

PRESS RELEASE: INTERNATIONAL HAIKU FESTIVAL GHENT 13 -19 SEPTEMBER 2010

The world top of haiku poetry is coming to Ghent for an International Haiku-Festival 'Haiku in – Ghent – in Haiku'. Viadagio vzw is a young association promoting a durable, conscious, esthetical, social, respectful and harmonic lifestyle. The (European) Ghent carfree Sunday on 20 September has inspired Viadagio vzw to organise a major international haiku poetry event with the support of Stad Gent (City of Ghent), Waterwegen en zeekanaal nv (Waterways and sea canal nv), Poëziecentrum (Poetry Centre) and Haikoe-centrum Vlaanderen (Haiku-centre Flanders). Around 35 poets from Japan, Canada, The United States and Europe have been invited to put the cultural city of Ghent into haiku and related verse forms in 15 languages.

Flemish-Dutch haiku contest and workshops

From 21 July to 21 August a Flemish-Dutch haiku contest is organised for the wider public. The contest is organised by Viadagio vzw (East Flanders), Haikukring De Fluweelboom (Haiku circle De Fluweelboom) (West Flanders) en Haikukern Zeeland (Haiku core Zeeland) with the support of the Stedelijke Openbare Bibliotheek Gent (Public City Library of Ghent). . In the framework of the festival two haiku workshops are organised. Frans Terryn and Jean-Marie Werrebrouck (Haikukring De Fluweelboom) give a workshop in the Saint Bavon Abbey in Ghent on 5 September. Lut Lievense gives a creative workshop in Oostkapelle (Zeeland) on 21 and 22 July.

Welcome evening

On Monday 13 September the delegation from abroad is welcomed with an evening meal in room Panda, Oudburg 38, Gent. For their accommodation the haiku poets will enjoy the hospitality of the local population in Ghent for their accommodation.

Haiku boat trips

On Tuesday 14 and Wednesday 15 September participants make haiku boat trips (*ginko*) by means of authentic wooden boats steered by manpower. The lyrical Ghent inner waterways form the inspiration source for the poets who will put the cultural city into verse. In the historical "Het Toreken" (Little Tower) of the Poetry Centre poets will write their haiku and related verse forms. The multilingual poems will be translated into English and Dutch with the help of literary translators and prepared for publication.

International Haiku Day

On Thursday an International Haiku Day is organised in the Poetry Centre on the Friday Market in Ghent. In the morning keynote lectures will be given by Jim Kacian (US), director The Haiku Foundation and owner of Red Moon Press, the largest Publishing House in the English-speaking world, and by Ban'ya Natsuishi, director of World Haiku Association. Musical interludes will be played by guitar virtuoso Alexander Makay. In the afternoon workshops will be given by guests from Romania, the United Kingdom, Italy, Russia and Belgium. The wider public is invited to the lectures and workshops. The delegation of poets is taken round the documentation centre of the Poetry Centre.

Welcome in City Hall

On Friday 17 September the delegation from abroad from 20 countries will be welcomed by the municipal authorities in the City Hall. After that the guests may take part in a guided tour in the historical centre of Ghent. Viadagio vzw in the meantime prepares the publication of a multilingual haiku festival collection in which two poems of each poet will be published. The festival haiku will also be printed on banners which will be exhibited along the Ghent waterways.

Panel discussion and gala dinner

On Saturday morning a panel discussion takes place in the Achilles Mussche room of the Stedelijke Openbare Bibliotheek Gent (Public Ghent City Library) for the wider public. John Vervoort (De Standaard and Poëziekrant) will be the panel discussion leader. Panel members come from the United States, Japan, Romania, Italy, Belgium, and The Netherlands.

On Saturday evening a presentation takes place of the multilingual haiku festival collection in room Panda with musical performance. In the framework of the festival a Flemish-Dutch haiku contest is organised for the wider public with 'Along the water' as its theme. The result of the contest will be announced in room Panda. The laureates, sponsors, host families and volunteers will be invited to a festive gala dinner with musical interludes.

European carfree Sunday

On 19 September, carfree (European) Ghent Sunday, participants take leave from their host families after a Sunday lunch. Haiku walks and haiku boat trips (ginko) are organised for the wider public along the inner waterways and haiku festival banners. From 19 September the wider audience may enjoy the festival haiku open air exhibition till the end of the water tourism season on 20 November.

For reservation for the International Haiku Day and International Panel Discussion contact:

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For more information about the festival activities surf to
:<http://www.viadagio.be/index.php?keuze=aktiviteiten>

Note for the press:

“Haiku in – Gent – in Haiku” is an initiative of Viadagio vzw with the support of Stad Gent, Waterwegen en zeekanaal nv, Poëziecentrum and Haikoe-centrum Vlaanderen.

The winning poems of the Flemish-Dutch haiku contest ‘Along the water’ can be published free of rights on 18 September.

If you would like to attend the International Haiku Day (16 September) or the International Panel Discussion’ (18 September), you can reserve a place with Diederik De Beir. E. diederikdebeir@gmail.com

For more information about the festival contact Ip Man, chairman of Viadagio vzw by e-mail ipman@belgacom.net or by telephone 09 225 07 86 (general) and 056 25 86 37 (programme).

