



VANCOUVER CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL CELEBRATES NATIONAL HAIKU MONTH WITH HAIKU WORKSHOPS AND GIANT HAIKU INSTALLATION

VANCOUVER, BC (January 23, 2017) – The Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival, which celebrates Vancouver’s favourite tree and holds an internationally acclaimed Haiku Invitational contest each year, will celebrate the unique Japanese writing form in an even bigger way in 2017 with Haiku workshops and a giant interactive Koinobori public art installation featuring the haiku of Lower Mainland residents.

The Koinobori is a large, 30-foot carp-shaped art installation that will be on display at the Festival’s Sakura Days Japan Fair (SDJF) in April at the VanDusen Botanical Garden. Adorning the outside of the installation from head to tail will be hundreds of round scales made of fabric, upon which people will have written their reflections of the cherry trees in Haiku.

To help people learn how to write Haiku, award-winning poets and authors Michael Dylan Welch and Jacquie Pearce will lead three interactive and engaging “How to Haiku” workshops in inspiring locations such as Queen Elizabeth Park, Joy Kogawa House and West Point Grey Community Centre.

At the free hands-on workshops, new and experienced Haiku writers will compose their Haiku on large decorated Koinobori scales, which will be provided along with art supplies. Participants can share an original Haiku or write out one of the winning haiku from the Festival’s annual Haiku Invitational contest. The scales will be collected at the end of the workshops and then added to the installation on April 8th at the Sakura Days Japan Fair.

“Traditionally, we’ve always flown smaller Koinobori (carp streamer) windsocks at VanDusen during the Japan Fair,” said Festival creator and Executive Director Linda Poole. “The cherry trees have such a magical effect on everyone who sees them, so we’re delighted this year to provide people with an even bigger way to express their love for our favourite tree. I want to thank Leith Wheeler Investment Counsel for sponsoring this Festival programming and our amazing writers for leading these exciting workshops.”

For writer Michael Dylan Welch, the workshops will be a fun and informative way to learn Haiku and a unique opportunity for people to add their creativity to a Vancouver public art installation.

“At Queen Elizabeth Park (on February 18th) we’ll inspire people to perceive the world more keenly through their five senses and to look for ‘seeds’ of their Haiku in all the things around us that they see and smell, or touch and hear,” added Welch. “We’ll then move to the nearby Terry Salman Branch of the Vancouver Public Library, where we’ll learn more about the art and technique of writing haiku. Adding your Haiku to this wonderful Koinobori artwork is the perfect way to celebrate our beloved cherry blossoms.”

Haiku Workshop 1:

Date: Monday, February 13
Time: 10:30am to 1:30pm
Location: West Point Grey Community Centre
Leader: Angela Naccarato

Haiku Workshop 2:

Date: Saturday, February 18
Time: 1 to 5pm
Location: Queen Elizabeth Park/ Vancouver Public Library (Terry Salman Branch)
Leader: Michael Dylan Welch
To register: Click [here](#).

Haiku Workshop 3:

Date: Saturday, February 25
Time: 1pm to 4:30pm
Location: Joy Kogawa House
Leader: Jacquie Pearce
To register: Please email info@kogawahouse.com

Originally created for the Powell Street Festival, this spring the Koinobori public art installation will be presented by the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival and sponsored by Leith Wheeler Investment Counsel.

About the 2017 Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival:

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. The Festival provides a happy occasion to bring us all together outside in our urban nature with cherry trees to enjoy this awe-inspiring event. Cherry blossom viewing has become a springtime tradition in our city now as people marvel as 54 different varieties come into blossom in our city.

- 30 -

Contact:

Linda Poole	www.facebook.com/VancouverCherryBlossomFestival
Executive Director	www.twitter.com/OfficialVCBF
VCBF	https://www.instagram.com/cherryblossomfestyvr/
604-767-9044	http://vcfblog.wordpress.com/
linda.poole@telus.net	www.vcbf.ca