Founder members:**

Rajesh Kulkarni & Mahendra Solanki

**Publisher:** Hidden Gems

**Editor:** Rajeshree Kulkarni

**Asst Editor:** Malathi Parthasarathi

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**Core Group Members**

**Rajesh Chandrashekar, Rajesh Kulkarni, Bharat Parulekar, Pragnya Purohit, Ramana Subramanian**

**HG Insider**, a quarterly magazine

In 2012, the next issue will be published in October.

If you would like to send in your articles for inclusion in the July issue, please send them to us at [hginsider2012@gmail.com](mailto:hginsider2012@gmail.com) by **Sept 1<sup>st</sup>**.

Editor's decision will be final!

Some Organizations we have supported through the years:



STAND UP FOR CHILD RIGHTS



Visit us at [www.hidden-gems.org](http://www.hidden-gems.org)

**WE DO IT ALL**

From retirement parties to holiday parties  
From public shows to private parties  
From fundraisers to crowd pleasers  
From graduation parties to farewell parties  
From sweet sixteen parties to home coming parties  
From parties for a cause to parties just because!

**If you've got the purpose,  
we've got the passion!**

**Come; discover what  
we can do for you!**

## Hidden Gems Programs April-June 2012

**April 14:** 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday party  
& SBPL Diversity Show



**April 28:** Vaisakhi Mela at Thompson park,  
Monroe, NJ



**April 20:** Ghazal Night

**May 26:** Jain Association Fundraiser,  
Blairstown, NJ



**May 11:** Engagement Party at Guru Palace

### Upcoming Programs:

**July 7<sup>th</sup>, 3pm:** Fun Festival at Reichler Park, South Brunswick, organized by South Brunswick Public Library

**July 13<sup>th</sup>, 7pm:** 'Annual Concerts in the Park' at Beechwood Park, South Brunswick

**Admission is free!**

# Meet the 'Gems'!

## Bharat Parulekar

It would not be an exaggeration if I were to say that my wife, Aditi and I would probably have been in India at this time had it not been for Hidden gems. I consider myself very fortunate to have been associated with this group, which is less of a group and more of a family to us. I have got some wonderful friends in this group, with similar passion as I do, and that is doing something good for the society by using your talent selflessly, without expecting anything in return. I live in South Brunswick, NJ with my family. I strongly believe that HG has helped my daughters stay close to the Indian culture, to an extent that with the songs and music being continuously played in our house, has brought a tremendous influence on both of them, which has helped realize their aptitude in the field of music. Watching the group perform all the time, both of my daughters don't know what stage fright is and have already started singing on tracks at such a young age.

### **When did you start singing?**

I always was into music and my parents tell me that when I was 5 years old I had started singing along with the songs. However I never took singing seriously, as those days the only popular fields were Medicine and Engineering. So singing just remained more of hobby and since I had to do something in music got in to learning tabla. I believe that brought the sense of rhythm in me and there was a point in time when I was thrown out of the class by my school class teacher, for not only banging the desks loudly but also singing along with that. However my first stint with singing happened when I was 24 years old and sang in a live orchestra while doing my MBA and that song was " Dekha na hai re socha na".

### **What interests you besides singing?**

I am majorly into sports. Represented my school and college in cricket tournaments and was also selected for Bombay under 15 cricket team. Also represented my college in soccer. Watching movies is another hobby that I pursue along with my family.

### **Who are your favorite singers? When growing up versus now?**

Having been born in the 70s, when the music industry was virtually ruled by the fabulous four: Kishore Kumar, Mohd. Rafi, Lata Mangeshkar and Asha Bhosle, I happened to listen to their songs more. If Kishore Kumar was a complete entertainment package with versatility, Rafi was a flawless classical singer with amazing range. While Lata Mangeshkar was an institution by herself, Asha Bhosle had a voice that on one side defined the cabaret era and on the other, rendered some wonderful soft romantic numbers. These days I like listening to Rahat Fateh Ali Khan, Sonu Nigam, Shreya Ghosal and some songs of Sunidhi Chauhan. I still listen to the above four oldies along with Manna Dey and Mukesh.

### **Any specific songs that you particularly enjoy singing? Why?**

My wife calls me crazy when I pick up lesser popular songs sung by Kishore Kumar and try to sing them. I like to sing all his soft romantic numbers whether they were popular or not as the feel with which he sang those songs reach my heart every single time I listen to them. My all time favorites are Pal Pal Dil ke paas, Jeevan Se bhari, Ye Waada Rahaan, Ek Ajnabee Haseena Se and many more and every time I try to sing these songs I enjoy it even more than before.

### **What genre/era do you think has made the most significant contribution to Bollywood film music?**

For me, it's the 70s that made its highest impact on the hindi music industry, with the entry of the great R.D Burman. He virtually introduced western music to the Indian cinema, which marked a completely new era in hindi film industry. But what impressed me the most was his ability to give hits in both western as well as classical form, keeping melody intact. Case in point is while on one hand he gave hits such as Teesri Manzil, Yaadon Ki Baarat, which had a significant western influence, on the other hand he also gave classical hits such as Aandhi, Amar Prem etc. No wonder we had music directors such as Jatin Lalit, Anu Malik in the 90s who were completely inspired by him to such an extent that one could see his touch in their work.

### **What is your profession? Was that your dream when you were a child?**

I currently work for L&T Infotech in Financial Services vertical handling some key client relationships and am responsible for growing these relationships at a global level. I always wanted to be a pilot. I also had this hidden ambition of becoming an actor.

### **If you had to choose 3 words to describe yourself, what would they be?**

Practical, Fun- loving and outgoing.

### **If you had a chance to make one change in society, what would it be?**

I would strive to bring world peace and bring in just one religion where people understand the significance of Live and let live.



# Meet the 'Gems'!

## Rashmi Kulkarni



### 1. When did you start singing?

Since childhood, I have been singing. My Mom used to put on radio everyday and I used to listen and

sing along when at home.

### 2. What interests you besides singing?

Anything artistic- interior decorating, painting, drawing, stitching, knitting, web developing, dancing, choreographing, Cooking, Movies. I love travelling too...

### 3. Who are your favorite singers? When growing up and now?

When growing up- Asha Bhosle, Suman Kalyanpurkar, Lata Mangeshkar, Kishore kumar, Sonu Nigam, Alisha Chinoy  
Now- Shreya Ghoshal, Sunidhi Chauhan, Shankar Mahadevan, Mohit Chauhan, A.R.Rehman, Hariharan

### 4. Any specific song you enjoy singing?

There are many songs, hard to name any particular. Any fun-filled, fast number.

### 5. What genre/era do you think has made the most significant contribution to Bollywood film music?

All eras have made their mark... each one has unique hits.

### 6. What is your profession? Was it your dream?

I am a web-developer/designer by profession. My dream was to become an actress or playback singer or to start one institute to learn art from all over the world under one roof.

But I am happy what I am doing now too, as I get to enjoy all my hobbies and do something creative.

### 7. Who is your inspiration in life?

Life itself is a biggest inspiration. Every day I come across so many things and people who inspire me and keep me motivated.

### 8. Are there any particular causes that you are passionate about?

Any good cause that I come across.

### 9. If you had to choose three words to describe yourself....

Artist, Energetic, Versatile

### 10. What one change in society would you like to see?

Eliminate the greed and selfishness, to see more peace and harmony in the society!



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR YOUNG GEM, NIKHIL IYER

**Nikhil Iyer** (graduated 5th grade) won the **Presidential Award** in school

He was among a few selected for academic excellence in school, by virtue of school performances and teacher nominations. He received a certificate signed by none other than the President, Barack Obama! Way to go Nikhil!

## Gems Achievements!

### Rashmi Kulkarni

Our Gem, Rashmi Kulkarni won the **first prize** and the **'Best singer'** award at the 'Zara Jhoom Karaoke singing contest', held at Raritan Center, Woodbridge, NJ. She performed the song, 'Udi', from the movie, 'Guzarish'.



### Rajesh Chandrashekharan

Our Gem 'Raju' received **'Teacher of the Year'** Award for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time, from Fairleigh Dickinson University, where he has been teaching for several years.

He has an undergraduate degree in Electrical and Electronics Engineering and an MBA and a PhD in marketing. Raju is a big supporter of the mission of the **Hidden Gems** and, among other things, he assists the group in marketing related activities. Raju also has a creative passion - writing screenplays and directing (short) films. He is also on the programming committee of NJISACF - a cine fest that promotes South Asian Independent Cinema from across the world.

### Partha Mallikarjun

Our Gem, Partha Mallikarjun received the **'President's Volunteer Award'** for volunteering over 200 hours each year, in 2009 and 2010. Besides being part of the **Hidden Gems**, he volunteers his time as a marathon coach for the Non-profit organization, 'Asha for Education'. He is a volunteer with the 'American Cancer Society' and 'Nrithyanjali Institute of Dance', a non-profit organization promoting Indian art and culture. He is also actively involved in sustainability and environment protection ventures at Citigroup, where he works.



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Please send us a mail to [info@hidden-gems.org](mailto:info@hidden-gems.org) and/or [hginsider2012@gmail.com](mailto:hginsider2012@gmail.com)  
We will not share your information with third parties.

# Celebrations!

## OUR COLLEGE GRADUATES THIS YEAR



**Khushbu Solanki** graduated Magna Cum Laude from Kean University (Union, NJ) with a degree in Science and Technology - Biomedicine. She received the following honors/awards: Who's Who of American Colleges and Universities (2012), Phi Kappa Phi (2012), & Lambda Alpha Sigma (2011 & 2012). Her future plans include studying at University of Dentistry and Medicine School of Osteopathic Medicine (UMDNJ-SOM) in the class of 2016.

**Trishala Parthasarathi** graduated Magna Cum Laude from Rutgers University with a double major in Cell Biology & Neuroscience and Psychology. She worked in Dr. Mark West's laboratory for 3 years, and completed her undergraduate honors thesis on the nucleus accumbens, a structure involved in mediating the reward pathway in the brain. She is the recipient of the Tracey Shors Award for exceptional performance in research in behavioral neuroscience and the Henry Rutgers Scholar award for outstanding honors thesis. She has also been honored with memberships in Psi Chi (Psychology Honors Society) and Phi Beta Kappa (Academic Honors Society). She is going to be pursuing a PhD in Neuroscience at the University of Pennsylvania this fall.



**Ujwala Chinni** graduated from Rutgers University this May with a double major in Psychology and Human Resources. During her time at Rutgers University, she has held a research position with Dr. Wagner, studying for the linkages between the functioning of a protein receptor, ephrin-A5 and autism. A deans-list student, she has also been on the prestigious accapella team, RAAG, and has won the title of Rutgers Indian Idol. Ujwala is currently interning with a PR and marketing company affiliated with Rupert Murdoch's, STAR TV. She is currently looking to pursue a career in Human Resource Management and ultimately intends to acquire a Masters degree in HRM.



### Guest Session

**First Friday of Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, Dec**

If you would like to attend our guest sessions, please send us a mail [hginsider2012@gmail.com](mailto:hginsider2012@gmail.com)

## One of the Organizations we have supported



Our philosophy is that by sharing not only what we have, but also the tools for people to feed themselves, no one in our community needs to go hungry.

Elijah's Promise has been serving two meals a day each weekday and dinner on the weekends.



Since Elijah's Promise began in 1989, we have been helping low-income people in the central New Jersey community. From nutritious meals, to social services and health screening, to culinary arts job training and entrepreneurial training, to our own catering business, Elijah's Promise has been moving people from hunger to wholeness. Please join us in the effort to alleviate hunger and empower lives.



### HOW TO HELP

A majority of Elijah's Promise's costs are met through individual donations and money raised via the organization's fundraising and business initiatives. "We live on the support of individual donors and volunteers. Funds, friends and food," Finston said, pointing out Elijah's Promise also benefits when people "support and patronize the activities we have to generate funds." For more information on Elijah's Promise, call (732) 545 9002 or visit [www.elijahspromise.org](http://www.elijahspromise.org).

**We at Hidden Gems feel privileged to have been able to support 'Elijah's Promise',  
in our own small way, over the past few years.**





## Movie Masala



### Did you know?

\* Rajesh Khanna (as Vijay) and Navin Nischol (as Ravi) were the first choice for Yash Chopra's Deewar.

\* In 1974 at the tender age of 5, she sang the national integration song 'Ek anek aur ekta' and it became a rage on Doordarshan. The adorable song which won the National award for best educational film was rendered by Sadhana Sargam.

\* Dev Anand has signed Zaheeda for the sister's role in Hare Rama Hare Krishna. She wanted to play the role enacted by Mumtaz. Exit Zaheeda enter Zeenat Aman and the rest is history.

\* Sai Paranjpye was very annoyed with producer Basu Bhattacharya when the release of 'Sparsh' got delayed. 3 years later when she made 'Katha', she purposely named Farooque Shaikh's character, which had negative shades, Basu Bhatt.

\* Kaifi Azmi. He penned his first poetry at the age of eleven and since then there was no looking back. Kaifi Saab is regarded as one of the greatest Urdu poets of the 20th century.

\* It was during a world tour that B R Chopra's wife, Prakash chanced upon a Japanese film about a man who has a secret affair with his secretary. The idea appealed to Choprasaab and on their return a modest film Pati, Patni Aur Woh was launched. Sanjeev Kumar agreed to do it for 20 percent of the overflow if the film clicks. It went on to become one of the top grossers of 1978. The film was shot in 30 days.

\* Post Anari, composers Shankar Jaikishan agreed to do Hrishikesh Mukherjee's Anuradha for just Rs 20,000 when their official rate was a lakh of rupees. As per the script Hrishida wanted just 4 songs while the composing duo insisted for 6 songs. Pandit Ravi Shankar arrived on the scene and the four songs were composed and recorded in just 2 days.

\* Amol Palekar refused to give dates to Hrishikesh Mukherjee for Rang Birangi because he wanted to

watch the India Pakistan cricket series. Hrishida, an avid cricket fan himself, got a television set installed on the set and shot the scenes between overs and during drinks, lunch & tea break

\* Hrishikesh Mukherjee was a strict disciplinarian on the sets. Once Amitabh jokingly remarked to a costar "Kaun kehta hai hitler mar gaya". The genius filmmaker, who had heard it, incorporated the line in Golmaal.

\* Keshto Mukherjee, who enacted a drunkard to perfection on screen never consumed alcohol in real life.

\* Balraj Sahni, who did his Masters degree in English Literature and Bachelor's in Hindi, taught English and Hindi at Rabindranath Tagore's Shantiniketan before he joined BBC as a radio announcer. His film career commenced in 1946.

\* When Iqbal Begum gave birth to the third daughter in succession her husband Ali Baksh, who desperately wanted a male child, left her at a Muslim orphanage and returned home cursing his luck. But fate had something else in store. He came back to find her still there. He took her back home named her Mahjabeen who grew to be the sole bread winner of the family ....Meena Kumari.

\*Relation between Geeta Dutt and Waheeda Rehman had strained beyond limits that during the recording of Kala Bazaar, the singer bluntly refused to give playback for the actress. Finally Vijay Anand came up with the suggestion that the song would be picturised as a background score. (rimjhim, ke tarane lekar..)

\* Poet and lyricist Majrooh Sultanpuri. Majroohsaab, an unsuccessful hakim, recited one of his ghazals at a mushaira in Sultanpur. The ghazal was an instant hit. He decided there and then to take up writing as a full time profession. Majroohsaab went on to pen songs for more than 300 films.

**-Compiled by Jayshree Iyer**

# Shamm-E-Ghazal: An evening to remember

## Ghazals By:

Asha Bhosle  
Bhupender  
Chitra Singh  
Ghulam Ali  
Jagjit Singh  
Lata Mangeshkar  
Mehdi Hasan  
Pankay Udhas  
Salma Agha  
Suresh Wadkar  
Talat Aziz

## HG Singers

Abhin Parkhi  
Aditi Parulekar  
Bharat Parulekar  
Mahendra Solanki  
Partha Mallikarjuna  
Rajesh Kulkarni  
Rashmi Kulkarni  
Vrinda Khatu

## MCs

Anandi Nagarajan  
Vrinda Khatu

## Decoration

Aditi Parulekar  
Anandi Nagarajan  
Rajeshree Kulkarni  
Rashmi Kulkarni  
Seema Parkhi

## Photography & Video

Murali Ramaswamy  
Rajesh Chandrashekar  
Kiran Bambulkar

**'Yeh dil ki lagi kum kya hogi, Yeh ishq bhala kum kya hoga  
Jab raat hai aisi matwari, Phir subah ka aalam kya hoga'**

In another novel venture, Hidden Gems put together a spectacular evening, Shaam-E-Ghazal, on April 20<sup>th</sup>. Hosted at the Kulkarni residence, this was a private event (entry by invitation only) extended to HG supporters and special guests. What was initiated as a mere "trial" turned out to be an incredibly, melodious evening enjoyed by over 55 guests. Aply planned by Rashmi Kulkarni, the program director for the evening, the group performed 31 ghazals, both filmi and non-filmi, non-stop for over 3 hours.

The emcees set the stage for the evening by sharing the meaning of a *Ghazal*, and its various components: '*Matla*', '*Maqta*', '*Beher*', '*Kaafiyaa*' and '*Radif*'. With every new *ghazal* that was sung, they shared interesting trivia about the *ghazal* itself, and the *shaayar*. The *sher-o-shaayari* shared by both emcees was received very well, in particular the original compositions of Vrinda Khatu, a budding poetess in HG.

The ambience was just perfect to enjoy the soulful renditions of classics such as: *Ranjish Hi Sahi*, *Honthon Se Choo Lo Tum*, *Chupke Chupke Raat Din*, *Chaandi Jaisa Rang Hai Tera*, *Wok Kaagaz Ki Kashti*, and so many more. Every performance was received warmly by our audience. Some sang along, some were quietly enjoying the meaning and music, but most certainly all of them showed their appreciation in their applause and acknowledgements, during and at the end of the program.

Another first for this program was a webcast that allowed us to stream the entire evening live to our audience who were unable to make it to the event. Many viewers logged in and watched the program from the US and also from India.

The overwhelming positive response to this evening by way of emails and phone calls has been heart-warming and encouraging. The performers of Hidden Gems have discovered a hidden genre that they had not explored yet. It is wonderful to be part of a group that continues to evolve; finding creative, new ways to develop their ideas and talent and share it with music lovers.

**- Dr. Anandi Nagarajan**

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**Please send your comments and feedback to [hginsider2012@gmail.com](mailto:hginsider2012@gmail.com)**