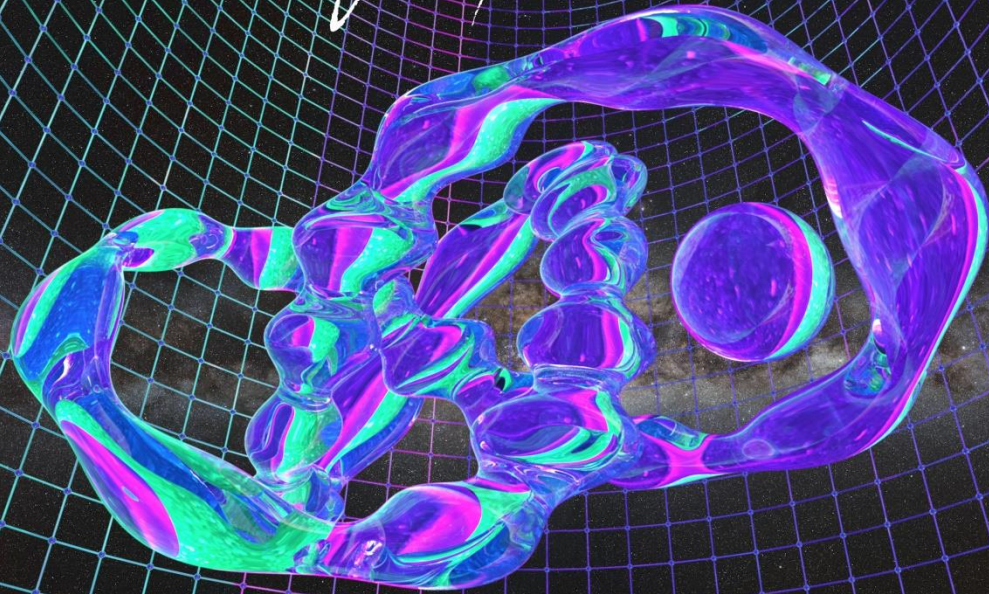


*Fran Adlard*



An immersive VR experience through  
birth, life and rebirth



# BREATHING THROUGH



Soundscape **Mihaly Horvath** Production **astradream**

## BREATHING THROUGH

### Technical Data

Length: 219" (3 minutes, 39 seconds)

Resolution: 4K VR 360° (3.840 x 1.080 pixels / eye), 30 fps, over/under

Audio: 4 channel immersive audio

Format: .mp4 / for all VR devices. Higher resolution (5.760 x 3.240) for VIVE available.

Recommendation: Sit on a swivel chair and use high quality headphones.

### Introduction

Until just recently, Virtual Reality (VR) was not a format that one was used to experiencing emotionally—at least not in the way that one experiences a painting or a sculpture. For this reason, viewers tend to be caught off guard when experiencing VR artworks. Media like this is too often something one is used to receiving from a corporation: the product of years of market testing, rather than the vision of a single artist or collective. astradream's *Breathing Through*, however, is a work of visual art that becomes a lived environment. Perspective is variable; one sees what one wants to see. This is all the more fitting for a work that foregrounds the journeying of consciousness from birth, through the stages of life, into death.

*Breathing Through* resembles architecture in many respects. One has the opportunity to choose a vantage point, even to set the pace of the experience. The flow of the work approximates an interactive space. Viewers can look around idly, as one does after emerging from the subway. Or they can just stare straight ahead for a more passive experience. You might wonder while watching if you're seeing what you're supposed to. You might try to imagine and recreate the path that the artists, Stan Adard and Mihaly Horvath, would want you to follow. If viewers want, they can peek around the corners of the immersive, 360 degree space, and look for various novelties coming or going. This freedom of perception parallels the ethical freedom we experience in life. Just as in life, you can even opt to ignore the objects presented to you, and try to understand the rules of the universe that one is inhabiting, conceptualizing its peculiar gravity and inertia.

The actual pandemic has set a somber tone for people used to showing art and creating experiences—dancers, musicians, performers, filmmakers. In the absence of public events like these, virtual space has become one of the most immersive sensory experiences available to us. As people acclimate to having more and more emotional and contemplative experiences mediated by technology, a work like *Breathing Through* is a marker of the times. Traveling through a digitally constructed world, surrounded by scenes cultivated from history, autobiography, nature, the objects one experiences become timeless symbols. Logic and perspective matter less than the journey of life itself. Images aren't supporting structures; the road we have chosen is only relative. But the meaning of our personal narrative, like the viewpoint one chooses to see in the video, is ultimately grounded in the breath.

## Field Report

by Jeffrey Grunthaler

Breathing Through, a collaborative project whose co-creators, Stan Adard and Mihaly Horvath, work under the umbrella of astradream, conceals as much as it reveals. A short-form VR video, which artfully incorporates a stream of video works arranged in digital space, a less metaphorical take on the work's title would suggest the process of dying. During the course of Breathing Through, the body is poured into an endless expanse, a ghost looking back on what it means to be alive, environed by a wall of memories.

Music is an essential component to this experience. Mihaly Horvath's soundscape fills out the images featured in the journey. Sometimes the immersive sound seems to dissolve into near total abstraction; in a few of the videos coursing through the work, it halos flowery landscapes rendered with a bright pastel-like fleshiness. There's also a good deal of interplay between the video works featured in piece, like a gliding exhibition unto itself, and the duration of the video as a whole. What astradream communicates is a sort of naive tranquility that becomes fraught. In the way the work comments on something as traditionally frightening as dying, one glimpses the authentic meaning of life: the restive destabilization of perspective.

I almost want to say there's something spiritual about Breathing Through, which is all the more strange because it's largely arranged around copies—videos and old Super-8 films arpeggiated like living photographs in a book. Taking documentary as source material, the contents of these images parallel an individual's development across a lifetime. The artworks used in particular, which stream past the viewer, feel both archaic and contemporary. This contrasts with the more documentary video footage, which has a timeless quality about it. One video, for instance, shows a father holding a child; but this moment, this reproduced image, is only one memory in an ongoing gallery of experiences. As though gesturing to a sense of frustration or criticality towards the more conventional being put to use, the whole experience takes place as the viewer slides down a digital tunnel into strange spatial expenses that can only be rendered in VR, like an embryo emerging into form.

Throughout everything, breathing is paramount. The pacing of one's breath, as one moves along a symbolic descent, is filled with a sense of dramatic progress. The experience of breathing is rendered as an experiment in dying; the images peopling the journey come to possess a diffuse power that focuses not so much on the presence (or absence) of signifiers of everyday life, but rather on the creative energy of life itself as it works in tandem with the breath. In this way, while most VR works present the viewer with an experience of spatial alterity, Breathing Through foregrounds the very conditions that make consciousness possible. This has little, if anything, to do with negating the body, or with representing abstract structures alone. Ultimately, you, the viewer, keep returning to a fascinating journey, not knowing what you're looking for, but feeling rewarded by it.

### Stan Adard (visual)

Born in 1954 in Schaffhausen (Switzerland), Stan Adard is a Swiss-based digital flow artist. He graduated from the University of Zurich with a master degree in Education, Social Psychology and Sociology.

As the owner and director of an international software company, Adard is a pioneer in the field of digital art and design since its advent. He has since received international recognition for his "The Breathing Pictures", which he started developing in 2014.



Website: <https://stanadard.com>

Agency: <https://astradream.com> (founded by Stan Adard)

### Mihaly Horvath (soundscape)

Mihaly Horvath lives and works in Switzerland. He has been traveling as a musician since the late 1970s. With the formation "Wild Hearts" he performed as a supporting act for Uriah Heep. Horvath also celebrates success with LEVEL at the Jazz Festival in Montreux (Switzerland).

Mihaly works as a studio musician, runs his own recording studio and is specialized in creating amazing soundscapes.

Website: <https://ivy-music.ch/>



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"BREATHING THROUGH" a VR experimental art film by STAN ADARD  
IN ASSOCIATION WITH ASTRADREAM AND IVY-MUSIC  
SOUNDSCAPE BY MIHALY HORVATH

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: STAN ADARD, PROD. DESIGNER: PETER FIBICH

VISUAL EFFECTS BY ASTRADREAM

STORY AND SCREENPLAY BY STAN ADARD, PRODUCED BY STAN ADARD AND ASTRADREAM

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