contents

Editorial
AYMAN OWEIDA

Sacred words
JULIA ISLER

Roar III
KRISTA BENNATTI-ROBERT

I wish that you were there
LEONARDO FLOREZ

Confusion
NADAV SLOVIN

Smile
SALMAH HUSSAIN

A riddle
AYA SALEH

Free poem
BRIGITTE NAGGAR

Cup poem
JONATHAN DUBE

Prophet Muhammed: A Legacy Beyond Words
AYMAN OWEIDA

Match
BEN PATRICK STIDWORTHY

Definition of God
HANNAH SIDEN

Crossword
JOSIAH KLASSEN AND BRIGITTE NAGGAR

Want to get involved? Email us.
radix@mail.mcgill.ca

Visit our facebook page:
facebook.com/radixmcgill

Ayman Oweida: Co-Editor
Josiah Klassen: Co-Editor
Jennifer Hamilton: Creative Director
Brigitte Naggar: Resident Poet
Asma Falfoul: Event Reporter
Courtney Waldie: Photographer

RADIX magazine is produced by the McGill Chaplaincy Services.

FRONT COVER: MARIE NADEAU-TREMBLAY
BACK COVER: PHOTOS BY JENNIFER HAMILTON
In a highly vibrant and intellectual environment as that of our beautiful campus, we are often judged and evaluated by our words. The eloquence of our speech, the beauty of our words and the complexity of our expressions are often the tools by which we are regularly evaluated and promoted in school and in society. Although these are important aspects of our academic success and career advancement, they should not be the only measures.

A great scientist may find that they best express their emotions through poetry while a reputable entrepreneur may find that their feelings are best expressed through painting. A visual artist may find a niche in singing while a psychologist may find a niche as a pianist. These are not uncommon examples of extraordinary people in history, but we often neglect to seek such venues to express ourselves. Part of the problem lies in the overwhelming emphasis on written content, whether in campus newspapers or city publications.

In this issue of Radix we explore the theme, beyond words. Many students have contributed to this edition of Radix in various ways, but most strikingly through poetry and drawings. We hope you will find some quality time to go through this publication and to make a contribution to Radix in the near future.

Ayman Oweida
Radix Co-Editor
And yet, we cannot live by faith alone,
Said Aaron to his brother’s silent back
As he, his spirit swollen great with songs,
With heaven’s light, with the pure scourge of fire,
Cast his eyes toward the desert’s edge,
Where loomed Mount Sinai, dim against the sky.
The dry grey of the mountain spilled from
The dry grey of the desert, as if the
Slipped thumbprint of one who sought to drag
A straight line through wet sand with a cold finger
But, startled by a wave that surged past
The bound described by the dogged surf,
Lost balance, and with it, the perfection of the line.

Julia Isler is a third year English Literature student minoring in Religious Studies.
But were these quiet words of Aaron the words
Of human weakness or the burning Word of God?
For Aaron was the mouth in which God placed
His words and those of silent, staring Moses.
And could there be room for weakness in a
Mouth so wholly filled with holy fire?
For he believed what Moses told him of
The burning bush, the writing in the stone,
Even never having climbed Mount Sinai,
Never gazed from its grey height across the greyer plain.
He did not receive the Word, but spread it,
For what was sweet as honeyed cherries
In Aaron’s fertile curving mouth was turned
To dust upon the stumbling tongue of Moses.

So Aaron sang what Moses could not say,
Gave handsome form to the terrible thought
For those who were less strong than Moses,
Who could not cross the dust sustained by
The fire of heaven and the booming voice of God,
But needed something solid, needed manna.
This was the will of God. He made the mouth
To fill it with the Word, to envelop it in flesh.
Is this so different from a golden calf:
To cast the spirit’s form in gilded words?
Yet Aaron’s choice, made while Moses wandered,
Enveloped him in holy scorching fire,
For he had surged beyond the bound prescribed
By his brother’s sacred dream of order
And ruined the perfection of the line.
I have witnessed youth change into deep voices, concerned with all but nothing, sitting in front of the Television sipping cola; downing Twisted Tea on a cold hard night it was them who stopped me on a hurtling path toward burning piety, whispering, yelling in hand painted classrooms of Steiner, in gnomeville where rounded huts hind uninhibited drama who laughed in unbridled ponytails on wet playing fields yelling BLITZ, in extreme fashion taking freedom, giving friends with words of pink trucks and prep schools who played skip-bo for hours, in rooms meant for learning, talked about boys, boys, boys and bullshitted GT work because no one wants to be gifted who had crushes in dark gymnasiums crisscrossed with red lights, mesmerizing strobe lights blink on and off and stairway keeps unhappy couples dancing with blurry eyes who christened me on Bourbon St. before it crumbled in its Titani cal crash who merged into one body in a building that bulged with youth but stopped up with acceptance of eccentricity, where naïveté ebbed with offers of weed in gray plastic bus seats from characters escaped from the Bible and moving on towards urban apartments who didn’t lift a finger to defend Hobart and slept through Macbeth and fought hard over who had brought on the fall of each unfortunate revolution who seduced me with a missing tooth-the delinquents smile, writing love letters in someone else’s broken English; grinning among piles of left-over food eaten by the bizarre, drunk and helpless who baptised me a donkey fart, standing immobile among rivers of grease flowing onto green and red uniforms; thieves of sweaty toilet paper loath to greet a shiny valedictorian who swore to take me to the bridge to dip skinny with alcohol on a foaming raft trip with shaky boys, swirling in a white current, clinging to a rock; jump! who cracked open a strange world where sanctity springs from red syrup on nails and wood; flipping through a student’s bible they call the Message; a Hindu praying to a confused God on the familiar trail behind her mother’s house who danced where strain melts in awkward arms flailing and pelvises gyrating to the sound of chicachica boop and the little girl who always wore two goody shoes becomes a whore and you wonder why who I hope never reads this because they will recognize themselves and I will turn red
Krista is a fourth year accounting major who grew up with strong Hindu and Christian influences. Krista aspires to be a chartered accountant and a writer.

ILLUSTRATION BY MARIE NADEAU-TREMBLAY
I wish that you were there

when I found you hanging in your living room,

as I screamed your name, trying to revive you

as I called the ambulance,

as I heard them say that you were dead.
I wish that you were there

as your mother arrived

as I told her what had happened

as she screamed and shouted with her eyes

without uttering a single word.

I wish that you were there

to explain to me why you did it

to explain why you never complained

never screamed.

I wish that you were there

as life taught me that sometimes

silence speaks the loudest.

But above all,

I wish that you were here.
Suspended in deep confusion
I float about the bright abyss of being’s distant bliss
Flames paint my skin with heat,
As cold surrenders
It rips through my lips
My forehead tears in two
Flies through
To you
One, too
For to wear a frown is to wear tattered clothing
Over the beautiful ones you have underneath
Cuz when you smile
Your eyes shine brighter than the sun at its brightest hue
Then they outshine the stars when the night is due
There’s none as bright as you
So while it may seem that difficulties
Are splitting your life in two
Smile because it could turn around at the slightest cue
Allah only wills what’s right for you
You need to think fast
And react with ikhlas*
Because sincerity is clarity for the heart
It gives us bearings in the dark
So don’t be scared when things are hard
For even when life presents more challenges than you could ever describe
Smile because things will get better in time

* ikhlas is Arabic for sincerity
Aya is a high school science teacher in-the-making, in her last year of the concurrent BSc/BEd program. She has a passion for reading, writing, poetry, honey, chocolate, different cultural dances, drawing, painting, and all things colourful.

ART BY JENNIFER HAMILTON
When you seek me, I’m not there
When you wish me gone, I’m everywhere
I am weightless but measurable
I am promising, alluring, yet sometimes regrettable
I am stronger than a tsunami—unstoppable
Yet weaker than a memory, for I’m irretrievable
I’m the swift, gentle trickling of sand
I’m why the four seasons dress the land.

I exist, and yet, I’ve never been alive
Can I live if I’ll never die?
I am invisible, colorless and soundless, but undeniable
You may think I’m yours truly, but I’m not that reliable
I am the secret ingredient to the perception
Of a half-full or half-empty glass discussion
To visualize me, allow me to explain:
Consider your life a photograph; then I am its frame.

I am given many names
I can be treated as a game
You might try to fit me into neat, perfect blocks
As though I really were predictable as the ticking of a clock
I am often undervalued, still more often I’m misused
Worth no monetary value, I’m methodically abused
Yet I am worth so much, if you but only knew
Then perhaps you’d change the way of all the little things you do.

Use me wisely, you’ll be blessed
Use me ignorantly to your distress
It’s easier said than done, ‘tis true
I speak to the riddler before speaking to you
You’ve probably grasped that this riddle’s a rhyme
So who am I? Quite simply, I’m time
the first thing i did was get naked.
no ticking clock on the hours of
such anticipated privacy
a jeté, tombé, pas-de-bourrée
across kitchen floors, four bedroom doors.
rehearsing the articulation
of the vowels which i am singing
which i am screaming, yelling, belting
i am beaming, (body’s swelling in
the sweltering
heat)
O aching heart! You are
drunkenness pulsing
in a sober world.
So sober,
we’ll be
drunk
by any means.

How thirsty, poor heart!
You have not forgotten
Ambrosia. And yet
this earthen cup
will not
tolerate
emptiness.

“Serve me more, O maid,
more wine, another cup
and yet one more!”
The heart cries,
desperate.
But this
will never do.

Jonathan Dube has an Honour’s Religion
degree from Concordia. He is currently in his
second year of the M.A. program in Islamic
Studies at McGill. He likes early evening
melancholy blue summer skies full of God.
Muslims believe that the Holy Quran is the word of God verbatim revealed to Prophet Muhammad over the course of 23 years. Many companions of the Prophet memorized the Quran while others wrote it down and eventually compiled it into the version we have today.

Given the extended period over which the revelation was brought down, one is left to wonder the wisdom for having the revelation come down in pieces? Afterall, God could’ve sent down the Quran as a book that the Prophet can pick up and teach to others!

Ironically, God chose Prophet Muhammad to be the recipient of the revelation, albeit he could neither read nor write! The revelation came down to Prophet Muhammad in various forms through Angel Gabriel. More ironically, the first verse revealed to Prophet Muhammad was:

“Read in the name your Lord; He created man from a clot; Read and your Lord is most generous; He who taught by the pen”.

Godly messages transcend the realm of written words. God chose Muhammad to be not only a teacher of the Quran, but a human embodiment of the Quran itself. Aisha, the Prophet’s wife, described him as a walking Quran. Muhammad lived the teachings of the Quran and in doing so exemplified the most noble character. The Prophet once said “I have been sent to perfect the best of manners”. God also says in the Quran “Indeed in the messenger of God, there’s an exemplary character for you to follow”. As people often say, actions speak louder than words. But, you can only appreciate the magnificence of this statement once you live
with the person of interest. We have very limited information about the actions of any historical or contemporary figure and it is likely that we have much more words than actions! However, Prophet Muhammad’s actions were documented to the smallest details, whether in the Quran, or by his companions.

In addition to the details of Prophet Muhammad’s character and personality, the circumstances and events that unfolded throughout his life formed the essence of a revelation that can be applied and extrapolated to all subsequent times and for all individuals.

Shortly after Prophet Muhammad received the first revelation during his early 40s, there was a period of disconnect that rendered him sad. After that period of disconnect, God revealed a short chapter of the Quran that many Muslims, including children memorize. God starts the chapter by swearing by the dawn and the night as it falls that “God has neither left you nor forsaken you, and the future is better than today, and God will grant you so that you are content. Did He not find you orphaned and sustained you? And He found you astray and guided you? And He found you dependent on others and made you self-sufficient?” These verses carry a profound meaning that can stand alone and bring tranquility and encouragement to anyone who feels down, but the mere fact that these verses are tied to the persona of the Prophet makes them that much more empowering and resonating. To go beyond the mere expression of words is to implicate them with a highly regarded character and moreso with a divine being.

Ayman Oweida is a PhD student in the department of experimental medicine at McGill. Ayman completed his writing diploma, along with his BSc and MSc in London, Ontario. He enjoys fishing and regularly contributes to local newspapers and blogs.
With the power of one thousand pied stallions
I rode
Three tiered with the merchants and warriors
Red toothed laughs and suicide kings
Jail cell bunks berth support
Built with clubs to rest the diamonds
Express to the wide avenues
Spade dug by the lions
on multi-tracked minds
Watching alchemy firsthand

Ben Patrick Stidworthy is a student in Religious Studies.
Untitled in India
Ben Patrick Stidworthy

Ten years done
and I’ve never known the time
As in tick tock, strapped to that man’s wrist
Teeth smiling red
Like the earth in my hair
Reflecting in the sunset
with the insistent incense of burning plastic
The triplets of Puri in eternal sleep
driving away.
I haven’t seen paper-colored skin
But I’ve watched temple stacked spines
Reducing like fire and water
from the weight of the bricks
And my belly is talking more than the dogs at night
Filthy as ten rupees
falling on my roof
you could hear it.
What is my definition of God?

Powerfully positive

The connection between two people—love
   And the energy that unites us all, friends and strangers

We are part of something much larger than ourselves

   What others might call magic
       a mystery
       or a reason

Something to search for (we like to do this)
   yet really, it is at the centre of us all

And all around us

   Let’s open our eyes
       our minds
       our hearts

Take someone’s hand

   And share with them your own definition of God.

Hannah Siden is a U1 student studying International Development.
Next Issue: good.

Submission deadline: March 4, 2013.

Think we’re biased? One, two, three-sided? So do we! We’re an inter-faith student magazine, and we’re looking for more perspectives: Hindu, Sikh, Native American, Shinto, Buddhist, Secular Humanist, Jewish, Baha’i and others. Submit your creative writing, opinions, artwork, ideas, quotes and more by March 4th.

radix@mail.mcgill.ca
Your Neighbour’s Faith
McGill Chaplaincy regularly visits Montreal’s diverse places of worship. Last semester we visited the Enpukuji Zen, Buddhist Meditation Centre, a Mosque, an Orthodox Christian parish and a Sikh Gurdwara. We will be going to St. Andrew’s and St. Paul’s this semester as well as Hillel House. Contact chaplaincy@mcgill.ca for more info.

Radix looking for Volunteers
Like what you see? Believe in student creativity, and inter-faith collaboration? Help us do it better! We can always use help in marketing, web-development, research, distribution and much more! Email us to join the community. radix@mail.mcgill.ca

International Students!
Are you freezing?
Lightly used coats, clothing, shoes, and boots are available free of charge to International Students. Stop by Chaplaincy Services.

Ancient Wisdom Lies At Your Feet
It’s free! Just bring yourself. McGill Ecumenical Chaplaincy Try walking meditation using a labyrinth on campus. Every Tuesday afternoon 12-4pm, M. Parent Room, 2nd Floor SSMU Building, For more information visit: Labyrinth McGill on Facebook or www.mcgill.ca/students/chaplaincy

Zen meditation
Starts January 11, 2013 until April 12, 2013
(no meditation during Study Break March 08, 2013)
Instructor: Myokyo Zengetsu
Location: Birks Chapel 2nd Floor
Faculty of Religious Studies, Birks Bldg.
3520 University Street
For More Info: call 514-398-4104 or chaplaincy@mcgill.ca

Ghetto Shul
House of Prayer

Rabbit Hole Café
Vegan Kitchen
Fridays 12:30-3:30
3625 Aylmer, downstairs
Donations of $2.00 or a non-perishable food item are appreciated.
www.yellowdoor.org

Newman Centre
3484 Peel St, 398-4106
newmancentre@mail.mcgill.ca
www.newmancentre.org

Did you know that Roman Catholic Mass is held conveniently on campus several times per week?

McGill Student Parents’ Network
The MSPN provides support to McGill students who are parents. Regularly we offer free of charge to McGill students: in-home babysitting, support group meetings, study sessions for parents with babysitting for children. Interested families should contact the MSPN.

STAND
Engaging students in advocating against genocide and mass atrocities

Conflict-Free Campus Initiative
This campaign works to educate the McGill community about the conflict in the DRC and the role of “conflict minerals”.

Fundraising for the Valentino Achek Deng Foundation
STAND McGill also holds fundraising events to benefit the VAD Foundation which builds a school complex in post-conflict South Sudan.

mcgill@standcanada.org  www.standcanada.org  Tuesdays @ 5:30 in the Arts Lounge
Orthodox Christian Fellowship
Are you an Orthodox Christian, or interested in Orthodoxy? Come out to our weekly meetings in the Claude Ryan Library in the Newman Centre (3484 Peel, 3rd floor) at 6-7:30pm every Thursday for discussion with a great group facilitated by an Orthodox priest. Otherwise, join us for a potluck, event or monastery trip! mcgillstudentsocf@gmail.com

Radical Christian Student Association
To contact email: rcsa.mcgill@gmail.com.

The Muslim Students Association of McGill
We aim to provide spiritual, social & educational services. We offer weekly study circles, free Islamic educational materials, Ramadan services, lectures/conferences, and a wonderful library called House of Wisdom. We also have many community events to serve others (ex. Project Downtown), as well as exciting social events (ex. ski trips, cultural dinner nights, MSA Frosh, and so much more!) Come drop by & say hi to us in our office (Shatner building, room B09.)
ACROSS

1. Instances of tkng the nme in vn?
5. Dominant group in Canadian history.
14. The i_____ new gadget for lying still?
15. Lakota conical structure.
16. Notre-Dame la Consolatrice des Affligés (En.)
17. ____ ____ ____-ations: stuttered, this has three of the prefix.
18. Nietzsche’s possible nickname. (or Schleiermacher’s.)
19. A nihiliste believes in this.
20. Ending for marketplaces (Gk) and plants (Lt).
21. Nautical brigand’s catch-all expression.
22. Only the second line doesn’t rhyme.
23. Don’t jump to conclusions! It’s ______ ___.
28. Rocky resource.
29. Kilos converted.
33. Greek name for sound beginning (TAO).
36. In it, ideally, you’re just truly _____, or getting there.
37. The opposite of Ouest.

14
17
20
23
30
31
32
36
37
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
38. Book of ___, inspiration for Winnie the Pooh.
39. usw. / и т.д. / forever and ever (no amen)
41. Ancient Chinese state established in the Zhou dynasty.
43. What you do while waiting for the Messiah’s coming.
52. Could be a company selling products that are ergonomic or eco-friendly.
53. L__e me alone!
54. Montreal-founded shoe company, now worldwide.
55. French for sixty seconds
56. Stick used for conducting, or light-hearted twirling.
58. No hair.
59. Large Scandinavian dairy cooperative.
60. Necessary reproductive lady organ (Pl.)
61. ¿luis y anna, vayáis a la música educadores asociación?
62. Vegetarian. Google more facts if that’s all you know.
63. Ssmu basement, post-host of Al Taib.
64. Button sold at Bureau en Gros, or ___ does it!

DOWN

1. America’s most reliable news-source.
2. MTL’s arteries, or having the style but not the orientation.
3. Hitchens’ discarded divine description.
4. Scatter all over the place. Often adjective with -n.
5. For The Win anagram.
6. Mutilate to ventilate.
7. Resembling a tall, skinny, tapering thing.
8. We hate it but we use it. We especially hate the price.
9. ___ who? Drawled demand for authority to back up claim.
10. a.k.a. Pentateuch.
11. Likely story.
14. Contemporary Saint Nicholas’ utterance, three times.
25. Thank-you to a Zen Buddhist or Shinto.
26. Very distant, in German-inspired slang.
27. Eliot.
30. Honest ___ (president).
31. Stop, go, __, no.
32. Searching for trivial errors; ___-picking.
33. Hebrew name for sound beginning (TAO).
34. With mode, in style or with ice cream.
35. Celestial sight that inspires spiritual feeling in some.
39. English letter, or substitution for an expletive.
40. Did we do this to God, or did he do it to us?
41. Excited prancing, engaging playfully.
42. ___, ego and superego. (lol, super? hooray!)
43. Pelerinage à Mecque, ou l’homme qui l’a fait.
44. Arias and falsetto here.
45. Fancy word for things like eyes.
46. One spelling for this sacred book. I prefer Q and apostrophe.
47. Necessary life substance.
48. _spoon, _cloth, _top. (classically wooden.)
49. If Barack were a great Tibetan teacher.
50. Canadian Aboriginal protester ____ “no more.”
51. Every day of the week, as you’re experiencing it.
56. What the black squares look like.
57. The Knights Who Say (don’t say it!) say these.

Answer Key available on our Facebook page: http://www.facebook.com/radixmcgill
While you’re there, give us a Like and stay updated with our issues as they come.