DECEMBER 2022 DÉCEMBRE

a little haiku rage

Seasonal newsletter for Haiku Canada's BC and Territories region

Le Bulletin d'information saisonnier pour Haiku Canada
section des Territoires et de la Colombie-britannique

in the issue
dans ce numéro

- interview / entrevue with Vicki McCullough
- haiku culture haïku
- at your calendar / à votre calendrier
- present moment... and beyond
- coming up / à l'affiche

Editorial

The silvery tingling of dissolving snowflakes in the night. As snow slowly settles here and there, it not only changes our physical landscape but also impacts our intimate world. It is when it's colder that we appreciate the most what keeps us warm—it's time to play our favourite song, to dust our framed portraits, to read (or write) an unfinished book, to reach old friends or make new ones. Paradoxically, it is also a season of great victory: another summit shovelled early in the morning for the great enjoyment of kids, another energetic exploration wearing ice cleats and an old winter coat lined with last year's adventures on our way to the mailbox, and another *pied-de-nez* to the barometer while warming up on egg nog and raclette. It is a season for the brave at heart. Therefore, I decided to take some haiku-rage (courage) and launch this regional newsletter as a means to promote our region and its literary resources. Each season will feature a haiku poet from our region in the *interview* section. For this inaugural launch, Vicki McCullough, former coordinator for this region, delights us with her reflection on her haiku life and practice. *Haiku culture* showcases a *hall of fame* and presents some fun prompts to get your writing started. *At your calendar* reminds you of important dates, contests and local meetings. *Present moment and beyond* is a space to introduce your special project, honour recently deceased poets and reflect on legacy. I am hoping this project will help us build bridges between regions, urban/remote communities, and languages. As a French-speaker in a minority setting (Yukon) I know how insidious assimilation can be, and how hard it is to pursue writing in the official language of your choice (or your heart). Therefore, although this newsletter is mainly written in English, I will list occasions and projects that will help everyone interested in keeping their culture and writing alive—or have you delve into your Grade 6 French lessons just for the fun of it! Make new friends before the 2023 Haiku Canada Weekend in Quebec ! *Et voilà* !
This newsletter is an invitation to build literary friendships and foster collaborations.

I hope you will enjoy it!

Sandra St-Laurent
regional coordinator / coordonnatrice régionale

bc-territories@haikucanada.org

Freely adapted from the thirty-five questions Proust originally answered in 1890.

1. What is your idea of perfect haiku?

One that I grasp immediately; where there are no word choice, logic, rhythm, or other flaws that impede my experience of identification with the haiku moment.

2. What is the quality you most like in a poet?

Deeply perceptive, especially when their work is tinged with compassion and/or employs humour, light- or hard-edged. Originality is an added plus.

Vicki McCullough

3. What is your greatest fear as a writer or poet?

Not living up to my own expectations and standards—and not being aware that is happening. Not unexpectedly, the things I most want to achieve in my writing include the qualities I list as what I most like in other poets or creators of all sorts. I want to feel there is at least some sign that I've dived into a subject enough to merit making comment, that I've thought about the audience, that I've been able to communicate my views with clarity of thought and with some sort of logic evident,

> *that there is a rhythm or music to the language and, there is a voice that is uniquely mine.*

Writing haiku, however, stands apart from this. The brevity and the direct experience of objective reality couched in concrete terms seem more manageable. And, with its spiritual, social and cultural aspects, being in relationship with haiku is so much more than just writing.

4. What do you most value in writing?

In endeavouring to be clear re the message, there is a certain amount of reflection required, no matter how trivial the communication subject or task is. I am more likely to say, with economy, what I actually mean and to have it received thusly, if I write it versus speak it.

5. Which writers or poets do you most admire?

Ooh, just thinking haiku and related forms, there are many, many poets I admire for their work and various other ways they've enriched my life. But I will constrain myself to: George Swede, John Stevenson, Marian Olson, and Carole MacRury, for their haiku/senryu and tanka. I enjoy Naomi Beth Wakan's unique voice in tanka and lyric poetry, and appreciate Claudia Coutu Radmore's sensibility across many forms, as well as her gentle mentoring ways. I bow to Terry Ann Carter and Marco Fraticelli's use of haibun in personal and imagined memoir. And a shout-out to "Canada's sabaki" Marshall Hryciuk and to Karen Sohne for their years of facilitating the live, collaborative experience of renku. Writers beyond these forms and our community? I'll name these three: Leonard Cohen. Ray Bradbury. Samuel Beckett.

6. What do you particularly like about your region?

That I, in southwestern British Columbia, am more connected through love of poetry to the Yukon, to the North. This is in no small way due to attending the 2016 Haiku Canada Weekend in Whitehorse. Also, the geographical diversity of the province I live in, from coastal rainforest, to mountain passes, to high desert, and more. I have lived on the BC coast my whole life: born and raised in Powell River and a resident of Vancouver since 1967. Over the years I have repeatedly traversed certain highways and byways into the BC Interior because of where friends ended up living, so built attachments to the towns of Nelson and Merritt. And through having met annually on Gabriola Island with many wonderful haiku poets, Gabriola became another destination on the map of my heart.

7. Favourite ginko walk?

Speaking of Gabriola, my favourite ginko has to be the island's Drumbeg Provincial Park—not least because I did that walk annually for the dozen years of the Gabriola Haiku Gathering (2002 - 2013). The social walk down a dusty road from Naomi Beth Wakan and Elias Wakan's home to find: sandstone ledges, fluorescent green seaweeds at low tide, sails on a sparkling blue strait, a grassy point, and, not unusually, weddings—on one occasion, a bride in red on a white horse, led through dappled shade of Garry oaks. So, a lovely balance of social intercourse, solitary openness to being present, and a gentle pressure to create.

8. Favourite season (or kigo)?

My favourite season is autumn. The start of the school year has always felt like the real New Year, with all the implicit promise. The season of my birth comes in with crisper air and a more crystalline light. I love the tree colours and the transformation from leafed to naked, opening up the sky; Thanksgiving feasting and fellowship; the playful drama, food for thought, and rituals of Halloween/All Souls/Samhain; the solemn remembrance ceremony where red poppies bloom; the sheltering-from-the-storms and soup-making of ever shorter November days; and then, in December, the many ways we illuminate the darkness of our days and longer nights.

pearls of wisdom

"The haiku community has been a wonderful 'cradle' for learning about the many dimensions of haiku and a haiku life. And so, I recommend that newbies immerse themselves in what the community has to offer: attend conferences and gatherings of all sorts, in person and online. Jump into late-night renku.

Share your gifts."

9. When and where were you happiest?

How does one single out one peak moment over seven decades of a pretty satisfying life? Impossible. But I've ruminated my way to this somewhat composite remembrance:

Circa 1996, I'm driving a dusty Toyota Corolla on BC's Highway 3 (southernmost east-west route), breezing along the Similkameen River in blazing light, windows down, an Indian cotton scarf draped over my sun-exposed arm. We are en route to or from Nelson in the West Kootenays. My daughters Robin and Molly are in the back seat and a case of audiotapes sits on the front passenger seat. We may be listening to a storytelling tape borrowed from the Vancouver Public Library—American teller Jackie Torrence, or maybe Laura Simms. Or my homemade mix of music from the store of LPs at home: I recall Joel Grey singing "Willkommen" from Cabaret, the Allman Brothers' freewheeling "Jessica," and Joni Mitchell "Why Do Fools Fall in Love?"

Undoubtedly, we will stop for buttered corn and fresh fruit at a roadside stand in Keremeos. I would drive this same route several times more some 20 years later, to visit Anna Vakar in Oliver, and consequently edit *Sisyphus: Haiku Work of Anna Vakar*.

10. What project are you currently working on (or looking forward to start)?

I am looking forward to completing all things related to haiku poet Anna Vakar's pre-death and estate donations to Haiku Canada. Ten boxes of books and periodicals were delivered to Special Collections at University of Victoria Library in 2018. There is also lingering follow-up related to the editing, writing and distribution of *Sisyphus: Haiku Work of Anna Vakar* (2017) such as getting copies into more libraries. Beware what you start!

11. When it comes to writing, how do you deal with selection/rejection ?
I submit very little, and luckily, to date, have had very little rejection. Though I've always strived to grow and do well, I do not have a burning need to write. So, if I continued to write in the face of serial rejections, it could indicate I'm doing it for love. Or, I might conclude that my time and energy may be better spent in other endeavours. I am what Barbara Sher coined a "scanner" or "creative generalist," and I'm pretty satisfied just tasting widely at the buffet of life. This seems to be a growing conviction as the years go by—perhaps a healthy form of detachment towards an eventual end.

12. What do you consider your greatest achievement?
Living to the age of 73 with what I consider great good luck and few regrets. Raising my two daughters and managing to co-sustain a 40-years-plus life partnership stand as the most meaningful and important of all my perhaps-too-many endeavours. I am grateful to my partner Randy for over 40 years of patience and support.

13. If you were to die and come back as a person or a thing what would it be?
A flamenco dancer and aficionado. . . ¡olé! Interesting that this is another art form with deep cultural roots (that are not mine), is highly collaborative and participatory, and is improvisational in the moment.

14. It's Halloween and you are invited to dress as your favourite word...
How can I decide? This is like asking a mother to state a favourite from among her children! But, for Halloween, in this moment, I choose the idea of dressing as a gentler, kinder, perhaps feminine version of the Grim Reaper. Which, led me to some Google searching, where I discovered the word *psychopomp*. Look it up! How great is that?

15. What is your greatest extravagance?
Honestly, I think it has been an extravagance that I've been able to live a relatively flexible life. I value variety, change, and personal growth, and have had the good fortune and freedom to work and play in many directions and to settle awhile where the resonances occur. At 20 years, I've stayed a while with haiku—the community of poets has had a lot to do with that staying power.

psychopomp

ˈsaɪkoʊpɑmp/Hyphenation: psy·cho·pomp

A spirit, deity, person, etc., who guides the souls of the dead to the afterlife.

source:en.wiktionary.org

16. Morning writer? Night owl or all-hours writer?

Thus far, an undisciplined, whenever-chance-strikes creative writer. Which is why haiku works for me: sometimes I'm open to "aha" moments and able to receive the poems when inspiration strikes. A good deal of creative work happens when, e.g., walking, doing dishes or other 'mindless' tasks, but one must have the discipline to capture all these uprisings on (for me) paper before they 'fleet' away. I do entertain notions of developing a disciplined writing practice to see where that may lead. (Memoir, personal essay, stage plays, and learning a lot more about poetry interest me.) It is said that to write, one must read, and I do need to read early in the day, so as not to nod off. I'm a bit of a late-night time-waster and need to make more progress toward earlier to bed, earlier to rise.

the Milky Way . . .
holding my daughter
closer

Vicki McCullough

First published: Hekinan Exposition Haiku 2009: Genkissu! Spirits Up! Hekinan World Wide Haiku Contest [Special Prize winner], Aichi, Japan.

17. When not writing you are... (fill in)

How much time do you have; how much text space? The list would be legion. I'm mostly doing things other than writing—writing freely and creatively, that is.
I write a lot, but it's largely in support of other endeavours (organizing, coordinating, reporting, proposing, sustaining relationships, etc.). However, I will mention two recent engagements that are helping shift the overall picture a little: reading at least one chapter of a novel per day, and learning Tai Chi two evenings a week.

18. A fantastic grant allows you to choose your next writing retreat destination, where would you go?

First thoughts were of Dawson City in Yukon, Newfoundland, Spain, Portugal, and the US southwest. However, I have landed on Cortes Island in BC. Hollyhock is a retreat centre there, which offers programs for personal development and social transformation.

For years, the annual course calendar was a staple among my bathroom 'literature' and I'd pour over the offerings . . . but never attended. Pricy! So, I'm hoping this grant is so fantastic that I could book an extended Hollyhock "holiday" in the off-season and do a self-directed retreat in a familiar landscape and climate. My intention would be to establish a discipline, explore processes of opening to flow, and hopefully, discover what and if I do want to write. Why not go somewhere exotic? I am too easily distracted by the newness and intrigue of foreign surrounds and culture and rarely write even haiku.

hall of fame mur de la renommée

2022 Haiku Invitational Winners
Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival

Congratulations to these distinguished poets who live in the BC and Territories region !

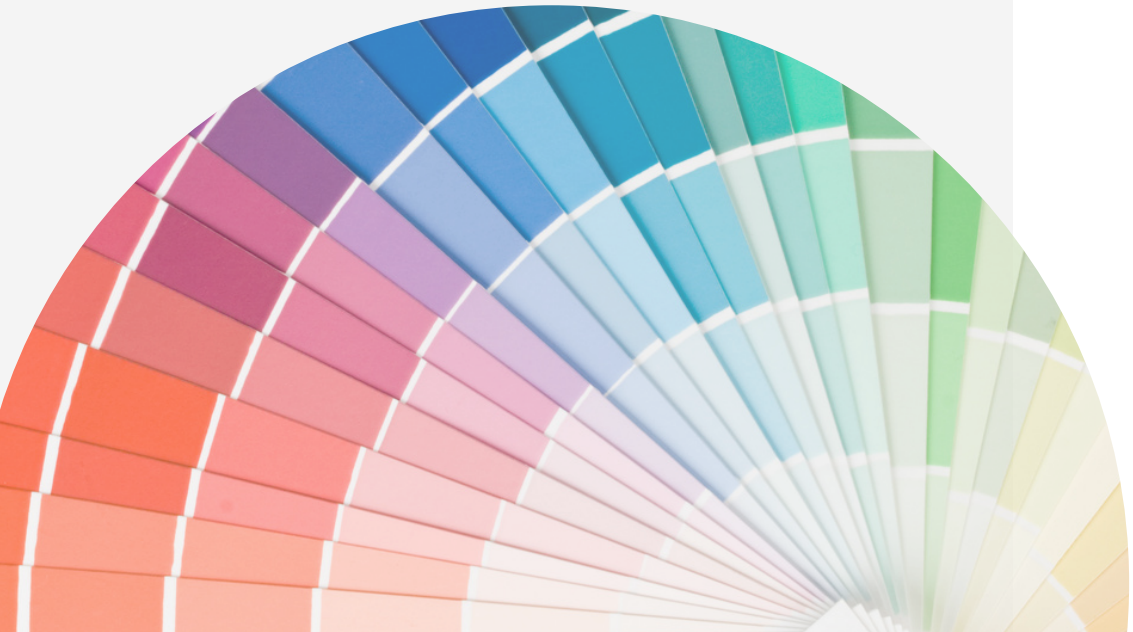
- *P. H. Fischer (top winner, Vancouver)*
- *elehna de sousa (top winner, British Columbia)*
- *Antoinette Cheung, Jacquie Pearce, Vicki McCullough (Vancouver Sakura Award)*
- *Ann Harreby, Joseph Roque, Genevieve Wynand (Vancouver Honourable Mentions)*
- *Carole Brost, elehna de sousa, Allison Douglas-Tourner, Holly Schofield, Magdalene van der Kamp (BC Sakura Awards)*
- *Marcia Burton, Michele Rule (BC Honourable Mentions)*
- *Sandra St-Laurent (Sakura Awards, Canada)*
- *Amber Lee, Age 13 (Sakura Award, Youth)*
- *Chloe Chan, Age 13 (Honourable Mention, Youth)*

solstice haiku group

The Whitehorse-based group had their renku '47 Ways' published in Haiku Canada Review Volume 16 Number 1, February 2022, also 'Another Season' appears in the Winter 2022 Vol.45:1 issue of Frogpond.

We want to celebrate your success! On veut célébrer vos succès!

bc-territories@haikucanada.org



Did you know? Saviez-vous que?

According to Diana Olvera, Behr's colour marketing manager, paint names can typically be sorted into four descriptive categories:

- visual
- geographical
- emotional
- experiential

Looking for inspiration?
How about a short stop at your local paint store to grab some paint swatches?

Too chilly for a ginko walk?
Try creating a new name for a colour you can see from your window. Or use one of the colourful examples below (found online) and try to imagine a poem including it:

- yellow-orange rubber band
- milk moustache
- frog belly
- timid absinthe
- tantalizing teal
- sulking room pink
- barcelona beige
- disco nap
- west coast ghost
- undercool
- laudable lime
- dorian gray
- stromboli chess club
- saturday on sunday
- 36 hours in Marrakesh

send us your poems for the Spring issue!

Haiku Canada corner

Betty Drevniok Award
Submit before Feb.15 2023
haikucanada.org

Prix Jocelyne Villeneuve
Dates: du 1er au 28 février 2023
haikucanada.org

Prix André Duhaime
Date limite: 31 janvier 2023
haikucanada.org

Haiku Canada Members Anthology
Submit before Jan.31 2023
Up to 5 haiku can be submitted
hcanthology2023@haikucanada.org

Haiku Canada Review
English: publications@haikucanada.org
Book reviews: reviews@haikucanada.org
Submit before Dec 31, 2022

Français: haikufrancais@haikucanada.org
Date limite: 20 déc.2022
Thème: les cimetières

REMINDER
It's that time of the year :
don't forget to renew your annual
Haiku Canada membership !!!
haikucanada.org

some calls for submissions and contests

The Heron's Net
Submit before Dec.15 2022
theheronsnest.com

Setouchi Matsuyama
International Photo-Haiku Contest
submit before Jan.11 2023
https://matsuyamahaiku.jp/contest/index_en.php

first frost
submit in Jan.2023 www.firstfrostpoetry.com

Acorn
Submit in January-February 2023
acornhaiku.com

GONG
date limite: 20 février 2023 for issue 79
association francophone de haïku
www.association-francophone-de-haiku.com

Please visit the official websites as information may change.
Veuillez consulter les sites internet officiels car l'information pourrait changer.

local meetings

Haiku Arbutus Victoria, BC, since 2014; meets quarterly; facilitated by Terry Ann Carter. For more information, contact Dan Curtis at dancurtis8@gmail.com

Solstice Haiku Whitehorse, YT, since 2014; meets monthly to share and discuss haiku; facilitated by Katherine Munro (kjmunro). Contact kjm.1560@gmail.com

Vancouver Haiku Group Vancouver, BC, since 2010; meets monthly. Visit the Vancouver Haiku Group Facebook page or vancouverhaikugroup@gmail.com

in memoriam

May their poetry forever stay with us…
Que leur poésie demeure avec nous pour toujours…

Lillian Strauss
member of solstice haiku (Yukon)

Ignatius Fay
Haiku Canada regional coordinator (Ontario)

Margaret Rutley
member of Haiku Arbutus (Victoria, BC)

Special projects

Reclaiming the landscape
Reconquérir le paysage

UPDATE: Project extended!!!
Time to participate in the "reclaiming the landscape" project following the Haiku Canada 2022 Conference. Promote a First Nations name of place in your haiku or haiga as a way to act towards acknowledgement and reconciliation through our poetry. A list of resources available to find the First Nations names used in your area is available on the submission form. Submission in English ou en français. You can either fill in the form online or by email at: sakurasandra.stl@gmail.com

Thank you for those who already submitted. A trifold and/or video of this project will be launch in May 2023.

Submit before **April 1, 2023:**
https://forms.gle/ypkSJ2GWiSmBbTxBA

Building the Haiku Canada Collection

Publishing a haiku-related book?
Donate one copy to the Haiku Canada Collection as part of your distribution plan.
Downsizing? Preparing for end of life?
You can help build the Haiku Canada Collection . . .

The Haiku Canada Collection, established in 2017, is located in British Columbia at the University of Victoria Library, within Special Collections and University Archives.

Already donated, or intending to donate, your haiku materials to another archive?
Let us know, so that site and your resources can be incorporated into the information base of the Haiku Canada archives.

Archives Committee members:
Katherine Munro
Vicki McCullough

For more information, contact us
archives@haikucanada.org

Next Issue: Spring 2023

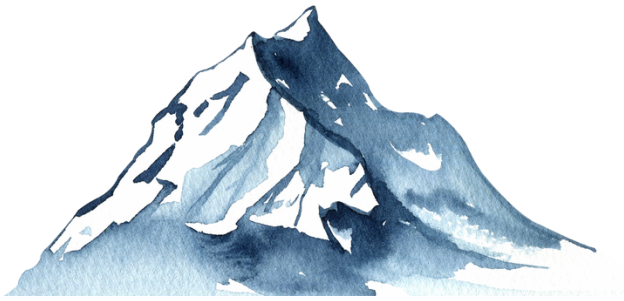
The next issue will cover the months of **March, April and May 2023** .

We want to know about your projects and meetings in your area!
Organizing a haiku-related event online? Let us know as we have many members in remote locations that could join in! Looking for rengay partners? Drop us a line and we'll add a *meet n' greet* section! Let's build this community!

Please send me your info for the *hall of fame, calls for submissions and contests, in memoriam* or for your upcoming book launch before **Feb.15 2023**.

If you are interested in answering the not-so-dreadful Proust-inspired questionnaire, please contact me as I am planning to feature one poet in every issue (season). Thank you to Vicki McCullough for being brave enough to answer it and be our very first guest! That's the spirit!

bc-territories@haikucanada.org



We would like to acknowledge that Haiku:rage was designed within the Traditional Territory of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council (Yukon Territory).
Nous reconnaisons que Haiku:rage a été réalisée sur le territoire ancestral des Premières Nations de Kwanlin Dün et du Conseil de bande Ta'an Kwäch'än (Yukon).
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