

# Gauri Saksena: A Promising New Musician

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MUMBAI — She's very promising, aims at the skies, and lives for music. Meet Gauri Saksena, who has recently cut the Sagarika Music remix album "Chane Ke Khet Mein," which has created quite a stir in today's hot Bollywood remix market.

Saksena, originally from Delhi, has been based in San Jose, Calif., for several years now after marrying Sandeep Saksena, whom she terms an encyclopedia on Hindi film music. "But more than that, he is the proverbial pillar behind me. He wants me to pursue my dream of turning playback singer, and he will go to any extent to help me achieve that," she says.

She adds, "Though my goal is playback



Gauri Saksena is a talented young vocalist making her home in San Jose, Calif.

singing, Wattal Uncle [Jawahar Wattal has worked with the cream of Indian pop stars from Daler Mehndi downwards] suggested that I do a remix album first because the public, especially the younger generation, identify better today with a remix instead of a new artist's original album. Though the remix field is very competitive too, I agree that it was a good way to get noticed."

Saksena also sings with Dhun, the band formed in California by Sandeep, which focuses mostly on doing charity shows. "I have been singing for as long as I can remember," declares the artist, who received her early classical training in New Delhi's Gandharva Mahavidyalaya under institute founder Shri Vinay

Chandra Mudgal. Later, she trained with Savita Devi, daughter of Siddheshwari Devi, and most recently with Shubhangi Sakhalkar.

"Chane Ke Khet Mein," her debut album, also has Gauri featuring in the music video with Mumait Khan of "Seekh le" (*Munnabhai MBBS*) fame. But why has she chosen tracks like "Aaiye meherbaan" and "Bujh mera kya naam re" that have been repeated in so many remix albums?

Gauri concedes this, explaining, "Remixes do not always have the kind of treatment Wattal Uncle has given in this album, where we have preserved the originality and melody along with doing some really creative work."

An ardent fan of Asha Bhosle, Lata Mangeshkar, Kishore Kumar and Mehdi Hassan, Saksena loves singing classical, semi-classical, ghazals, bhajans, pop, film and folk songs. She sings in immaculate *sur* and has a fresh voice and unique style of her own.

Since the interview takes place in Mumbai and with the success of her debut album, I ask her how she can concentrate on her progress as a singer as she is flying back home to San Jose. "I will be back soon in Mumbai. I have tremendous family support and with God's grace and blessings of elders, I hope to reach levels of excellence in the competitive world of music," she signs off.

For updates on concert appearances, visit [www.gaurisak-](http://www.gaurisak-)