



**Acclaimed Iranian Photographer, Goga Bayat,  
discovers her Canadian community through Artists In Our Midst**

For the past 35 years Goga Bayat has been working extensively in the field of photography. Before immigrating to Canada in 2002, Goga Bayat had a well-established career in Iran as both a portrait photographer and stills photography for film. Her career as a professional stills photographer began in Iran in 1987 and she has worked on over 25 feature films, series' and plays. Goga is one of the founders of the Iranian Society of Still Photographers and a late 669 member from 2003-2009. She has worked with such esteemed Iranian filmmakers as Jafar Panahi, one of the most influential filmmakers in the Iranian New Wave movement and recipient of numerous awards including the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival and the Silver Bear at the Berlin Film Festival. On 20 December 2010, Jafar Panahi was handed a six-year jail sentence and a 20-year ban on making or directing any movies, writing screenplays, giving any form of interview with Iranian or foreign media as well as leaving the country.

Now firmly grounded in Canada, Goga Bayat returns to Iran from time to time. Her constant fascination with what goes on "in the back of people's minds" has led her to two solo exhibitions in Tehran. The first exhibition was based on children's doodling on the wooden school desks of Iran. The second was on love notes that Iranian people often inscribe on paper currency. To Goga, photography is not merely a medium to record the irreplaceable moments. Rather, it allows her as an artist to say, "Once upon a time, I was alive."

A member of Artists In Our Midst since 2009, Goga Bayat has found what she left behind in Iran. A community of talented, inspiring and supporting artists. Now in its nineteenth year, Artists in Our Midst kicks off with The Roundhouse Exhibit, a dynamic two-day group exhibit and sale at the Roundhouse Community Centre featuring over 60 artists. This is followed by Open Studios, a weekend of touring studios and artist-created galleries throughout Vancouver's west side. The first of such groups in Vancouver, this exciting and dynamic community event is a great opportunity to engage with artists and patrons alike.

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