



# EXHIBITING GAIAN ANIMISM:

HOW CURATORS ARE FUSING ESOTERICISM,  
SCIENCE, SPIRITUALITY, AND PROMOTING  
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION,  
AT ART & SCIENCE MUSEUMS  
AROUND THE WORLD

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Bron Taylor is Professor of Religion and Environmental Ethics at the University of Florida. An interdisciplinary environmental studies scholar, he explores through the lenses of the sciences and humanities the complex relationships and influences among worldviews, values, ideologies, and socioecological systems. His books include *Dark Green Religion: Nature Spirituality and the Planetary Future* (2010), *Avatar and Nature Spirituality* (2013), and *Ecological Resistance Movements* (1995). He is also editor of the award-winning *Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature* (2005) and in 2017, received a Lifetime Achievement award from the International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture.

In recent decades scholars from diverse disciplines in the Arts and Sciences have been advancing what I call Gaian Animism, namely, animistic spiritualities, kinship feelings toward non-human organisms, and eco-organicist/Gaian worldviews, in order to promote proenvironmental attitudes and behaviors. With evidence from Europe, Africa, and the Americas, I provide photographs and video excerpts from such venues to argue that curators at many of the world's museums, while sometimes influenced by such scholars, have become influential promoters of such 'dark green' nature spiritualities, values, and behaviors. By so doing they provide paths to spirituality, meaning, and purpose that are especially relevant for those who have left behind the world's still predominant religions. These venues offer religious forms that echo some longstanding religious and mystical perceptions – they also often and increasingly expressing appreciation for and spiritual affinity with indigenous religious traditions – while enriching and reinforcing such perceptions and values with scientific understandings. These spaces also function as shrines and pilgrimage sites for whose sharing deep feelings of belonging and connection to nature, and who are themselves seeking to find pathways between their own mystical connections to nature and their respect for the sciences.



**23rd April, 2024**  
**18:15 – 19:45**

Room 000.235, Seminar  
Room, Hartmannstr. 14,  
Building D1, erlangen

**link for virtual attendance:**

<https://fau.zoom.us/j/63672581746>



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