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RADIX is a student-led, student-centred magazine providing literary and artistic space for expression on spiritual themes, produced by the McGill Office of Religious and Spiritual Life. Visit us at: mcgill.ca/morsl/radix-magazine
Dear Radix Reader,

Everything and everyone has a path to follow. From the planets on their orbits to a line of ants marching, all things move onward. Every entity in this cosmos, tiny or gigantic, is a wanderer. We creatures, however, who tread upright across this sublunary world know our trajectories are less defined than those of the celestial sphere’s denizens. Fumbling, novice navigators like us are prone to taking wrong turns. Sometimes we get lost or otherwise end up off-route, but is this really so wrong? The idea — or physical presence — of a “Path”, whether followed or not followed, has been integral to spiritual discourse and practice for as long as such things have been recorded. Consider, for example, the labyrinth: the twisting passage toward the centre is as much a journey into the heart and mind, toward knowledge of oneself and one’s place in the world. Arriving at the end of the path, the empty centre of the maze, the Way ahead stands clear. And so the wayfarer, step by step, stumbles into wisdom.

The works collected in the present issue speak to the varieties of paths and ways our peers have taken in the course of their journeys in art, faith, love, and more. May their words and images, like the labyrinth’s curves, be cause for contemplation.

Thank you, and enjoy. How lucky it is that our paths have crossed.

Sincerely,
Lucas G.
Radix Project Student Staff

RADIX would like to thank Rakshitha Ravi for the art featured on this issue’s cover. Rakshitha is a first year student in computer engineering who finds her passion in painting landscapes.

The painting at the bottom of the previous page is “À Vous”, by Lucy Pevensy. Lucy is a painter from China interested in communicating with people through art.
University can be one of the most exciting and rewarding times in our lives, but it can also overwhelm us with choices. Navigating through it all can leave us feeling lost, with little time for developing practices that make us feel grounded and connected. Fortunately, you don’t have to journey alone. Talk to others, listen to their story, learn from them. Take time to explore what works for you. As you forge your own habits for inner wellness, share your story with other students. Looking for a place to have these conversations? Come join us at MORSL! Whether you’re a spiritual seeker, secular humanist, devoutly religious, agnostic, atheist or just plain curious, MORSL is here to help every student, no matter what path you’re on. Keep up with our latest offerings on our website and social media, or just drop in any time from 10am-4pm. We’re looking forward to getting to know you better!
Not when the fog lifts early
and settles late
on the sea-line;
nor when salmon sears over butter
and garlic
and you
answer my letters in iambic verse.

Even with the smiling relatives;
the classmates;
summer vacations
and Christmas dinners celebrated;
New Years resolutions
and newly
painted fences;
all the vacant parking lots and
dewy morning
kisses
and hesitant brushes of writhing
skin—
in these
I find only fruit:
Imperfect and fermented. Under warm
autumnal leaf
all I find
no longer tastes.
Not when salmon sears on a bed of
butter
and pine nuts
and you
answer my letters in verse.
Not when the fog lifts early
lending view
of distant islands.
Not when each day comes in
and washes out
like this one.

Clayton Longstaff is a poet and writer of short stories living in Montreal, QC.

Photography opposite is by Azed Irem. Azed is a second-year student from Istanbul who finds inspiration in cultures and literature.
Her prayers were rushed. They had words without emotion. However, she had never-ending faith that only Guru Sahib could save her.

One afternoon after another rushed Ardaas, she drifts off to sleep. She dreams. For a long time she treads upon mountains and difficult terrains. A stranger who doesn’t even look like a Sikh approaches her and points towards a room saying “Guru Sahib is there”. He insists that she should go immediately and see Him. He says it is a long-overdue meeting. She is extremely tired and surprised as she is not expecting any of this. Flinchingly, she enters the room and finds Guru Sahib’s Parkaash. She prostrates. Lo and behold! Things unsaid in Ardaas earlier find expression without any barriers and without any hindrance. The soul speaks! It asks for forgiveness for not being loyal. It asks for rescue and refuge. The emotions arise from the core of her being.

The dream finishes.

She feels much lighter, as if a mountain were lifted from her chest. Her sincere faith had found connection. Much-needed help from the Beloved was on the way.

Glossary:

Guru Sahib – Guru Granth Sahib [the Eternal Living Guru]
Ardaas – A formal Sikh prayer
Parkaash – Guru Granth Sahib seated on a royal throne for an audience.
UNTITLED

Dust floats through the air
Remnants of glories past,
Rulers and gold, war and blood
All vanished, drifting, lost in time

Along an old bookshelf
I brush my fingertips
They hold fragments of temples and churches
Ancient ruins on my hands

I whisper, thank you
My breath picks up the dust
And carries my prayers
Into the universe

I hope something more permanent
Would listen
WE NEED A NEW

I saw your post,
You said we need a new King, a new Bonhoeffer
Why did you do that? Just post?
Do you believe our times need something better?

I saw your post, is that the thing you wanted to say?
All that you have to say?
Are we only brave online?
I guess if you posted the position
You assume someone else will take it, but not you.

I assume, you are not suggesting yourself
I am asking because;
Because I want to know for myself
Am I also only brave behind a screen,
Casting jokes, sending critiques out to
My algorithm assembled audience?

We once wondered if we would have an audience
And now we have one designed for us
But what can it do?
Because if we are not going to, it must
Do something
It must stand tall in the face of fear.

It must be remembered that as ridiculous as tyrants seem
Broken from the norms, they can still conjure fear
Buffoons can still command armies
Clowns can have sycophants
Up against the face of power, pain and fear
The decent can still be made to crawl
And the holy to curse.

Your call is for;
A new King! A new Bonhoeffer! Two!
Who stood up to live more fully
Who stood up to die.
Who stood up like the one they followed
Who stood up to give abundant life
In the face of power, pain and fear
Who stood up to die.

Jeffrey Mackie is a Montreal poet and Anglican seminarian.
ON MEGABUS SOMEWHERE

I am knowing the great nowhere, because that is real. Might be all there is.

Always between and along, it threads the air and the rock together. By day, it meets all of the lost bits of the land, and by night, it joins them.

Whether dry or plump, these grasses are flanked by strange water flowing. To one end, the sun flings itself from the deep. Of course it then crashes into oblivion on the other.

There is an understanding across this trail. It stretches, but it is not for me.

Still, by the brightness of the leaves and by the way they bristle, I am asked here to be overcome. I leave this place to its grandeur.

Learning to trust her instincts, she hopes to go where and when she says she will.

Illustration by the poet.
SHOW ME THE WAY

Pure white dove
Set me free
Fly away
Away from me

Pure white dove
Set the course
Which will bring
Bring me the force
To live true
And care for
Those who need
Need it most.

Oh, lovely dove,
How do you fly so high
Up there, in the sky?
How are you so
Carefree
of the ground below?
Teach me this spirit
And liberty
So I may revere it
And possibly,
End up free
Like a pure, white dove
As it flies
Over the Bodhi tree.

GETTING LOST

I am
Who I want to be
And I get lost
Sometimes
When I’m on my way.

I shall be
Who I foresee myself to be
With slight changes
Occurring,
Many times
Along the way.

Equanimity
Is something
For which
I wish
To apprehend –
Taking in things
Without coveting
Their possession.

Jonah Dabora is a 4th year medical student who wishes to share his words with those willing to read them.
i know your name and the way it falls
the way it beckons to every heed & call
the way it hangs from every bedroom wall
i know your name and the way it falls.

i know your ways / how prone to deceiving
the fallen grace that was once worth retrieving
well i only pray when i find myself grieving
the tired pulse of the space once breathing

and the space you inhabit / the space left behind
it lived for a little and it begged for a sign
the world felt so cheated when you paid in kind
we lived for a message that was only a line.

you croaked out a whisper and said “here it comes”
the streets full of martyrs / the banging of drums
but we were so full of practice our spirits were numb
you were tired of judging / the day wouldn’t come

and it never had to / we tipped our own scales
we sentenced so swiftly and we would never fail
to plug our ears as the endless children wailed
you paid in kind for the broken bodies on sale.

the war that we fought in the back of our heads
the war that we brought back to the tired bed
the spirit divorced that since birth had been wed
wonders why we grieve if we chose to be dead
when feet could draw borders on the sand in a line
and let the waves bury them (and be just fine)
or forgive the world for being neither yours or mine
and let our arms reach fondly across that line.

i too fear the message as it burrows inside
i too hear the cross is now a crooked sign
we spill the blood that we turn into wine
and lose the hands ours in prayer find

we drink the blood that we covet as wine
and hold fast to whatever our suffering finds.

Atsushi Ikeda is an emphatically clueless animal. Devoted to wonder. Chasing humility. In love with your spirit.
it is not
that i am afraid of Death
rather i am pained
by the fear of a small dying
found in every day
like a coffee not drunk
like a tree ringing hollow
in a forgetful feint of its age
like a pocket that is slowly escaping its pants
only to be overturned into the
mirrored eyes of a beggars
hopeful for something
besides the thrown-up insides
of emptiness
that are filled with too much
stuff to be named
until it is there in single stray piece of hair
that asks if the man is bald or not
there in the echoed footsteps of snow
that suddenly stop
where you wonder if
he turned around
was he lifted
where did he go
to find what it is
that has gone
you move forward
but the path is harder
slower
now
even if the snow
is fresh

Kacper Niburski is a twin who is convinced he would make a good
triplet. Don’t ask his twin, though. Follow his IG: @_kenkan.
THE WAY TO THE HAPPY ENDING

how is it
that there are still sad words
to be written

where a familiar face disappears
into the frown of procedures
of did
you check your bag
take off your shoes
have a good flight

where all sunsets end
and all sunrises do too

where a child is laughing
while playing chess
where she grows to beat her father
in practiced moves he forgets
where she finds she can never beat
an aging computer her father made
before her

where you are alone again
on a saturday teeming with more

where the blue has
been sick with green
and yellow has missed both dearly

where each song comes with a prede-
termined
dance that an old grandmother
confesses
her cat conceived of first

where there is a man on death row
who is learning how to spell again
though he isn't sure what he wants to
say
yet

where love is not enough
despite being all there is

where i am going to bite into you
wondering if you can stomach me

where a goldfish in a bowl
whispers the path to freedom
if only one remembered
what it is to be
what is

where people will watch their shows
for they end just at the right moment
for another

where another doesn't come
but this still does
and
you can only ask
again
how is it
ON PURPOSE AND LONELINESS

We are here to do just that: be here. Everything in the universe is part of one being. Everything is part of one big flow of energy. When you breathe in, the air you inhale was expelled by all the other living things on earth, mixed and cycled through the whole world before entering into you. When you exhale, the breath that was once in you is expelled into the world around you. Everything is like this. When we grow we take in the energy of the world; when we die it returns to where it came from. Everything is a flow of ins and outs; a gentle rise and fall in the fabric of reality.

Because of this, life is like a painting, where each brushstroke represents energy being taken in or put out. The pattern made by these strokes represent a life, and the whole beauty of the painting represents the allness of existence. Even if each brushstroke appears inconsequential on its own, the final painting — the whole — is full of beauty. It tells a story, and above all else it has a meaning far greater than can be seen in an individual stroke. By the time the painting is finished it is viewed and regarded as a whole image. To understand the painting one cannot focus on the individual strokes, much in the same way that in order to understand the meaning of the universe and one’s place in it, one cannot just examine its base parts but must examine it as a whole. Because of this I feel like the reason we are here is to make the most of our lives and experience all we can. Life can seem on purpose and loneliness

Aiden finds that the arts are what make us human. Through art we can connect to one another unlike in any other way.
chaotic and meaningless if you look solely at the ins and outs of your own isolated experience. It starts appearing a little more stable when you look at the whole of your life and the wider patterns you inhabit and embody. However, when you regard the whole of existence and see how your place in it fits perfectly with the other flows of energy and life that make it up, then it becomes clear that our purpose is to simply be. We are perfect in our existence as that is how the universe made us, so the ends of life is simply to experience life. Every instant is full of meaning on so many levels which we can’t even begin to understand. Everything happens the way it is supposed to. The fundamental interconnectedness of everything within the universe means every action on every level affects everything else in some way.

With this in mind it becomes clear that there is no Self. What we see as “Me” is nothing more than a small combination of brush strokes in the far more vast painting of the universe. But this also means that each life is full of meaning in itself!

With this understood, the question arises as to why we still feel loneliness. If it could, would a stroke of blue paint in a field of red feel alone? Of course not; it would know that its place is necessary in order to complete the painting. The painting could not exist in its wholeness without the contrast which the splash of blue presents. Thus the opposite of feeling alone is to understand this deep connection to everything. If you think of the universe as a clock with each piece being a cog in the machinery, then this makes sense: you are part of this incredible whole that keeps turning onwards no matter what. You are never really alone; the whole of everything is always here with you.
Cans, paper cups, fishing line, batteries... I have collected them all, and integrated them into the landscape pictured. Because I don't know where else to put them. In garbage bins, they will go to the landfill. In the river, they will flow to the Pacific plastic patches. On land, they will sink into the layer of crust that marks the Great Plastic Era. Why bother moving them if everywhere is equally filthy?

To whomever it may concern, I have gathered what once you considered your belongings right here under the blatant daylight. Now they can see you again the next time you come — which I hope you do soon — to marvel at how nature will always find a way to bring back to your eyes that which you wanted to hide.

Yi Tian is a masters student in computer science.
MY NEIGHBOUR’S FAITH
Visit to a Presbyterian church
with dinner and a concert!

Sunday, December 16th at 4:45pm

4:45 PM Tour of the Church of St. Andrew & St. Paul
5:30 PM Communal dinner with the congregation
7:00 PM Candlelit caroling concert
8:30 PM End

We will meet in the church entrance.

Location:
Church of St. Andrew & St. Paul
3415 Redpath St
(corner of Sherbrooke)
Montreal, QC H3G 2G2

Caroling is an important element of the Christmas season for many Christians. Join MORSF for an interactive visit to the Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul to learn more about this rich cultural tradition as well as the meaning and celebration of Christmas and a beautiful candlelit caroling concert.

This is a wonderful opportunity to engage in interfaith learning and musical celebration!

Free but registration required:
mcgill.ca/morsl/my-neighbours-faith
MEET MORSL’S MULTI-FAITH TEAM

Adriana Cabrera Cleves
clevesadriana@gmail.com
Adriana is our Bahá’í volunteer and serves as Director of the Inter-religious Affairs Bureau-External Affairs of the Montreal Bahá’í Community.

Father Gerry Westphal
fr.gerry.westphal@newmancentre.org
Fr. Gerry is our Catholic volunteer and is currently chaplain of the Newman Centre, McGill’s Catholic community.

Father Ihor Kutash
ikutash@gmail.com
Father Ihor is our Orthodox Christian volunteer. He is a priest of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada and a theology professor.

Rev. Jean-Daniel Williams
jd@mcgillprotestant.ca
Jean-Daniel is our Protestant volunteer, sponsored by the United and Anglican Churches of Canada.

Rev. Mr. Jonathan Stewart
jonathanchristopherstewart@gmail.com
Jonathan is our Gnostic Faith volunteer. He’s long had a passion for all things Gnostic, esoteric, and mystical.

Rabbi Shmuly Weiss
shmuly@chabadmcgill.com
Shmuly, our Chabad Rabbi, leads the Chabad Student Center on Peel, where they offer spiritual growth, and personal guidance.

Imam Salam Elmenyawi
smenyawi@gmail.com
Salam, our non-denominational Muslim volunteer, serves both McGill and Concordia, and also presides the Muslim Council of Montreal.
Fauzia Saiyed
fauzia.saiyed@mail.mcgill.ca
Fauzia is our Muslim peer liaison. She hosts small discussion groups to create a supportive environment for peers to foster each other’s spirituality.

Catherine Jarvis
jarvis_catherine1@hotmail.com
Catherine is our volunteer with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. She’s also their Director of Public Affairs for Quebec.

Luisa Sinacore
luisa.sinacore@federationcja.org
Luisa is one of our Jewish volunteers, hailing from a Reform background. She is the Community Engagement Associate at Hillel Montreal.

Nicole Perkins and David Summerhays
nicole.perkins@mail.mcgill.ca;
david.summerhays@pm.me
Nicole and David are our Quaker volunteers. Nicole is available for a chat about faith, and David helps to organize meditations in the Quaker tradition.

Julian Paparella
juliancspaparella@gmail.com
One of our Catholic volunteers, Julian is the Campus Minister of the Newman Centre.

Rabbi Ellen Greenspan
rabbigreenspan@templemontreal.ca
Rabbi Greenspan has been serving as the Rabbi-Educator at Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom in Westmount since 2014.

Juss Kaur
juss.kaur.magon@mcgill.ca
Juss is our Sikh volunteer. She is open to chat over tea with Sikh students or anyone with questions about Sikhism.
Radix is Looking for Volunteers!
Like what you see? Believe in student creativity and inter-faith collaboration? Help make Radix happen! We can always use help in distribution, research, writing, layout, and much more! To join the community send us an email at morsl@mcgill.ca. Just make sure to mention Radix in the subject line!

My Neighbours Faith Series
This series of monthly visits to Montreal’s places of worship provides a guided experience with various world religions being practiced in the city. Email morsl@mcgill.ca to join the mailing list.

Ghetto Shul
Ghetto Shul is a student- and volunteer-run Jewish organization in downtown Montreal. We hold weekly Shabbat services and dinners, as well as learning events, volunteering, and more! We welcome people from all walks of life and love having newcomers at our services. Check our Facebook page (Ghetto Shul) for updates on our upcoming events, or our website: https://ghettoshul.wordpress.com/

Intervarsity McGill Christian Fellowship
We are a group of interdenominational Christians on campus who have come together because of our shared faith in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. We strive to create a community that encourages dialogue from varying perspectives and exploring what it means to be a follower of Jesus. We welcome you to join us on our weekly bible studies on Mondays and Tuesdays. We also have a discovery group that meets every week to explore big questions about Christianity. Lastly, we have bi-weekly large group gatherings called FUSE! Come as you are to join us for a time of community and fun, we welcome anyone from different faith backgrounds! Follow our facebook page & group and instagram for more info!

www.facebook.com/ivmcgillcf/ @ivmcgillcf

MORSL Interfaith Lounge
Tea, coffee, cocoa and couches in a welcoming space. Come for the meditation/prayer room or our selection of books on religion, spirituality, and colouring.

Open Monday-Friday, 10am-4pm.
3495 Rue University, 2nd floor
Newman Students’ Society
The Newman Students’ Society is the Catholic student community of McGill University. Based out of the Newman Centre of McGill University, we seek to make our Christian faith alive through social activities and community life, faith formation and spiritual enrichment, charitable outreach and service, and a strong sense of friendship and fellowship among our members.

Here’s our website:
www.mcgillcatholics.ca

And here’s our Facebook page:
facebook.com/mcgillcatholics/

Chabad
The Chabad House at McGill University is your campus center that aims to be your home-away-from-home. We offer the anchor and embrace of ‘family’ for Jewish students regardless of background, observance or affiliation. If you would like to learn more, message us on Facebook or come to our weekly Shabbat dinners!

Social Media:

Facebook: Chabad at McGill
Instagram: @chabadatmcgill

Personal Contact:
Feel free to message Rabbi Shmuly Weiss or Student Board President Ben Grossman on Facebook with any questions!

Mid-Week Quaker Meditation
During the academic year, the Montreal mid-week Quaker Meeting meets every Wednesday, 17:30-18:30, at McGill’s Newman Centre, 3484 Peel Street in the Ryan Library (2nd floor, end of the hall). Keep an eye on our Facebook group (www.facebook.com/goups/mtlmidweek) for updates.
Winter 2019
Call for Submissions

care

Due: January 13th, 2019

Submit online at:
www.mcgill.ca/morsl/radix-magazine