

a little haiku rage

Seasonal newsletter for Haiku Canada's BC and Territories region

volume 5

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



Editorial

No.5... in the world of perfume and fashion, it is a synonym for the well-known classic (Chanel no.5). If we think about it, winter is probably the most classy season of all. Fur, wool, velvet, a hot cup of cocoa, every texture associated with “our battle against the cold” screams luxury and class. But if I had to choose my classic, I would go up north as there is an Icelandic classic *par excellence*. Have you ever heard of Jolabokafloð aka the Christmas flooding of books? From Martha Stewart, to Country Living or the Tourism Bureau, you can learn about this national day of books where Icelanders will choose to spend the day exchanging books and reading! My kind of classic! So, here it is, my gift of reading to you, this classic-revisited, one day famous number 5 newsletter.

Thank you so much everyone for contributing to this fifth edition of the regional newsletter ! We have already covered 4 full seasons + 1 New Year together! The full circle. How was the ride? Did you enjoy? I hope so as we are getting more and more contents to share with each issue! I would like to thank all contributors and especially participants in the Haiku Challenge on Preserving. I hope that you will feel pride in having your haiku “preserved” in this winter edition. A big shout to P.H. Fischer who will inspire us to get out and walk (and write about it too). You can discover this long-distance traveler and persistent poet through the interview. It was a pleasure to interview you for this edition.

Again, this newsletter is an invitation to build literary friendships and foster collaboration. I hope you will enjoy it!

Sandra St-Laurent
regional coordinator / coordonnatrice régionale

in the issue dans ce numéro

- interview / entrevue with P.H Fischer
- haiku challenge / défi haïku
- Let's celebrate!
- special projects/ projets spéciaux
- at your calendar / à votre calendrier
- present moment... and beyond
- coming up / à l'affiche

Click on any underlined text in
the newsletter to directly
access the website



bc-territories@haikucanada.org

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

1. What do you most value in writing?

I value the visceral reaction I have when I read a great poem. I fully agree with Emily Dickinson, who defined poetry in the following way:



"If I read a book and it makes my whole body so cold no fire can warm me I know that is poetry. If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know that is poetry. These are the only ways I know it. Is there any other way?"

Emily Dickinson

2. What is your idea of a perfect haiku?

Early in my apprenticeship as a Haiku poet, I came across Ben Gaa's equation for what makes a great haiku. It has stuck with me. The perfect haiku would be simple (using ordinary language), succinct (not a syllable more than needed), and suggestive (lots of room for the reader). A favourite haiku that embodies these ideals is the 2020 Touchstone Award winner from Annette Makino:

long before language the S of the river



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

I stand in awe of poets like John Stevenson, Cor Van den Heuvel, Alexis Rotella and others who have the ability to notice the extraordinary in the ordinary:

Undressed—
today's role dangles
from a metal hanger

Alexis Rottella, Modern Haiku 13:2

a deep gorge . . .
some of the silence
is me

*John Stevenson,
Some of the Silence (1999)*

matinee
the summer sun
under an exit door

*John Stevenson, Quiet
Enough (2004)*

city street
the darkness inside
the snow-covered cars

*Cor Van den Heuvel, Haiku in English:
The First Hundred Years (2013)*

4. Which writers or poets do you most admire?

When I receive a new journal in the mail, the first thing I do is turn to the index of poets and count the Canadians.

I love seeing fellow Canucks publishing their work! I'm inspired by the writing of Antoinette Cheung and Aaron Barry (my co-editors at Prune Juice) for their fresh perspectives, ability to push the creative envelope, and their sometimes subversive humour.

I also love the work of Jacquie Pearce, kjmunro, Geneviève Wynand, Michael Dudley, Roland Parker, George Swede, Michael Dylan Welch, Terry Ann Carter, Lynne Jambor, and many other Canadian haiku poets.

Then I search the index for other favourites including Victor Ortiz, John Stevenson, Robin Smith (rs), Kat Lehmann, Bryan Rickert, Kala Ramash, Ben Gaa, Pippa Phillips, Scott Mason, and, for haibun, Lew Watts and Roberta Beary. Honestly, I could go on and on with this list of favourites!

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

Plagiarising another poet. The danger's real. I read a lot of poems and can't remember them all. When writing my own poems, I sometimes wonder how much "inspiration" I draw from the shadows of great poems lurking in the corners of memory.

6. What is currently your favorite short form?

I hang my writing hat on one of three hooks: haiku, senryu and haibun. When choosing a format, I listen closely to the wishes of the poem. That said, I have a bias for monoku.

**When the poem suggests it
would like to stretch out for a
bit,
I'm always quick to say,
"yes please! Lie down, make
yourself comfortable!"**

7. Favorite season (or kigo)?

As I write, I'm firmly entrenched in my fifty-third autumn and I continue to be humbled by how much this season has to teach me about the process of honouring what has come to fruition/completion, acknowledging the transience and impermanence of life, and letting go with dignity.

The leaves pirouette to the ground, geese fly south, the annuals in our garden bow down to the earth, and the darkness compels us inside our homes, and further inside ourselves. For me, autumn best embodies the Japanese aesthetics I most aspire to incorporate in my haiku:

8. Morning writer, night owl or all-hours writer?

I rarely schedule a time to sit down and write. Instead, I carry my trusty little notebook and fountain pen everywhere I go (except the shower), ready to jot down fragments, phrases, whole poems, or notes, wherever and whenever inspiration strikes. Sometimes it alights upon me at 3:00am.

Try as she might, my wife Linda hasn't found a foolproof way to keep my muse out of our bedroom!

10. Funniest/strangest time when you were mistaken for another person? Who? When? Where?

An exceedingly beautiful woman once approached me and said, "Heavens! You're Brad Pitt! I've been dying to meet you!" Then I woke up.



Yūgen (mystery and concealment)
Wabi-Sabi (imperfection and impermanence)
Ensō (void and absolution)

9. Which words or phrases do you most overuse?

It's a tie between cherry blossoms and the moon. To prepare for the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival's Haiku Invitational, I usually write a dozen cherry blossom poems before deciding on the top two to submit.

Many of the remaining poems usually end up getting submitted to journals, so I've got a few too many cherry blossom poems out there and will probably have more. I love the VCBF too much to stop entering.

And I'm definitely a Moonie. As soon as I pledge a moratorium on moon poems, another one sneaks in through the bedroom window.



12. When and where were you happiest?

I was (and am) most happy when I am fully present in the moment: my walking pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, at Linda's side when she gave birth to our two boys, making love, enjoying a meal with family and friends, writing/editing a poem, or enraptured by the precipitating "haiku moment."



14. favorite ginko walk?

My life is a ginko! Many years ago, I committed to live as lightly on the earth as possible. So I walk everywhere I can.

“ I love walking as much as I love haiku. They are a perfect pairing. ”

Whether I'm walking to the office, enjoying our evening after-dinner stroll along the seawall, or indulging in a saunter across Spain's Iberian Peninsula, I always carry my mini notebook and fountain pen, ready to transcribe all the haiku moments I have. Most of my first drafts happen while I'm out walking.

11. What is your greatest extravagance?

In 2018, I took 6 weeks off of work to walk 900 kms from St. Jean Pied de Port in France to Santiago de Compostela and then beyond to Finisterre and Muxia at the Atlantic Ocean. It was an extravagant indulgence but, oh, so very good for the soul. If you haven't done the Camino yet, go!

13. What do you consider your greatest achievement?

With the help of my life partner and soul-mate, Linda, I am most proud of raising two boys who are now beautiful young men. Their embodiment of our shared values of compassion, inclusion, service, social justice, and love of all sentient beings is making the world a better place, and swelling their parent's hearts with gratitude. Nothing else comes close.

"every day is a journey, and the journey itself is home."

Basho



15. Could you share how you discovered poetry? Or haiku in particular?

After watching The Dead Poet's Society as an undergrad, I quickly formed a poetry reading group that met every chance we could to read Keats, Shelley, Dickinson, E. E. Cummings, Whitman, and the other classics.

While living in Toronto in the mid 90s, I read Alan Ginsberg, Charles Bukowski, Richard Brautigan, and many Canadian poets, including Milton Acorn, Margaret Atwood, Gwendolyn MacEwen, Earle Birney, Irving Layton, and my favourite, Al Purdy. I even gathered up the courage to write to Al Purdy, and he wrote back! All this time, I was writing my own terrible poetry and selling photocopied leaflets of my poems door to door for a loonie to make rent. It worked! Until I went back to my customers with a second round of poems.

One day, I bought a copy of H.G. Henderson's Haiku in English at a used bookstore on Harbord Street. I began dabbling in writing haiku myself. Then life happened, and the tap turned off on writing much poetry until 2018, when I vowed to write at least one haiku a day while walking the Camino. It wasn't until early 2021 when I joined Haiku Canada, the Vancouver Haiku Group, and HSA's mentorship program that my commitment to writing and publishing haiku flourished.



16. Anecdote about your first haiku that you would like to share?

I was first published in Hedgerow #134 in March 2021. Caroline Skanne selected three of my poems, including:

last night's snow
lingers here—
plum tree

I wrote it at sunrise one morning in late winter while out for a walk along Vancouver's seawall. Much of the snow from the previous night's snowfall was melting in the early sunlight and rising temperature.

But this plum tree, standing in the shadow of a building, held its tufts of snow like a preview of the glorious blossoms just about ready to burst forth.

"I love this poem for its simple, shasei-like qualities."

17. When it comes to writing, how do you deal with selection/rejection?

I try to never get too high (with achievements) and too low (with rejections). I ask myself: do you still enjoy writing? If the answer is "yes," then that enjoyment is its own reward. Lao Tzu in the Tao Te Ching said, "Do your work, then step back. The only path to serenity."

18. What is your relation to music while writing?

While out walking/writing, I'm usually listening to the natural soundscape surrounding me. When writing first drafts at home, I enjoy listening to just about anything (other than country music). If I'm editing or writing to a deadline, there are only two songs allowed in my ears. Both are from the soundtrack for the 1992 movie *Baraka: Varanasi Sunrise* by Michael Stearns, and *The Host of the Seraphim* by Dead Can Dance.

19. Which talent would you most like to have?

More of a superpower, actually. I'd love to have an invisibility cloak that would allow me to observe wildlife up close without scaring the creature away. Just imagine cozying up next to a Great Blue Heron on a dock and sitting zazen with him/her for an hour! It'd also come in handy in social situations when my introverted self needs a time out.

20. If you were to die and come back as a person or a thing, what would it be?

I've put in a request to come back as a cockroach. Fortunately, I'm the only one standing in that line. I understand why. A cockroach isn't exactly the most charming of creatures, but it does score high on perseverance, resilience and grit. Also, should there be a nuclear apocalypse, the humble cockroach (apparently the only creature able to survive such a catastrophe) will rise to its noble calling of carrying forward the legacy of better times.

21. A time-traveling voucher is offered to you. Where/when would you go?

I already spend way too much time in the past and the future. I'd love to use the voucher to fully explore the present moment. To be here now. It's enough. More than enough. It's such a simple, ever-accessible journey, and yet I travel ~~there~~ here here too infrequently.

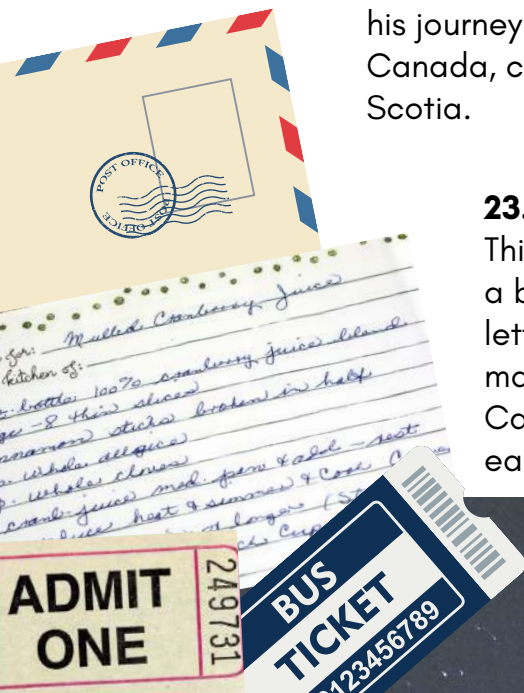
on purpose

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

It would have to be a walking/writing retreat. Perhaps retracing Basho's steps of his journey to the deep north. Or, if I got started now, walking/writing across Canada, culminating in my attendance at the 2024 Haiku Weekend in Nova Scotia.

23. Describe your favourite/usual bookmark.

Things I've used as bookmarks: ripped pieces of tissue paper (most often), a band-aid (unused), a plastic knife, postcards, business cards, a love letter, an expired transit pass, elastic bands, a seagull feather, a dried maple leaf, a U2 concert ticket, a photo of the boat my father sailed to Canada on, my mom's recipe for Christmas stollen, a Visa bill, a foam earplug, other books, my library card, and a dead silverfish (self placed).



24. What do you particularly like about your region?

I grew up in Hamilton, Ontario. A great, gritty city that's still in my bones. But when our young family moved to Vancouver over twenty years ago, my spirit soared. Rarely a day goes by that I'm not inspired by the lavish beauty of the coast mountains, the Salish Sea, the lush vegetation, and the frequent sighting of eagles, seals, herons, and the occasional porpoise, whale, deer or even bear. As an uninvited, first generation Canadian born of immigrants, I am grateful to the first stewards of this stolen and unceded land, the Coast Salish peoples: the Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish nations who continue to call all of us to live in harmony with the beauty that surrounds us.

Food favorites: Chana Bhatara from any of the amazing Indian restaurants in Surrey, BC. To wash it down, I'd quaff a Fat Tug IPA from Driftwood Brewing in Victoria. Oh, and some vegan Earnest Ice Cream from Vancouver for dessert. Hey, YOLO!



You Only Live Once

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

managing a government-funded employment program at the YWCA to help mature jobseekers (55+) find sustainable employment in occupations they find meaningful, are skilled at, and enjoy.

pearls of wisdom

- Read and write as much haiku as you can. Then share what you've written.
- Ask for advice, feedback, tips, and eventually, publication.
- Avail yourself of the myriad opportunities to connect with other poets.
- Join a local haiku group or one of many online groups.
- Take part in anonymous workshopping of poems. Enter kukais and contests.
- Attend a haiku conference. Join the Haiku Society of America's mentorship program.
- Reach out to haiku poets you admire. Most will be happy to hear from you.

“ The haiku community is a welcoming, friendly, and helpful group of wonderful human beings. There is a place at the table for you ”



26. What project are you currently working on?

Along with the Prune Juice editing team of Antoinette Cheung and Aaron Barry, I'm putting the finishing touches on Issue #41 of the journal; ready to hit the publish button on December 1st.

Annette Makino and I feel honoured to be editing this year's Seabeck Haiku Getaway Anthology, to be published in 2024.

Finally, I'm currently having fun creating short sound collages that incorporate a variety of sound samples, music, and spoken word haiku. I think of these as haiga for the ears. I'll start publishing these #audioku soon on Instagram (@p.h.fischer)

27. Where can we learn more about you or about your projects?

Let's connect on Instagram where you'll find me @p.h.fischer.

Feel free to email me at phfischer@gmail.com

A few other links:

- Meet the new [Prune Juice Editorial Team](#)
- [New to Haiku, Advice for Beginners: P. H. Fischer](#)
- Meet [Vancouver Haiku Invitational Winner 2022](#)
- [Haiku Dialogue: A Good Wander](#)



dad's toolshed—
the taste of iron
in my blood

P.H. Fischer
The Heron's Nest, 03/22

Walk. Write. Read. Repeat. Living the dream!



Preserving
Conserver

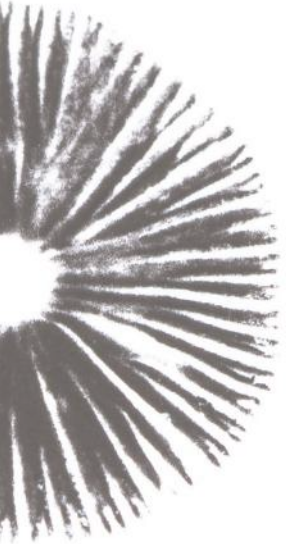
This Fall you were invited to use all your senses to find examples of “preserving” that might be your own harvest, your memories, our resources, world peace or mental health. Here are some fine examples of your offerings.

Cet automne, vous étiez invité.e à explorer à l’aide de vos sens le concept de “conserver” que ce soit votre récolte, vos souvenirs, nos ressources, la paix dans le monde ou notre santé mentale. Voici quelques exemples partagés.

pressing maple leaves
in the pages of a book
squashed fly

Michele Rule





pears in brandy
jars tucked up in the hay
for a cold night

Michele Rule

harvest
wild mushrooms
behind the supermarket

*Magdalene van der Kamp
Haiku Canada Members Anthology 2022*



blood pressure cuff
left on the table
first frost

Magdalene van der Kamp

on the last night of
hanukkah
menorah blazing:
prayers for peace

Cheryl Ashley

islanders gather by the sea her ashes

Cheryl Ashley



HALL OF FAME / MUR DE LA RENOMMÉE

Congratulations to these distinguished poets who live in the BC and the Territories region!
Félicitations aux poètes de notre région qui se sont illustrés.es récemment!

2023 Haiku Invitational (Cherry Blossom Festival- BC)

Category Canada

- Honourable mention: Charlotte Hrenchuk, Yukon

Category British Columbia

- Top winner: C Jean Downer
- Sakura awards: Allison Douglas-Tourner, Laura Kelsey, Jan Stretch
- Honourable mentions: Carole Brost, George Dueck, Michel Rule, Amity Skala

Category Vancouver

- Top winner: Antoinette Cheung
 - Sakura awards: Antoinette Cheung, P.H. Fischer, Jacquie Pearce, Genevieve Wynand
 - Honourable mentions: Peter Anderson, P.H. Fischer, Kathy Mak, Joseph Roque, Sarah Szymanski, Ayrin Wong, Genevieve Wynand.
- Full list of winners can be found on the [website](#)



Did you know?

kjmunro curates a weekly column for The Haiku Foundation called [Haiku Dialogue](#) - submit your work & join the conversation!



Haiku Canada Members Anthology 2024

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Members of Haiku Canada are invited to participate in the 2024 Members' Anthology.

Each member can submit up to five (5) unpublished or previously published haiku. Of these, one (1) haiku will be selected for the anthology. Edits may be suggested. For haiku that have been previously published, please include the credits. This year's anthology is being co-edited by Sandra St-Laurent and kjmunro.

The submission period is from **December 1, 2023 until January 31, 2024.**

Appel de textes

Haiku Canada invite ses membres à participer à l'anthologie 2024.

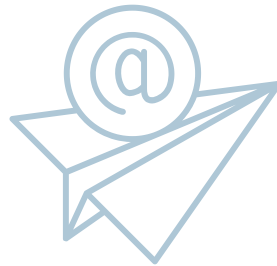
Chaque membre peut soumettre jusqu'à cinq (5) haïku originaux ou déjà publiés.

Un seul haïku sera choisi pour publication dans l'anthologie. Certaines modifications pourraient être suggérées.

Merci d'indiquer la référence complète pour tout haïku déjà publié.

L'anthologie 2024 sera co-éditée par kjmunro et Sandra St-Laurent.

Les haïkus seront acceptés du **1er décembre 2023 au 31 janvier 2024.**



Send tin an email/ envoyer dans un courriel
hcanthology2024@haikucanada.org

Or by mail / ou par la poste
Mike Montreuil
1409 Bortolotti Crescent
Ottawa, ON, K1B 5C1 Canada



In Memoriam

It is with great sadness that we learned about the passing of

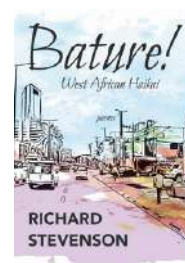
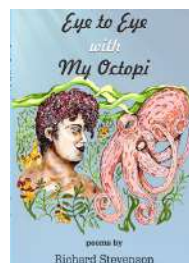
Richard Stevenson

Haiku poet and writer, *British Columbia*

Information on his celebrations of life:

<https://www.pacificcoastcremation.com/richard-william-stevenson/>

Note: we had planned to feature the last 2 books in the current issue. However due to his passing we couldn't conduct an interview. You will find below the covers of his last 4 books: *Bature* was already featured in our Spring issue and *Eye to Eye with my Octopi*, in our Fall issue.



some calls
for submissions and contests



December décembre

Journals and other publications

- [Bottle rockets Press](#), Nov.1-Dec 15
- [The Heron's Nest](#), December 15
- [L'ours dansant](#) no.38 thème libre, avant le 10 janvier
- [Presence](#), Dec. 15- Jan.31
- [Wales Haiku Journal](#), Dec.1-31



NEW: Links are now active: click on any underlined section to access websites! visit the official websites as information may change.

NOUVEAUTÉ: Les liens sont activés. Cliquez sur les sections surlignées pour accéder aux sites! Consulter les sites internet officiels car l'information pourrait changer.

January janvier

Journals and other publications

- [Whiptail Journal](#), Jan. 1-7
- [First Frost](#), January 1-31
- [Failed Haiku](#), Feb 10-25
- [Acorn Haiku Journal](#), Jan-Feb
- [Akitsu Quarterly](#), Jan
- [Seashores](#), Jan

February février

Journals and other publications

- [Cicada's Cry](#), Feb 1-15
- [Prune juice](#), Feb. 1-29
- [Chrysanthemum](#), Feb
- [Kingfisher](#), Feb

Children / enfant



[JAL Foundation's 18th World Children's Haiku Contest 2023-2024](#)

Theme: FAMILY

Send haiku before JAN. 15, 2024

Click on the link (underline) to register



local meetings

Haiku Arbutus

Victoria, BC, since 2014;
meets quarterly;
facilitated by Terry Ann Carter.
Contact Dan Curtis at dancurtis8@gmail.com

Vancouver Haiku Group

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

Solstice Haiku

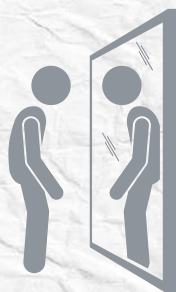
Whitehorse, YT, since 2014;
meets monthly to share and discuss haiku; facilitated by
Katherine Munro (kjmunro).
Contact kjm.1560@gmail.com

Next Haiku Challenge

Theme: Déjà vu

Send up to 3 haikus or tankas
Envoyez jusqu'à 3 haïkus ou tankas
Before/ Avant Feb.15 2024

bc-territories@haikucanada.org



As Spring will be around the corner we will experience the awakening of life again and a certain concept of *déjà vu*. The term "Déjà Vu" is derived from the French word for "already seen".

This term was first used by Émile Boirac, French philosopher in 1876. Déjà vu has been presented as a reminiscence of memories, "These experiments have led scientists to suspect that déjà vu is a memory phenomenon. We encounter a situation that is similar to an actual memory but we can't fully recall that memory". *Source: Wikipedia*

Comme le printemps sera au détour et que la vie s'éveille, nous aurons peut-être cette impression de déjà vu. C'est le thème du prochain défi, terme inventé par le philosophe Émile Boirac en 1876. Racontez-nous vos déjà vu...



Building the Haiku Canada Collection

archives@haikucanada.org

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 (Yukon)
Vicki McCullough (BC)



Next Issue *Spring 2024*
prochain numéro *printemps 2024*

regional
online reading



Use QR code or click here to get
your zoom link

Utilisez le code QR ou cliquer ici
pour obtenir le lien zoom

It's a wrap!
BC and the Territories
regional haiku reading
lecture régionale de haïku pour la Colombie-Britannique et les Territoires

**online (zoom)
Sunday/dimanche
Dec.17.2023**

BC 1-3 pm 13h-15h	YT/NWT/AL 2-4 pm 14h-16h	Sask/Man 3-5 pm 15h-17h	On/Qc/Nun 4-6 pm *6-18h
NB /NS/ PEI 5-7 pm 17h-19h	NFLD 6:30-8:30 pm 18h30-20h30		

- warm up with haiku friends around our virtual fireplace
- discover local talents from BC and the Territories
- surprise...

**RSVP before December 15
Réservez votre place avant le 15 décembre**

bc-territories@haikucanada.org

The next issue will cover the months of
March, April and May 2024

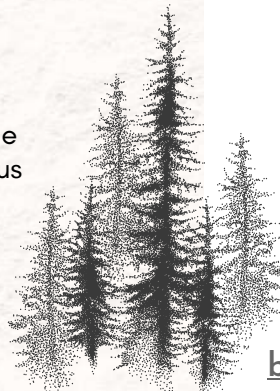
We want to know about

- your special projects and meetings in your area
- book launches and readings
- awards, publications and achievements
- in memoriam

Please send your info before **February 15, 2024.**

If you are interested in answering the not-so-dreadful Proust-inspired questionnaire, please contact me as we will feature one poet in every issue. Thank you to **P.H Fischer** for sharing precious moments and tips with us! Priority will be for promoting local poets from the BC and the Territories.

Hoping to feature your success and inspiration soon!
Happy winter ! Bon hiver!



Sandra St-Laurent
regional coordinator
coordonnatrice régionale

bc-territories@haikucanada.org