



Haiku Invitational Deadline Extended Until June 24, 2013

VANCOUVER, BC (JUNE 11, 2013) – “What comes to your mind when you think about cherry blossoms?” While our resplendent spring is still in your memory, there is still one event to round out this year’s cherry blossom celebrations. Budding and seasoned poets have until June 24th to enter up to 2 original and unpublished haiku within 17 syllables for submission to the **Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival’s** (VCBF) annual **Haiku Invitational**, sponsored by Leith Wheeler Investment Counsel Ltd.

Recognized by BBC World Travel as one of the world’s best cherry blossom festivals, winners will have their poems presented on the VCBF website, published in the *Haiku Canada* newsletter as well as printed in a chapbook, handfolded and bound by Lead Press and VCBF. The top poems in five main categories (Youth, B.C., Canada, United States, and International) will be featured on board Metro Vancouver TransLink buses and SkyTrains. They will also receive celebrity readings at events such as the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra’s “Tea & Trumpets” concert, hosted by Christopher Gaze, **Cherry Jam Downtown** Concert by a local media celebrity and be featured in many creative ways during the next festival in 2014.

Internationally recognized haiku and tanka poet Terry Ann Carter will judge the 2013 competition. Carter is the author of five poetry collections and four chapbooks, and gives ‘small book’ workshops across Canada, as well as at international schools in Singapore and the Bahamas.

Since 2006 the Invitational has attracted more than 6,000 submissions from 39 countries. The Festival welcomes haiku submissions that capture the essence of cherry blossoms and their relation to humans and to the natural world. Help VCBF celebrate the beauty of the city’s cherry blossom trees by entering the competition this year. To find out more about what defines a haiku poem, go to VCBF’s website for examples of haiku and for some pointers that may help you generate some ideas, www.vcbf.ca.

Take time to reminisce on what springtime and cherry blossoms mean to you, and most of all, have fun!

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About the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival Society:

The **Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival** is a charitable not-for-profit organization with the objective to sustain and renew Vancouver’s cherry tree heritage, while educating and actively engaging diverse communities in local arts and culture to celebrate the fragile beauty of the iconic cherry blossom.

For photos, more info, please contact:

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www.facebook.com/VancouverCherryBlossomFestival

www.twitter.com/OfficialVCBF

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BACKGROUND: THE HAIKU INVITATIONAL

inspired by the cherry tree

What is a haiku?

A haiku is a poem that captures a scene or experience in just a few words, suggesting the depth and intensity of the moment. Haiku use concrete images to capture this moment of intuition. Above all, haiku try to imply the emotion of the poet's experience without stating it.

What are some of the basics of writing haiku?

Haiku are plain-speaking poems where every word counts. Try to avoid using abstract or conceptual words. Use sensory images to convey experience about sights, sounds, smells or tastes.

Does a haiku have to have 17 syllables?

In Japan, the haiku is traditionally written in a single vertical line with sound symbols arranged in a 5-7-5 rhythm, but Japanese words tend to be longer than their English counterparts, so literal translations end up as English poems with fewer than 17 syllables. While some haiku poets writing in English do follow the 5-7-5 pattern with wonderful results, most view the haiku as a poem in three lines of 17 or fewer syllables.

What else should I know about the form of a haiku?

Most haiku contain a kigo, or a word or short phrase that places their poem in a season of the year. For example, if you use the word "daffodil," the reader will know you are

describing a scene in spring. The kigo links a haiku to the deeper rhythms of nature. In addition, many haiku have two parts, separated by a word or punctuation mark to create tension and resolution, or an unstated relationship between two images.

Submission deadline:

The deadline for haiku submissions is **June 3, 2013**. For more information on submitting your haiku, visit <http://www.vcbf.ca>.



Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival 2012 Haiku Invitational Winners

Best British Columbia Poem

Marianne Baharustani (Vancouver, BC)

alone at the airport
a cherry blossom
on my suitcase

Best Youth Poem

Cristina Ailoei, 14 (Botosani, Romania)

old cherry tree—
a spider weaves its cobweb
between two flowers

Best Canada Haiku

Lin Geary (Paris, Ontario)

morning tai chi—
all the prams
slowly turning pink

Best International Haiku

David Terelinck (Pymont, Australia)

school for the blind
every fingertip sees
a different pink

Best United States Haiku

Michele L. Harvey (Hamilton, New York)

cherry petals falling
the pond's oldest koi
slowly surfaces