



DROWN OUT THE NOISE

# BREATHE

A DRAMA

# LOGLINE

A woman carrying the invisible weight of anxiety discovers, beneath the surface of an ordinary life, that she is not as alone as she has always believed.



# SYNOPSIS

Amara. Call her what the world calls her: functional, fine, together. She swims. Not as exercise, not as hobby. As necessity. Underwater is the one place where the noise stops, where her body stops fighting itself, where she can, simply, breathe.



On land, she moves through the architecture of a normal life: work, relationships, the small choreography of being a person. She is good at it. That is the thing about anxiety that rarely makes it to screen: how good you get at it. How the performance becomes indistinguishable from the person. How you can be surrounded by people who love you and still feel entirely untranslatable.

This is a film about that gap. About the exhaustion of being unseen not because people aren't looking, but because they don't know what they're seeing.

And about the moment, quiet and improbable, when someone does.



# LOOK & FEEL

## THE CENTRAL INVERSION

BREATHE is a film built on a single, precise inversion: color belongs to Amara only when she is below the surface. Above ground, the world is full of it. Overwhelmingly, relentlessly full. But color up here is not hers. It happens to her. Below the surface, it belongs to her.



## THE REAL WORLD: OVERWHELMING. CHAOTIC. AIRLESS.

The world above ground is not grey. It is too much. The fall landscape blazes with color: reds, golds, burning oranges, a million competing tones that the rest of the world calls beautiful. For Amara, it registers as noise. The camera does not drain the color from her world. It shows us what that color actually feels like when anxiety is the lens: relentless, enclosing, impossible to locate yourself inside of. Color up here is not offered to her. It crowds her.

The framing holds this feeling from the first shot. We begin with tight, airless compositions: headroom stolen, walls crowding the edges of every frame, characters pushed to the margins of the space they inhabit. There is nowhere to go. As the film progresses and understanding develops between the characters, the frame gradually opens. By the final act, there is room. There is air. There is breath.



# LOOK & FEEL

## THE WORLD BELOW: LUMINOUS. INTENTIONAL. HERS.

Convention tells us the underwater world is monochromatic: cold blues, muted and shadowed. We subvert that entirely. And that subversion is the film's emotional argument in a single image.

Below the surface, color does not overwhelm. It clarifies. Aquas, emeralds, corals, golds: the same spectrum that crowds and disorients Amara above ground becomes something she can inhabit, something with shape and intention. Up here, color happens to her. Down here, it is hers. This is not where Amara escapes. It is where she is most herself.

And the world below is not realistic. It is not meant to be. This is Amara's fantasy, and it looks like one. Her dress moves through the water the way dresses do not move in real life: slowly, deliberately, as if the fabric itself has finally been given permission to breathe. Above ground she is contained, pressed in, managed. Below the surface, everything about her flows. It is the only place in the film where she is not bracing against something. The audience understands instinctively that this is not real. That is exactly the point. It is the truest thing in the film.



# LOOK & FEEL



## **FALL FOLIAGE: THE WORLD IN EXCESS.**

We shoot in peak fall foliage in a rural mountain setting. The landscape will be breathtaking by every conventional measure. Viewers will arrive expecting to find it beautiful. They will. And that is the trap.

The foliage is not reframed as ugly or cold. It remains gorgeous. But we hold it long enough, press it close enough, layer it with Amara's interiority, that the beauty becomes suffocating. The reds, golds, and burning oranges do not comfort her. They are the visual equivalent of every room being too loud at once. Stunning, inescapable, and entirely indifferent to how she feels standing inside it.



## **LANDSCAPE AS CHARACTER.**

The setting is not backdrop. It is participant. The film uses the natural environment the way a co-writer uses a scene partner: intentionally, with purpose, and with the understanding that what surrounds Amara reflects what is happening inside her.

Water is the film's emotional through-line, and it moves with Amara's mental state. We begin with a roaring waterfall: overwhelming, relentless, impossible to speak over. As the film progresses, the water quiets. A babbling stream. Movement still present, but breathable. By the time Amara is ready, we arrive at a placid lake: still, open, and entirely her own. The landscape does not comment on her journey. It is her journey.

# PERFORMANCE

## THE CHARACTER:

### Amara

Amara is, by every outward measure, fine. She shows up. She smiles. She moves through the architecture of a normal life and does it well. She is Asian-American, and carries with her an additional layer of silence: a cultural inheritance that does not always leave room for the language of anxiety, that prizes composure as a form of love. The weight she carries is real. It is also, to everyone around her, largely invisible. That is the film's central tension, and Amara's central loneliness.



## THE ACTRESS: HAVEN EVERLY

Haven Everly is a Filipino-American actress, singer, and creator based in Los Angeles whose roots could not be more fitting for this role. The daughter of professional singers from the Philippines who gave up their own dreams to build a life in the United States, Haven grew up understanding, from a very young age, what it means to carry something quietly. She has appeared in Netflix's *YOU*, Showtime's *The L Word*, and led the Fil-Am feature film *The Girl Who Left Home*, which made its way through the festival circuit including the Seattle Asian American Film Festival.

Haven is known primarily for her comedic and musical work, and that is precisely why she is right for *BREATHE*. The best dramatic performers understand timing, nuance, and the weight of a moment. They know that what a person doesn't say is louder than what they do. Haven brings all of that to Amara, along with something rarer: the ability to hold complexity without externalizing it, to make stillness do the work that noise never could.

# DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I've struggled with anxiety for most of my life. I'll never forget my first panic attack. I was completely blindsided. Not by sadness, not by fear in any way I recognized, but by something that had no name, that hijacked my body without warning and left me wondering what had just happened to me. That was the moment I understood there was something living underneath everything, something that sat just below the surface of every ordinary moment, invisible to everyone around me and completely consuming from the inside. For a long time, I didn't have the words for it. I had vocabulary for sadness, for fear, for grief, but not for this particular thing that wasn't quite any of those. Nobody else seemed to see it. Nobody seemed to know it was there.

What I wanted, more than anything, was to see something and think: that's it. That's what it actually feels like. Not just for myself, but so I could share it. So that for once, I wouldn't have to find the words, because I could point to something that would find them for me.

BREATHE is the film I wish I'd had. What interests me is not anxiety as a diagnosis but as an experience: interior, invisible, and so ordinary to the people who carry it that they sometimes forget it isn't ordinary at all. I want the audience to feel the texture of it: the way a room can feel impossible, the way love and isolation coexist, the way relief, when it comes, is never where you expected to find it. The underwater sequences are not metaphor for their own sake. They are the truest image I know for what it feels like when the world finally stops asking something of you.

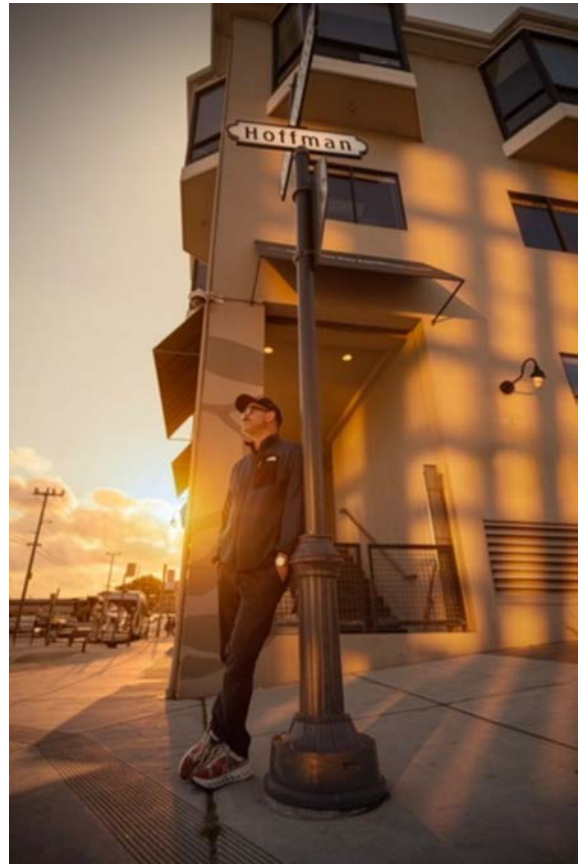
This film is also meant to be something beyond a film. I want it to travel into spaces where these conversations need to happen, paired with talks and partnerships with mental health organizations, including the National Alliance on Mental Illness, creating a resource for communities of people who have felt unseen and are ready to feel otherwise.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Hoffman". The signature is written in a fluid, cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

# ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Brian Hoffman is a New York-based filmmaker who was selected as a 2026 Emerging Artist at the American Pavilion at the Cannes International Film Festival. He is also a marketing executive whose entire career has been shaped by the power of storytelling and its ability to create genuine connection between people. He is a husband and a father of four. As someone who has carried anxiety quietly for years, he thinks about it not just for himself but for his children, determined that they never feel as alone in it as he sometimes did. *BREATHE* is his second film, and his most personal.

His debut short film, *A Matter of Time*, is currently on the festival circuit and won Best Actress at the NY Shorts International Film Festival and Best Drama at the Poppy Jasper International Film Festival.



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THANK YOU.