



NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 4 • ISSUE 1

Labyrinths and Islam

Muslims in Toronto traditionally mark the end of the Holy Month of Ramadan with prayers at a celebration called Eid al Fitr. This year, I attended the GTA Eid at Metro Toronto Convention Centre, hosted by the Muslim Association of Canada. After prayers, Muslim children, namely brothers Omar and Ammar, and their big sister, helped me create a labyrinth using masking tape.

Grown-ups asked what we were doing, and why, so I shared with them the connection between labyrinths and Islam.



Box 22 Station Q
Toronto ON M4T 2L7
www.labyrinthnetwork.ca

If you look closely at the prayer rug of an Imam you will see the pattern framing the edge of the rug has a labyrinth-like motif. It is not exactly a true unicursal labyrinth, but more of a sieve, a passageway in and through, to and from time and space and place.



The first time I wove my right index finger through the yellow lanes of the prayer rug, I was reminded of the sensation of completing the Braille labyrinth at the entrance to the Toronto Public Labyrinth.

As for the children and the masking tape labyrinth, they seemed to have had more fun taping up the floor, something perhaps they had never had a chance to do before, than they did by running in and out of it once it was made.

- BY HiMY SYeD

HiMY SYeD founded the project, Toronto City of Labyrinths, to create a labyrinth within walking distance of every Torontonians inside the city limits. To date he has created some 60 plus labyrinths. Watch for his book early in 2012, titled Toronto City of Labyrinths. You can reach him through his excellent website: <http://www.labyrinths.ca>.



LABYRINTHS AROUND ONTARIO



Carlton Place Community Labyrinth, Carleton Place
A chain dance at dedication. Classical style, 7-circuit. Inspirational stones set into the pathway lead to a pausing stone at entrance. Photo: Marc Lebeau.



Tranquil Spirit, Cameron
7-circuit, 60-ft. diam, grass paths, 500 perennials line walls, centre 8-ft. diam. with meditation rock and Rose of Sharon bush.

THE APPLE LABYRINTH AT MY WEDDING

Getting married outside was a wonderful journey, and getting married on a labyrinth made of apples made the day even more magical. Because I grew up on an apple farm, the walk was more meaningful.

We were in the garden with a river flowing by, salmon leaping.

All you need is deep within you waiting to unfold and reveal itself. All you have to do is be still and take time to seek what is within, and you will surely find it.

- Eileen Caddy,
Co-Founder of the
Findhorn Foundation.



All of the wedding party, including the minister, walked into the center with lovely guitar music playing. There was much to focus on, so the guests enjoyed watching us walk in. We incorporated this “walk in” as symbolic of each partner walking in separately, and then the journey back out symbolized our life together as a couple. This created wonderful photos of the two of us joyfully making our way out of the labyrinth. To all who might consider walking the labyrinth during their wedding, it was a wonderful experience.

At the end, apples were thrown into the river with their seeds of loving. Still more apples were

made into apple sauce, and the seeds were dried and made into necklaces for each of us. It was joyous in every way.

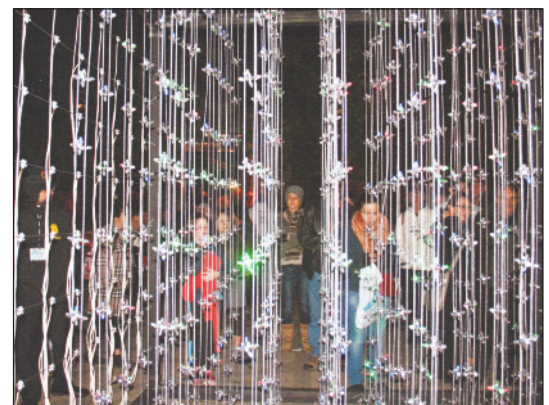
Virginia Burt can be reached at Visionscapes Landscape Architects, Inc.
1-888-339-3031 www.visionscapes.ca.

– VIRGINIA BURT

NUIT BLANCHE AT THE TORONTO PUBLIC LABYRINTH

This is a photo of *Shannon's Fireflies*, a contemporary art piece installed in the centre of the Toronto Public Labyrinth for one night only, October 1st of this year. The piece, created by a group of artists called Site3 coLaboratory, was part of an annual all-night festival located in the downtown core of Toronto, sponsored by the City of Toronto and Scotiabank.

The cube-shaped Shannon's Fireflies was composed of electrical wiring with light/sound sensors a foot apart in any direction. If you stood up close and whispered, some of the bulbs would turn on. If you photographed using a camera flash, the whole thing lit up like a Christmas tree. The centre of the Toronto Public Labyrinth filled with a



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See the LCN website for a growing list of labyrinth facilitators, books, children's activities, articles, interesting links, and much more.



Beverly Chen, Ottawa
Purple lines painted on 7-circuit portable plain canvas.



Mandala Gardens, McKellar
7-path Hopi labyrinth built of stone on sand
Learn more about the Hopi design at www.mandalagardens.ca.

gigantic firefly was a sight to behold.

Afterward, we are glad to say, the labyrinth was left in pristine condition, not a mark anywhere.

– KATHRYN KNIGHT

Dancing at the Edge of Death The Origins of the Labyrinth in the Paleolithic

By Jodi Lorimer
Kharis Enterprises 2009

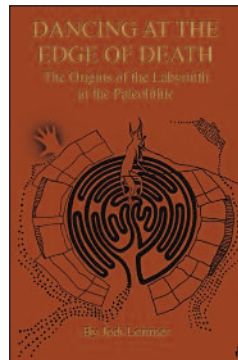
Author Jodi Lorimer has spent twelve years researching her book about the roots of the labyrinth story and why it is shared by the people of almost all countries. She traces this history from the time of the ancient shamans to the modern day labyrinth renaissance, and finds labyrinths in almost every country from Finland to Tasmania.

A graduate in archeology and anthropology, Lorimer describes the labyrinth as a symbol of humankind's first religion and describes how it has played many roles - a pattern of beauty, emotionally fulfilling, and symbolic of pilgrimage.

The book touches on the mythic minotaur, the limestone caverns of the ice age, the use of mind-altering drugs, shamanism, and the symbolism of the Paleolithic cave drawings of Europe.

Lorimer concludes by commenting that the symbol of the labyrinth has re-surfaced in our lifetime just when its power is needed to bring forth a new spirit that will underline the commonalities that all humans share.
www.dancing-at-the-edge.com

– Reviewed by JOAN D. CLAYTON



You have to trust your inner knowing. If you have a clear mind and an open heart, you won't have to search for direction. Direction will come to you.

- Phil Jackson, quoted from the Omega Institute's, *Vitality and Wellness*

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Upcoming events

Timothy Eaton Church Canvas Labyrinth Walk

First Sunday of each month 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Next one: December 4.

Contact Church for info on New Year's Eve Walk.
230 St. Clair Ave. W., Toronto.

<http://www.temc.ca>

High Park Labyrinth, Toronto

Sunday, December 18 at 4 p.m.

Candlelit walk. Located 100 feet north of Grenadier Café.

lutialausane@sympatico.ca

Celtic Service at Metropolitan United Church

Monday, December 19, 7 p.m.

Labyrinth walk accompanied by organ & harp music.
Taize Labyrinth Walk first Wednesday of each month, 6 p.m.

56 Queen Street East, Toronto.

(416) 362-0331 x24

Winter Solstice at Toronto Public Labyrinth

Thursday, December 22, 12 – 1 p.m.

Trinity Square Park just west of the Eaton Centre
Braille labyrinth on site. All welcome.

Check our website in January for dates of TPL walks in 2012.

www.labyrinthnetwork.ca

Chartres, France, with Lauren Artress

June and September 2012.

Walking a Sacred Path One and Two, Facilitator Training, Advanced Facilitator Training.

www.veriditas.org

Please check the LCN website regularly for other events, and have a look in our Ontario Labyrinth Directory for labyrinths and events near you.



BRIDGEPOINT HEALTHCARE LABYRINTH

A public labyrinth will be part of the new Bridgepoint Hospital, opening in 2013. Every aspect of this project has been designed to promote healing for people living with complex chronic disease. A labyrinth was a natural fit for the hospital's plans.

Shaded by spruce trees and flanked by flowerbeds, Bridgepoint's labyrinth will allow patients, hospital staff and visitors from the community to enjoy fresh air, gentle exercise and quiet reflection.

The labyrinth will be approximately 20 metres in diameter, situated on a terrace overlooking Riverdale Park. Its Chartres design will be formed by contrasting colours of flat paving, allowing people with impaired vision or mobility to use it easily.

Creation of this labyrinth is supported by Bridgepoint's Life Changes campaign. For more information, please call 416.461.8252 ext. 2030 or visit www.lifechanges.ca.

– LEIGH BOWSER

From the President

To labyrinth listeners....

As a labyrinth community we have networked together for yet another year - our 14th. The website keeps improving; you, our membership, remain supportive and our outreach may be counted upon. Well done.

As president I wish to thank the core committee for the gifts of their insights and skills, as well as the Friends of the LCN who form our backbone.

Labyrinths are great life-learning, life-affirming patterns that "whisper loudly" in our cities and country sides. That everyone is welcome and that no one is denied is a huge rallying cry for those who do this work.

Labyrinths have resonated with me ever since discovering them in 1997 - perhaps, as feels more likely, I have known them forever.

So ingrained are they that I see them in the cat's paw ripples of a lake, in the spiral of a seashell and the pattern on a snail. You are the people who see this too.

Walking a Labyrinth is a way to listen deeply -

to ourselves and to others. You are the people who know that metaphor is a clear, true voice. It is a blessing to be part of such a group of people. Thank you.

– JO ANN STEVENSON

WHO WE ARE

Chair: Camilla Gryski

President & Co-Founder: Jo Ann Stevenson

Co-Founder: Anne Tanner

Secretary & Website Liaison: Joan D. Clayton

Treasurer: Mary Anderson

Membership Coordinator: Maureen Edgar

Data Base Coordinator: Lois Catalano

Host for Meetings: Carolyn Gratton

Interfaith Rep.: John Joseph Mastandrea

Newsletter Layout: Flamingo Graphics

Newsletter & Publicity: Kathryn Knight

Whatever is flexible and flowing will tend to grow, whatever is rigid and blocked will wither and die.

–Tao Te Ching