

For immediate release 4 April 2011



The 19th Annual Artists in Our Midst Celebrates Art in the Community

Locations & Times

THE ROUNDHOUSE EXHIBIT

Thursday, April 28

Public viewing: 11am - 10pm

Opening Reception: 7pm - 10pm

Friday April 29

Public Viewing: 11am - 9pm

OPEN STUDIOS

Saturday April 30 & Sunday May 1st

11am - 6pm

Artists in Our Midst is a vibrant community of artists and creators dedicated to promoting visual art in Vancouver, British Columbia. Now in its nineteenth year, Artists in Our Midst kicks off with the Roundhouse Exhibit, a dynamic two day group show and sale at the Roundhouse Community Centre featuring 60 artists. Join us for the opening night reception, April 28th starting at 7pm to meet with the artists and enjoy the live music of Greg and Louise Solecki Weir with Mark Dowding.

The Open Studios weekend that follows is a self-guided tour of 35 artist-created galleries and venues throughout Vancouver's west side. Visit these unique galleries to meet with artists and explore the stories behind their artwork. While you're at it, drop in on the Lord Byng Mini School of the Fine Arts to view new works by emerging young artists who will be participating in the studio-gallery tour and the exhibit. A number of retailers along Broadway and West 10th Avenue will also be showcasing work by artists in the community. You can design your own route by using the map in the brochure, or view the website to check out which artists to visit.

If you are in the market for original art this is a great opportunity to find that perfect artwork for your home and support local artists. Art will be for sale at all events and credit cards will be accepted at the Roundhouse Exhibit.

The first of such groups in Vancouver, this exciting and dynamic community event is a great opportunity to engage with artists and patrons alike. Make time to celebrate art in the community!

For media inquiries please contact:

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**Dave Roman explores the use (or abuse) of
Canada's natural resources through photography**

Provocative imagery has always been Dave Roman's preference. On the surface his latest work "Not Quite Clear Cut" is about the use (or abuse) of the natural environment. He's drawn to the precision of the shapes formed by clear-cuts while feeling a sadness at the loss of a forest. Dave's finely detailed black and white prints acknowledge ecology as today's cause celebre and at the same time, large industries' reliance on natural resources to provide valuable materials and revenue.

However, what really fascinates Dave is the way people's points of view are so polarized. While one person may see ecological devastation, another may see selective harvesting and billions of dollars in annual income. What's worse is that we've become so extreme in our views that a middle ground where compromise, or at least the search for an agreeable solution, often seems improbable.

Dave's intention with "Not Quite Clear Cut" is to represent both sides of the argument and provide a jumping off point for discussion. Whether it's forestry, mining, aquaculture, petroleum or any other sensitive topic-of-the-day, it is his view that our culture of polarized opinion is our greatest obstacle. Would a print from "Not Quite Clear Cut" find a home in the offices of the West Fraser Timber Company as equally as the headquarters of ForestEthics? He'd like to think so. At least that way they'd have one thing in common and that would be a start.

Dave Roman is one of the compelling local artists involved in Artists In Our Midst. 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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**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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Tristan McElheron: Finding Solace in Sculpture

Tristan McElheron is a mixed-media artist whose sculptural work depicts people and animals in odd or compromised everyday situations. His brightly-coloured, whimsical pieces present the humour and irony in the follies and foibles of the human condition. Slightly voyeuristic, his work provides a glimpse into the lives of ordinary people and their pets amidst their heroic befuddlement.

Originally from Montréal, Tristan studied Studio Art at Concordia University in Montréal before moving to Vancouver in 1993. His sculptures are influenced by the work of Alexander Calder, Fernand Léger, René Magritte, and Don Martin of MAD Magazine. Living with Tourette Syndrome, his inspiration and techniques are informed by his neurological disorder. A feeling of giddiness comes over Tristan when he's building a piece and anticipating the final result. His art is therapeutic and works as a constructive outlet for the obsessive-compulsiveness often associated with the disorder. In addition to Artists In Our Midst and other group shows, he hopes to have a solo exhibition in the near future.

Tristan McElheron is just one of the 60 artists involved in this year's Artists In Our Midst. 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. 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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Elida Rey's art career is going strong in her 90's

At age 93, Elida Rey's art is a reflection of the culture she lived in for over half of her life. She was born in Montevideo, Uruguay in 1917. After completing her BFA at the School of Fine Arts in Montevideo in 1937, Elida worked with different mediums including pastels, pencil, oils, tapestry and weaving. After a few years, she returned to university to complete her Certificate in Art Education. She taught drawing in high school for many years until she moved to Vancouver in 1980, following her daughter and son.

Elida Rey returned to Uruguay every year for the summer months when the "Carnaval" takes over the country. It was during one of those trips that she started using the batik technique to capture the mystery of the "Carnaval". Her curiosity and love for the African population in Montevideo made her enter the world of the "llamadas", or "el carnaval de los negros". Her medium of choice was Batik on cloth or paper. "As I draw and apply the many layers of wax," Elida says, "my intuition takes over and at the end everything becomes an experience for the senses: vivid colors, bodies turning, and the continuous drumming of the "tamboriles" bringing it all together to an encompassing experience".

Elida Rey has had several open studios in Vancouver, a solo exhibition in the Silk Purse in West Vancouver, and was part of three collective exhibitions in Montevideo.

As this year's oldest member, the Artists In Our Midst Society is delighted to sponsor Elida Rey. 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.

Elida Rey is available for interviews in Spanish and English.

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Louise Solecki Weir's Beautiful Monsters

As one of the few sculptors specializing in portraiture in Canada, Louise Solecki Weir's art runs the gamut from the noble bronze and terracotta portrait bust created in the classical style to fanciful bronze creatures. "I love to work in clay. In addition to the ease of creating a compelling character, I like the way I can create a lively and expressive surface on my sculpture. The delicate pieces I prefer to have cast in bronze". Her sculptural work has been described as lovely and romantic by some, and unsettling and creepy by others.

"Portraits of Recovery" is the title of Louise's latest show displaying the nobility of the human form. Louise employed subjects recovering from mental illness, many of them homeless. 30 portrait busts were shown with accompanying biographies of the subjects, stories of young vibrant lives, tragic illness and eventual recovery.

Louise is currently working on a series of small bronzes of women/birds in which you can see the influence of Degas and her own years studying ballet. It is a series that attempts to explore myth, sexuality, nature and culture. In all her bronze and ceramic works she looks for duality. She likes to explore beauty in homeliness and heroism in the everyday, playfulness in the monstrous, and the "civilized" in a wild thing.

Louise Solecki Weir is one of the compelling local artists involved in Artists In Our Midst where she will be exhibiting and performing with her jazz trio on Opening Night. 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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