

Art-Ritual, Spirituality and Unification, Bibliography 2026

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What follows is a selected bibliography of writings in different categories addressing the relationship of art and ritual to the spiritual or unification perspective on reality. Citations may appear in more than one subcategory.

Recent General Overview Essay

- **“The Intersection of Arts and Spirituality,”** Harvard Divinity School, Center for the Study of World Religions, News, Oct. 22, 2024.
by Jeffrey Blackwell,

Foundational & Theoretical Texts

- **Concerning the Spiritual in Art** (1911).
by Kandinsky, Wassily.
A foundational text advocating for abstract art as a means of expressing inner spiritual life.
- **Creativity and Spirituality: Bonds between Art and Religion** (1998).
by Coleman, Earle J.
Analyzes the aesthetic and spiritual, connecting them to figures like Van Gogh and Kandinsky.
- **Art and Spiritual Transformation: The Seven Stages of Death and Rebirth in the Artist's Journey** (2009).
by Eversole, Finley
Explores the spiritual evolution of consciousness through modern art.
- **The Inner Reaches of Outer Space: Metaphor as Myth and as Religion.**
By Campbell, Joseph
Explores the role of art and symbol in spiritual experience.

Art as Spiritual Practice & Process

- **The Artist's Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity** (1992).

by Cameron, Julia.

A popular, actionable guide to unlocking creativity through spiritual practice.

- **Art Is a Spiritual Path: Engaging the Sacred through the Practice of Art** (2005).

by Allen, Pat B.

Explores the intersection of art, psychology, and spirituality.

- **Spirit Taking Form: Making a Spiritual Practice of Making Art** (2002).

by Azara, Nancy J.

Focuses on the process of creation as a spiritual journey.

Visual Culture & Art History

- **The Oxford Handbook of Religion and the Arts** (2014). An academic by Taylor, Roger, et al.

An overview of the intersection of religious thought and artistic practice.

Foundational & Theoretical Works Concerning the Spiritual in Art

- **The Spiritual in Twentieth-Century Art**

by Roger Lipsey (1988): An extensive exploration of how 20th-century artists responded to the call for spiritual content in modernism.

- **Art and Spiritual Transformation**

by Ad Reinhardt, Mark Rothko, and others (ed. by Robert Wuthnow): Examines the "broken center" and regenerative power of post-1945 art.

- **Reclaiming the Spiritual in Art: Contemporary Cross-Cultural Perspectives**

edited by Dawn Perlmutter and Debra Koppman (1999): A collection of essays on the continued relevance of the sacred in global contemporary art.

Creating Art as Spiritual Practice

- **Art-Making as Spiritual Practice**, Bloomsbury Press. (2025).
(Forthcoming 2025): A new collection edited by David Newheiser and others exploring ritual, time, and medium in artistic practice.
- **Creative Spirituality: The Way of the Artist**
by Robert Wuthnow (2003): Discusses how contemporary artists such as Madeleine L'Engle and Tony Kushner view their creative work as a search for divine mystery.
- **Beginning Again: Reflections on Art as Spiritual Practice**
by Deborah J. Haynes (2018): Combines Buddhist practice with art-making to address themes of impermanence and compassion.

Historical & Religious Contexts

- **Spiritual Moderns: Twentieth-Century American Artists and Religion**
by Erika Doss (2023): Analyzes how religion influenced modern icons like Andy Warhol (Catholicism) and Mark Tobey (Bahá'í Faith).
- **Art and Religion in Africa**
by Rosalind Hackett (1998): A comparative study of how African visual and performing arts communicate relationships between the human and spiritual worlds.

Specialized Bibliographies

- **Sense and Spirituality: The arts and spiritual formation**
by J McCullough - 2015
The footnotes accompanying the text and the **bibliography** will reflect the range of sources used in the writing of this book.
- **Creativity and Spirituality: Bonds between art and religion**
by EJ Coleman - 1998

Jewish, and Taoist theories of **art** and nature.

. [Annotated Bibliography: the spiritual in art](#)

by A Valenti - 1991

In **art**, to stand alone in expression of the deepest **spiritual** yearnings of the **artist**.

Art-Ritual, Altered States of Consciousness and Universal Energy

. [Tantric Buddhism and Altered States of Consciousness: Durkheim, emotional energy and visions of the consort](#)

by L Child - 2016

Explores the role of altered states of consciousness in communicating social and emotional energies within tantric Buddhist ritual, applying analysis from Durkheimian social theorists and Jungian psychology.

Energy in Tantric Ritual

Applies an analysis of social and emotional energies to tantric Buddhist ritual and biographical material.

Art, Ritual, and Consciousness

Suggests that tantric deities, portrayed in religious art and ritual as collective symbols, allow for an interaction between social and personal consciousness that can be understood in terms of communication and energy.

. [Poetic Imagination in Scientific Practice: Grand Unification as](#)

[Narrative Worldmaking](#)

By A Borrelli, 2020 - brill.com

Narrative Cultures and the Aesthetics of Religion

Explores the aesthetic and imaginative aspects of modern science, particularly the Grand Unified Theories (GUTs) in high energy physics, and draws analogies to the modern Western religious sphere and narrative character.

Unification and Religious Affordances

Connects the function of unification scenarios in physics to religious affordances described in the context of fictional texts fostering religious belief in supernatural beings.

Parallel with Ritual Doubt

Draws a parallel between the storytelling of traditional legends and the expression of belief, sometimes involving ritual doubt, suggesting a link between narrative, ritual, and belief structures.

. **Ritual As Resource: Energy for Vibrant Living**

By M Picucci - 2005

Explores energetic healing within the context of ritual, using it as a tool for tuning, focusing, amplifying, and directing energy.

Ritual as Art: Discusses using ritual as an art form that offers a way to stimulate dormant internal energy to heal and transform the troubled self.

Unifying Perspective: Links ritual to concepts of 'spirit, universal energy, and evolution,' and 'other existing realities,' suggesting a broad, unifying perspective on reality.

. **Art, Ritual, and Trance Inquiry**

by B Bickel - 2020 - Springer

Explores art and ritual within the context of altered states of consciousness, which relates to the idea of a unified reality.

Energy and Reality: Discusses how rituals re-configure "energy and information that creates and maintains our realities," directly touching upon the concept of reality creation through energy.

Spiritual Interconnection: Details the use of art and ritual as means for engaging with the "spirit world" and connecting with "intelligent powers of the cosmos," suggesting a non-material, interconnected view of reality.

. **The Dawn of Division: For an anthropological theory of consciousness through contemplative ethnography**

by [F Divino](#) -, 2025 - Wiley Online Library

Anthropology of Consciousness

Examines the role of non-dualistic perspectives, drawn from Buddhist philosophy, in interpreting contemplative practices and the resulting mandalas drawn by participants, which can be seen as artistic expressions.

Mandala Interpretation: Discusses the use of drawing mandalas as a visual elicitation exercise during ethnography of contemplative practice, where the drawings are interpreted by the meditator from a non-dualistic perspective, rather than an artistic critique.

Ritual and Non-Dualism: Connects dismembered body parts appearing in the mandalas to a shamanic initiation ritual, which, despite its macabre appearance, is viewed as a progressive refinement or 'digging deep into consciousness' that aligns with a non-dual understanding of relationship and interconnection.

· **[The Unity of Physics and Poetry: HC Ørsted and the aesthetics of force](#)**

by [AD Wilson](#) - [Journal of the History of Ideas](#), 2008 - JSTOR
examines H. C. Ørsted's deep and lasting interest in aesthetics and poetry, which he believed had an essential link with science.

Aesthetic Reading of Science: Asserts that by reading Ørsted's scientific writings "aesthetically," scholars can gain a more nuanced understanding of the conceptual foundations of his scientific thought.

Unification of Art and Science: Notes that Ørsted sought to unify art and science, and poetry and philosophy, considering this unification to be the goal of scientific method and understanding.

· **[Art, Energy, and the Brain](#)**

by [R Pepperell](#) - [Progress in brain research](#), 2018 - Elsevier
Proposes that the challenges of integrating art and neuroscience can be addressed using an energy-based approach, which is a concept central to physical sciences, neuroscience, and has been consistently referred to by artists and art historians.

Energy's Role in Aesthetics: Surveys the role of energy in art, philosophical and psychological aesthetics, and neuroscience, suggesting that this approach could help explain how brain activity contributes to aesthetic experience.

Energy in Art Theory: Discusses how concepts of energy pervade the thinking of artists and art critics, informing their understanding of art's operation, and is conceived as a motivating force for artistic endeavor.

- **Art & Energy: how culture changes**

by B Lord - 2014

Explores the history of art in all media, including architecture, literature, and performing arts, through the lens of how sources of energy affect culture.

Energy's Cultural Impact: Analyzes how new energy sources fundamentally transform art and culture, affecting how communities organize, communicate, and assign value to art.

Rituals and Physical Culture: Examines how physical culture, including marriage rituals, courtship traditions, and the sex trade, are examples of practices linked to bodily and external energy conversions.

- **Sacred Interconnections: Postmodern spirituality, political economy, and art**

by DR Griffin - 1990

Discusses the focus on the place of art within postmodern spirituality and culture, specifically mentioning authors who deal with visual arts, literature, and the centrality of art within religious meditation.

Ritual and Interconnection: Mentions authors who speak of "ritualistic affirmations of interconnection" and suggests that Shingon Buddhism, with its contemplation upon mandala, may provide a model for deep religious experiences evoked through sensory images.

Spiritual Energy Concept: Affirms the reality of "spiritual energy" that exists within and between all nodes in the cosmic web of interconnections, linking it to a non-dualistic postmodern spirituality.

- **Ritual, Collective Effervescence and the Categories: Toward a neo**

Durkheimian model of the nature of human consciousness, feeling and understanding

By [CJ Throop](#), CD Laughlin - [Journal of Ritual Studies](#), 2002 - JSTOR

Examines the role of ritual in generating "extraordinary energy states," which are often termed "psychic energy" experiences, and describes how these are interpreted in different cultural contexts, such as the !Kung term *n/um* and the Tibetan term *dumo*.

Bodily Energy Flow: Discusses how these ritually evoked energy experiences involve the feeling of intense bliss and energy flow in the body, which can be described as circulating around centers or forming a dynamic central axis.

Energy Confirms Ideology: Outlines how the experience of evoking extraordinary psychic energy confirms and energizes the ideology of the respective religious system, linking lived energetic experiences to cultural cosmological systems.

- **Generative Creating of Sacral Space: mythology, cosmology and places for cult rituals**

by S Ozola - Proceedings of the International Scientific Conference, 2021 - journals.ru.lv

Explains the Latvian symbolic sign system, the Lielvārde belt, which includes symbols of strong energy and encodes ancient information related to nature and the Universe.

Energetic Ritual Spaces: Discusses the Balts' tribes choosing energetically powerful places for cult rituals, connecting sacral space and religious ritual with concepts like Place, Way, and Symbol.

Sacral Space Creation: Analyzes the influence of Latvian wisdom on the establishment traditions of early places of worship, focusing on mythology and cult ritual traditions.

- **Re-visioning Ethnography Through Meditative Practice: The proposal for a contemplative anthropology and its experience through visual elicitation technique**

by F Divino - Journal of Contemplative Studies, 2024.

Examines how an anthropologist with a contemplative background can analyze rituals and ceremonies from a nondual perspective, focusing on shared consciousness and interconnectedness.

Visual Elicitation Methodology: Proposes a research methodology that integrates ethnography and visual elicitation, specifically using mandala-like images, to explore consciousness and meditative experiences.

Contemplative Approach to Art: Discusses how artistic expressions can be studied to determine how they evoke shared states of consciousness and transcendence, benefiting the understanding of art's role in human societies.

- **[The Aesthetics of Meaning and Thought: The bodily roots of](#)**

- **[philosophy, science, morality, and art](#)**

- by [M Johnson](#) - 2022

- Explores the relationship between cognition, meaning, language, action, and values, and how they are grounded in and shaped by embodiment.

- **Mind and Embodiment:** Argues that a scientifically and philosophically satisfactory view of the mind must account for the deep visceral, emotional, and qualitative relationship humans have to the world.

- **Arts and Meaning Making:** Suggests that the arts offer profound insights into the processes of meaning making that form the basis of conceptual systems and cultural practices.

- **[The Non-dual and Interconnected Nature of Aesthetic Judgments](#)**

- by J Li - 2022 - [diva-portal.org](#)

- Explores aesthetic judgments within a framework where existence is considered non-dually interconnected, which relates to a unified perspective on reality.

- **Zen Philosophy Framework:** Presents Zen philosopher Dōgen's framework for allowing aesthetic judgments within an interconnected view of existence.

- **Reformulated Aesthetic Meaning:** Reformulates the meaning of aesthetic judgments, suggesting that they reveal something about the standpoint taken in judgment rather than just the object's beauty.

- **The Indian Aesthetics of Emotions (Rasa): non-duality, aesthetic**

- **experience and the body pdf**

by D Loundo - Dossiê Diálogos entre Literatura ..., 2021 -

dancehausreview.wordpress.com

Frames Rabindranath Tagore's literature and writings within the wider perspective of Indian traditional performing arts, specifically *nāṭya* and *kāvyā*.

Art as Performance: Defines artistic events as existential performances (*abhinaya*) involving words, gestures, imagery, dance, and music, with the supreme goal of self-transformation.

Aesthetics and Non-Duality: Discusses the Indian aesthetics of emotions (*Rasa*) in relation to non-duality, aesthetic experience, and the body.

- **Symbolic Worlds: Art, Science, Language, Ritual**

by I Scheffler - 1997

Explores the symbolic function of the mind across various domains, including science, the arts, religious ritual, and child's play.

Ritual and Scientific Symbols: Offers an integrated treatment of ambiguity and metaphor, analyses of play and ritual, and a discussion of scientific symbol systems and reality.

Mind's Symbolic Character: Presents a broad view of the mind's basic symbol-forming character, relevant to fields like anthropology, religion, and psychology.

- **Toward a Unified Field in Aesthetics**

by W Abell - Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, 1952 - JSTOR

Suggests possibilities of interrelationship between art, psychology, and other current developments of thought, such as the social sciences, aiming for theoretical unification and synthesis.

Aesthetics Synthesis Need: Urges the present need for theoretical unification and synthesis in aesthetics, particularly to organize the rapid discovery of particular facts in a period of cultural change.

Art Integration: Reviews two articles that seek to integrate the problems of art and aesthetics with the totality of modern thought, including psychological and social science perspectives.

- **From Energy to Information: Representation in science and technology, art, and literature**

by B Clarke, [LD Henderson](#) - 2002

Examines the interactions of science and technology, art, and literature in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, focusing on the historical transition from energy to information.

Scientific Themes: Discusses five historical themes—thermodynamics, electromagnetism, inscription, information theory, and virtuality—to sample modes of representation in response to newly developed scientific concepts.

Energy in Modernism: Demonstrates the crucial centrality of the theme of energy in modernist discourse by relating literary fictions and the plastic arts to the transition from the era of energy to the information age

- **Art, Ritual, and the Crafting of Illusion**

By D Tuzin - [The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology](#), 2002

Characterizes recent developments in the anthropology of art led by inspired young scholars who are today's leaders in the anthropological study of art and ritual

- **Anthropology and Art**

By [A Schneider](#) - [The Sage Handbook of Social Anthropology](#), 2012

The phenomenologically inspired anthropology of the senses has been important

Art, Ritual and Insight

- **Thinking Through Rituals**

Edited by Kevin Schilbrack, [K Schilbrack](#) - 2004

Ritual skills facilitate insight and discovery.

- **Theorizing Rituals, Volume 2: Annotated Bibliography of Ritual Theory,**

1966-2005

Edited by [J Kreinath](#), JAM Snoek, [M Stausberg](#) - 2007

Insights on the nature of rituals and general works in the humanities that have important implications for the study of ritual.

Art, Ritual and Intuition

- **Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry**

by J Maritain – 2023

Artists using poetic and creative use of intuition.

- **Inner Knowing: Consciousness, Creativity, Insight, Intuitions**

By H Palmer - 1998

Altered-state induction procedure.

- **Conscious Evolution: The Dance of Intuition and Intellect.**

By BS Stoff, S Stoff - 2010

Art and ritual as part of this dance.

Art, Ritual and Creativity

- **Creativity and Spirituality: Bonds Between Art and Religion**

By EJ Coleman - 1998

Martin Buber's I-Thou relationship captures much that is central to art and creativity; the varieties of union in art and religion

- **Tradition and Creativity in Tribal Art**

by DP Biebuyck - 1973

Under the title 'Individual Creativity and Tribal Norms in Non-Western Arts,' the traditional artist often works for the members of closely knit kinship groups or of **ritual** communities.

- **Art-Making as Ritual: An Exploration and Development of a Personal**

- **Iconography**

by C Winter - 2017

The creative act within art-making is a means to experience what it is to be human, not only in our physicality, but also in our ability to transcend the mundane.

Art, Ritual and Transcendence

- **Translucence: Religion, the Arts, and Imagination**

by C Gilbertson, G Muilenburg - 2004

An ongoing seminar, led by Ronald Thiemann of Harvard Divinity School,

- **The Religion of Reality: Inquiry into the Self, Art, and Transcendence**

by D Maleuvre - 2006

The artist as a guide to understanding reality.

- **Art and Spirituality: Exploring the Sacred and Transcendent in Human**

- **Existence**

by S Shah - Journal of Religion and Society, 2023 - islamicreligious.com

Exploring the sacred and transcendent dimensions of human existence from ancient religious **rituals** to contemporary **art** movements.

- **The Margins of Transcendence in Contemporary Art**

by G Sztabiński - Art Inquiry, 2014

Art does not seek to express transcendent reality. ... transcendence only as a more or less tangible prospect.

- **Consciousness and Transcendence: Art, Religion, and Human**

- **Existence**

by L Mayer - 2023

Heaven is that intuition of perfection toward which human effort must be aimed and of which **ritual** practices are a reminder.

- **Performance in the Texts of Mallarmé: the Passage from Art to Ritual**

by ML Shaw - 1992

The transition of art to ritual.

- **Resounding Transcendence: Transitions in Music, Religion, and Ritual**

by [J Engelhardt](#), P Bohlman - 2016

There are reasons to be uncomfortable about our comfort with transcendence in thinking about music, ritual, and religion.

- **They Smell of Earth After Rain: Exploring the Sacred Space Within**

- **Performance**

by C Jimenez - 2024

I create works for the concert stage as a ritual.

- **Affective States in Art: An examination of the paradigm of**

- **transcendence**

by T Mukhopadhyay - 2005

Transcendence is concretely realized in good art, folk-art, and ritual.

Art, Ritual and Reality

- **Materializing Religion: Expression, Performance and Ritual**

by E Arweck, WJF Keenan - 2006

This book offers a valuable resource for researchers in the sociology and anthropology of religion, art, and ritual.

- **Art, Myth and Ritual**

by K Chang, K Chang - 2009 - books.google.com

Access to gods and to ancestors through rituals and art.

- **Ritual and Event**

by M Franko - 2007

Relationships between ritual and politics, everyday life, and art making. Johansson discerns a post-ritual reality.

- **Theorizing Rituals: Annotated Bibliography of Ritual Theory, 1966-2005**

by JAM Snoek – 2006

Ritual, from 'ordinary' or 'everyday' reality.

- **Theorizing Rituals, Volume 2: Annotated Bibliography of Ritual Theory,**

1966-2005

Edited by [J Kreinath](#), JAM Snoek, [M Stausberg](#) - 2007

Take a theory of any aspect of 'the real world' from 'ordinary' or 'everyday' reality.

- **Art, Ritual, and Trance Inquiry**

by B Bickel - 2020

Re-configure "energy and information that creates and maintains our realities," forging expansive relationships where the "intelligent powers of

the cosmos” can assist us.

- **Material Culture and Ritual: State of the Question**

by J Elsner, 2012

We are fortunate in the ritual-centeredness of art.

- **Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life: Expanded Edition**

by A Kaprow - 2003

A return to the point where art was more actively involved in ritual, magic, and life I would maintain is the only reality within which any question about the arts may be asked.