

# Psychyl: The Art of Neuro-Aesthetics for Meditation

## Overview of the Emerging Arts and Science for Meditation

Recently, meditation has become the popular focus of scientists, healthcare professionals, artists, the media and the general population. Meditation is now recognized by scientists to be synonymous with theta brainwave entrainment, and is understood by health care professionals as being an effective treatment for stress related illnesses, while increasing concentration and relaxation. Studies have shown meditation to enhance immune function and promote healing of the body, mind and spirit. Along with the comprehensive research on meditation conducted by scientists worldwide, artists and musicians are also embracing new artistic avenues to create works for meditation. For millennia, art and music have been used to aid in meditation and relaxation, and some artists are revisiting the ancient methods by using these in their artwork. Modern science has also produced effective technologies to aid in meditation through theta brainwave entrainment such as bio-feedback, binaural-beats, and neuro-feedback. Recently, scientists are studying how visual art and music affect the brain, which is known as neuro-aesthetics. Psychyl (pronounced as "cycle") is a unique method for meditation through binaural-beat theta brainwave entrainment combined with neuro-aesthetic event-scapes of visual art and music which has been interpreted by artists mindful of both the aesthetics and the science. There are currently four Psychyl releases on DVD-Video which can help to induce meditation and invoke a theta state of consciousness by simply watching, and listening.

## Introduction to Neuro-Aesthetics

Neuro-Aesthetics studies the effect of visual art and music on the brain and consciousness as well as the effects of our consciousness on the arts. Many of the studies conducted, investigate aspects of the arts relating to patterns and time. Music is a system of patterns in time, and the ability to perceive and produce patterns is fundamental to our understanding of the world and ourselves. The frequency pattern distributions of neuronal action in the brain are a kind of music going on in each of our heads, based on the principles of: harmonics, resonances, and rhythms.

## The Visual Art of Psychyl

Since large areas of the brain are involved in the processing of visual information, it makes sense to integrate visual content with audio to effectively entrain meditative states of consciousness. By synchronizing non-objective symmetrical visuals with a musical counterpart, Psychyl can relieve stress and induce a relaxed, meditative state of consciousness. The Psychyl neuro-aesthetics are based on the use of symmetrical patterns over time. The patterns transform slowly, where the viewer becomes consciously unaware of the changes, but observes distinctly different images. This can reinforce the mind to release the sense of time and thought, and meditate within the moment. In Psychyl, the artists have focused on patterns in similar styles to mandalas and yantras, but have added further dimensions to the patterns through more detailed symmetry, shape and colour offered through modern digital technology. The artists have approached the visuals like a song, where the patterns of shape and colour slowly evolve. This adds a linear element to the visual artwork much like musical neuro-aesthetics.

## The Music of Psychyl

Psychyl music is based on a mantra approach with slow-moving musical elements layered in a non-linear fashion. This results in a form of music with one constant movement over 30 minutes. By not using any apparent melodies, rhythms, dynamics, or changing movements to demand the listeners' attention, the composition can release the listener from the music into a meditative state of consciousness. Psychyl music also integrates binaural beats tuned to theta brainwave frequencies. This is a proven neuro-acoustic science, which has been used effectively in many relaxation products for decades to evoke deep meditation. Psychyl harmonizes binaural beats within the composition as a "part" in the score, like a musical instrument. Rather than using a purely clinical neuro-feedback approach using binaural-beats, the goal of Psychyl is to develop an aesthetic appeal to this science because typically the sound of binaural-beats is not musical. Psychyl music has been created for meditation and wellness, but above all, has been composed for the same purpose as any other musical art form: to offer an aesthetically engaging listening experience.

## The Balance of Art, Music and Science

The aesthetic harmony of the visual, music and scientific components of Psychyl has been of paramount consideration for the artists. By treating the sequence of pictures as visual songs and the music and science as sonic art, the artists were able to move the visual, music and science elements into unison, where each are effecting the different senses, but in a harmonized aesthetic manner.

Psychyl has been created by the artists to express their interests and thoughts in neuro-aesthetics and sciences. Psychyl is an endeavour to create art which reaches into the consciousness to provide a relaxing and healing effect. Psychyl is a new art form created to help anyone meditate by simply watching and listening.

## About the Artists

Psychÿl is the works of db.

The artist collaboration of Debra McEachern and Brent Alan Plain began with the productions of the first 4 DVD's and 4 CD's in the Psychyl series released in 2004.

Brent Alan Plain has a diverse background as a multimedia artist, composer, producer and inventor with an eclectic body of work which includes patented internet processes, software designs, web designs, digital video and multimedia releases on CD-ROM and on the internet as well as music releases for film, television, radio and CD. His synectic approach to art, technology and living, culminates in his latest works on the Psychyl projects.

Debra McEachern is a forward-thinking and innovative artist focusing on the endless possibilities presented by digital art. Born in Thunder Bay, Ontario, she holds a HBFA in Fine Arts from Lakehead University and a post-graduate Diploma in 3D Animation from Sheridan College. Her work has been purchased for both corporate and institutional collections with numerous works in private collections in Canada, US and Paris. Ms. McEachern works out of her studio in Toronto, Canada.

## Psychÿl Production Notes

Psychÿl is a Canadian production produced in Toronto. The production of the first four works for DVD began in 2002. Each of the works was created to aid in relieving stress and inducing meditation. The works were inspired by traditional meditation aids, known as mantra and yantra, interpreted using digital imaging and sound combined with binaural-beat theta-wave science. Each of the releases has a different theme of patterns in art and music, with each work using a different frequency of theta brainwave entrainment. The works are entitled: Volume 1 - "The Bright Seed"; Volume 2 - "Birth of Planets"; Volume 3 - "Sea of Life"; Volume 4 - "Inner Island". Psychÿl is published by db Visual Music Company of Toronto, Canada. The artists and company are planning to release subsequent volumes in 2005 and beyond.

## Psychÿl Release Notes

The scheduled consumer release date for Psychÿl DVDs was October 1, 2004. Previous to this, there was an artist screening at the National Film Board in Toronto, followed by a Press screening on September 22. The products were launched at the CHFA Trade Show at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre September 25-26, to be followed by other exhibitions planned at alternative health shows and art venues. The db Visual Music Company is currently negotiating distribution with several distributors worldwide. Psychyl products are currently available for online purchase at the company's website: <http://www.psychyl.com>, and in select retail outlets.

By db, January, 2005  
EOF #####