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Daniel Laurendeau Shichidan Shihan – Head Instructor



- Began Aikido in October 1975, at [Aikikai de Montréal](#).
- Attends first Aikido USAF Summer Camp in 1977.
- In 1981, takes part of an intensive tour of Aikido organisations and dojos in France.
- First involved as Assistant-Instructor for the McGill Aikido Club in 1982.
- Earned black belt, first degree (shodan) in 1983.
- **Head Instructor** of McGill Aikido in 1984.
- Travels to Japan with Yamada, Kanai and Tamura Shihans in 1989.
- Recommended for black belt, **6th degree (Rokudan)** in September 2007 by Y. Yamada Shihan.
- Returns to Japan to train at [Hombu Dojo](#) in June 2008.
- Marks **25th year of teaching** at McGill Aikido with seminar lead by Y. Yamada Shihan in November 2009.
- **Doshu Moriteru Ueshiba** visits McGill Aikido Dojo in September 2010.
- In February 2011 travels to Hawaii to participate in the 50th Anniversary Seminar of O'Sensei's only visit outside of Japan.
- Celebrates his **30th year as Head Instructor** at McGill Aikido in October of 2014 with guest Instructors Massimo di Villadorata, Claude Berthiaume and Robert Saad Shihans.
- Appointed **Shihan** by Doshu Moriteru Ueshiba January 2016.
- Recommended for 7th degree (Shichidan) in January 2022 by Doshu Moriteru Ueshiba.

"Sensei Laurendeau believes that any teacher of aikido should keep training as long as possible as an example to students that the art is a life long learning process for all participants. He maintains a regular training schedule and has attended countless seminars over the past many years.

McGill Aikido organizes seminars for each of the Fall and Winter semesters and has received prominent teachers such as Yoshimitsu Yamada, Massimo di Villadorata, Christian Tissier, Paul Müller, Mary Heiny, Dick Stroud, Pat Hendricks, Donovan Waite, Lorraine DiAnne, Claude Berthiaume and many of the new upcoming generation of Leaders in the Aikido community.

Sensei Laurendeau has been invited to lead seminars and to head classes in the Montreal and Quebec City areas, in Ottawa, Toronto, the United States, Mexico, France, Portugal and Turkey.

As head instructor at McGill Aikido, awakening young people to the values carried by Aikido has certainly been Sensei Laurendeau's most precious accomplishment. He has presented many of his fine senior students for Dan grades, traditionally at Y. Yamada Shihan's New York Aikikai.

And he strongly believes that Aikido remains an act of generosity, passing on knowledge as an altruistic gift.

Go, and give some more..."

~ Daniel Laurendeau, Head Instructor

Gilles Longpré Shichidan Shihan – Senior Instructor



~~Mr. Juan Carlos Cruz is a 7th degree Aikido Master in Montreal, 1997. He is a former student of the New York Aikikai and has been teaching Aikido in Montreal for over 20 years. He is a member of the International Aikido Federation and the Canadian Aikido Association.~~

Juan Carlos Cruz – Godan



- 1995: Started Aikido in Mexico City at Carlos Corderos' Aiki-Cally
- 1997: Moved to Montreal and joined McGill Aikido
- 2003: Assistant-Instructor at McGill Aikido
- 2008: Tested for and awarded rank of Nidan from Y. Yamada Shihan at the [New York Aikikai](#)
- 2012: Tested for and awarded 3rd Dan rank by Y. Yamada Shihan at New York Aikikai's Christmas Seminar.
- Obtained rank of Yondan in 2017 from New York Aikikai.
- Recommended for 5th degree (godan) in January 2022 by Y. Yamada Shihan.

"Born in Mexico City, I started practicing martial arts in 1984 (Tae Kwon Do & Lima-Lama); I discovered Aikido in 1995 at Carlos Cordero's Aiki-Cally; my teachers in Mexico had strong links with Massimo di Villadorata and Daniel Laurendeau in Montreal; therefore, when I came to study my MBA in 1997, I immediately joined McGill Aikido where I am now an assistant instructor.

Aikido is a very important part of my life; I also belong to Amnesty International whose philosophy I find very similar to Aikido's principles of harmony and non-conflict.

Having an autistic daughter has taught me the importance of understanding that each person is special and unique and we should accept and love each one the way they are. Aikido is very much about this, it's about being non-competitive and resolving conflict through harmony and understanding. For me, the real challenge is not to conquer others but to understand ourselves.

Working for Air Canada has allowed me to travel to many Aikido seminars where I have established good friendships, particularly with Clyde Takeguchi Shihan and Mary Heiny. I also admire the teachings of Frank Doran and of course Daniel Laurendeau, Massimo di Villadorata and Y.Yamada."

~ Juan-Carlos Cruz, Assistant-Instructor

Jacques Pharand - Yondan



- Le judo d'abord, ensuite le karaté ont été mes premiers contacts avec les arts martiaux. Et c'est par hasard, me cherchant une activité pour m'extirper du travail, que je suis tombé sur l'aikido.
- Le terme le plus juste serait plutôt "tombé dedans" l'aikido, tant cet art m'a et me fascine encore.
- Après quatorze ans à l'Aikikai de Montréal, sous la férule de sensei Massimo Di Villadorata (2001/2015) et depuis avec Daniel Laurendeau Shihan, la poursuite du geste juste se continue avec le même enthousiasme.
- Co-Instructeur classe des jeunes.

- Obtient le grade de Sandan en mai 2016.
- Promu ceinture-noire 4ième degré (Yondan) en septembre 2020.

"Plus impliqué dans l'enseignement, autant avec les enfants que les adultes, je m'applique à transmettre ce que j'ai appris, ce que je continue d'apprendre et surtout, ce que j'en ai compris."

~ Jacques Pharand – Assistant-instructeur

Denis Betournay - Yondan



- In the 1980's, began the study of Budō Yōseikan Aikido at the Cegep de l'Outaouais, under Sensei Patrick Augé Shihan, Head Instructor.
- In the 1990's, expanded my martial arts study (incl. Karate Shotokan and forms of mixed martial arts).
- In 1998, decided to return to my traditional Aikido roots at the Montreal Aikikai – with Sensei Massimo di Villadorata Shihan, Head Instructor.
- February 2007 - earned the rank of Shodan – tested by Yoshimitsu Yamada Shihan.
- February 2011 - earned the rank of Nidan – tested by Yoshimitsu Yamada Shihan.
- May 2015 - joined McGill Aikido under Daniel Laurendeau Shihan, Head Instructor.
- May 2016 – tested and earned the rank of Sandan.
- September 2020 – promoted to rank of Yondan by Y. Yamada Shihan.

"My martial art journey has essentially evolved around the harmonious integration of key martial principles, free state of mind and core life values and priorities, reflected into a fluid and natural aikido style. In my teachings, I strive to convey core aikido principles which are naturally adapted to a student's personality and biomechanical pre-dispositions."

~ Denis Betournay, Assistant-Instructor

Eric Kimmel – Yondan



- Started Aikido in 1988 at Montreal's Aikido de la Montagne.
- Trained under Obata Sensei for 3 years at the Japanese Canadian Cultural Center (JCCC) in mid-town Toronto.
- 1993 - Moved to downtown Toronto and spent 4 years with Sensei Fran Turner at Aikido Shugyo Dojo.
- 1997 - Moved back to Montreal and joined McGill Aikido.
- Involved as Assistant-Instructor in 2002.
- Tested for and awarded rank of Shodan in 2003.
- Obtained rank of Nidan in 2006 from Y. Yamada Shihan at the [New York Aikikai](#).
- In 2011 tested for and was awarded his 3rd Dan rank by Y. Yamada Shihan at New York Aikikai's Christmas Seminar.
- Obtained rank of Yondan in 2015 from New York Aikikai

"Aikido has become such a grounding force in my life. Its conflict-free philosophy has translated into a more relaxed nature in both my business and personal life. Aikido is about overcoming one's ego and the need "to win" all of the time. Because we are responsible for our partner's safety (even when employing effective controls or throws), we learn to deal with very stressful moments on the mat and in life that don't necessarily need to result in creating pain or "a loss" for the other person. In my mind, this is the goal of Aikido - to live every moment of one's life experiencing this sense of focus, lack of ego, and care for those we're with (regardless of their intentions)."

~ Eric Kimmel, Assistant-Instructor

Jason Lambert - Sandan



- Begins Aikido in 2002 at Montreal Aikikai with M. di Villadorata Shihan after having practiced Judo and Taekwon-do.
- Reaches rank of Nidan in 2013, awarded by Yoshimitsu Yamada Shihan.
- Following 13 years training and 4 years teaching at Montreal Aikikai, joins McGill Aikido in May 2015.
- Instructor for the Thursday night class.
- 2017: Tested for and awarded 3rd Dan rank at the USAF Summer Camp.

"My practice is centered on the study of the principles of unhindered motion that results in the application of aikido in a natural, spontaneous way, and of the mental and spiritual disposition that arises from this application. On the physical level, elements of dynamic posture, rigorous execution of techniques and correct body motion in time and space are ever present both in empty-handed and weapons practice. These aspects are reflected at the mental level by a mind that is calm but active, imperturbable but never stagnant, thus always free. Zen permeates each moment during practice and the spirit that comes with it allows transcendence of the aggressor-victim duality, transforming conflict into an opportunity of mutual learning, discovery and harmonious progression."

~ Jason Lambert, Instructor

Pierre Marier – Shodan



Michel Brutti – Shodan



- Started Aikido at McGill Aikido in 2003
- Tested for and awarded rank of Shodan in 2013

" Practicing the martial art of Aikido at McGill, under the stewardship of Sensei Laurendeau, has been a very enriching experience for me. There is a great deal of positive energy that comes out of those hours of training.

In our lives, as we are subjected to pressures coming from various fronts, we tend to spend our energies handling those pressures rather than exploring a true sense of who we are and evaluating where we are at that moment in our life journey. Aikido was definitely a way for me to raise my awareness of who I am, and where I am in relationship to other people.

As I practice it, Aikido is also very powerful at transforming negative energies into positive ones. Applying the same principles in my personal life, it has provided me with a more enriching and inspiring journey. "

~ Michel Brutti, Assistant-Instructor

Louise Potvin - Shodan



- Joint McGill Aikido en 2015.
- Co-Instructeur classe des jeunes.
- Promue ceinture-noire 1er degré (Shodan) en mai 2019 par Y. Yamada Shihan.

" Plus impliqué dans l'enseignement, autant avec les enfants que les adultes, je m'applique à transmettre ce que j'ai appris, ce que je continue d'apprendre et surtout, ce que j'en ai compris."

~ Louise Potvin – Assistante-instructeur

Raymond Yuan - Shodan



- Dabbled in Karate, Jiu Jitsu, Judo, Taichi before settling onto Aikido.
- Started Aikido at Aikikai de Montréal in May 2009.
- Joined McGill Aikido in May 2015.
- Involved in teaching the youth class at McGill Aikido since May 2016.
- Promoted to black belt 1st degree (Shodan) in May 2019 by Y. Yamada Shihan.

" The study of Aikido is intriguing in that applications look effortless when executed by experienced Aikidokas, but is very frustrating to the novice. The allure to this art is the economy

of movement, spirals of neutralization, projections and wrist controls. An often neglected aspect of Aikido, is the spiritual component which aims to cultivate inner peace. The tatami is my escape from the hectic work schedule and enables me to focus on the present."

~ Raymond Yuan, Assistant-Instructor