MENTAL ILLNESS

The Aviator (2004)

Biopic telling the story of the early years of Billionaire genius and OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder) sufferer – Howard Hughes.

Director: Martin Scorsese
RATED PG

Benny & Joon (1993)

Small-town auto mechanic Benny has devoted his life to caring for his schizophrenic sister, Joon. Her behavior drives away all of her caretakers, and Benny is informed by Joon's psychiatrist, Dr. Garvy that it is time to consider placing her in a group home. The following day, Joon is picked up in the street by the police after Benny leaves her at home unattended to go to work. Benny brings Joon to his poker game, as he can't leave her alone. The days' events diminish Benny's sense that he can take care of Joon, and his friends later add to his dilemma by telling him about all the things he could be doing with his life if it weren't for Joon.

Director: Jeremiah S. Chechik
RATED PG

Proof (2005)

The daughter of a brilliant but mentally ill mathematician, recently deceased, tries to come to grips with her possible inheritance: his insanity. Complicating matters are one of her father's ex-students who wants to search through his papers and her estranged sister who shows up to help settle his affairs.

Director: John Madden
RATED PG

How Awful about Allan (TV 1970)

After an eight-month stay in a mental hospital, a tormented man comes home to live with his sister; but a mysterious boarder may be trying to kill him.

Director: Curtis Harrington RATED PG
Le roide coeur (King of Hearts) (1966)

During the latter part of World War I, Private Charles Plumpick is chosen to go into the French town of Marville and disconnect a bomb that the German army has planted. However, Charles is chased by some Germans and finds himself holed up at the local insane asylum, where the inmates are convinced that he is the "King of Hearts." Feeling obligated to help the inmates, Charles attempts to lead them out of town, but they are afraid to leave and frolic about the streets in gay costumes. Will Charles be able to deactivate the bomb in time and save his newfound friends?

Director: Philippe de Broca

An Angel at My Table (1990)

Janet Frame grows up in a poor family with lots of brothers and sisters. Already at an early age she is different from the other kids. She gets an education as a teacher but since she is considered abnormal she is locked up in a mental institution for eight years. Success comes when she starts to write books.

Director: Jane Campion

RATED R

Shine (1996)

Based on the true story of Australian pianist David Helfgott, this delightful movie charts the early and traumatic years. Telling the story in flashback we see David as he grows up and into a child prodigy while his father abuses him and his siblings with the memory of his childhood in Europe and the loss of his family in the concentration camps. David finally breaks away from his father and goes away to study overseas, he later suffers a breakdown and returns to Australia and a life in an institution. Many years later he is released and through several twists of fate (in reality even more unlikely than film portrays) he starts playing a piano in a bar before finally returning to the concert hall.

Director: Scott Hicks

RATED PG
A Beautiful Mind (2001)

Biopic of the famed mathematician John Nash and his lifelong struggles with his mental health. Nash enrolled as a graduate student at Princeton in 1948 and almost immediately stood out as an odd duck. He devoted himself to finding something unique, a mathematical theorem that would be completely original. He kept to himself for the most part and while he went out for drinks with other students, he spends a lot of time with his roommate, Charles, who eventually becomes his best friend. John is soon a professor at MIT where he meets and eventually married a graduate student, Alicia. Over time however John begins to lose his grip on reality, eventually being institutionalized diagnosed with schizophrenia. As the depths of his imaginary world are revealed, Nash withdraws from society and it's not until the 1970s that he makes his first foray back into the world of academics, gradually returning to research and teaching. In 1994, John Nash was awarded the Nobel prize in Economics.

Director:  Ron Howard
RATED PG

I am Sam (2001)

Sam Dawson has the mental capacity of a 7-year-old. He works at a Starbucks and is obsessed with the Beatles. He has a daughter with a homeless woman; she abandons them as soon as they leave the hospital. He names his daughter Lucy Diamond (after the Beatles song), and raises her. But as she reaches age 7 herself, Sam's limitations start to become a problem at school; she's intentionally holding back to avoid looking smarter than him. The authorities take her away, and Sam shames high-priced lawyer Rita Harrison into taking his case pro bono. In the process, he teaches her a great deal about love, and whether it's really all you need.

Director:  Jessie Nelson
RATED PG
Lust for Life (1956)

Vincent Van Gogh is the archetypical tortured artistic genius. His obsession with painting, combined with mental illness, propels him through an unhappy life full of failures and unrewarding relationships. He fails at being a preacher to coal miners. He fails in his relationships with women. He earns some respect among his fellow painters, especially Paul Gauguin, but he does not get along with them. He only manages to sell one painting in his lifetime. The one constant good in his life is his brother Theo, who is unwavering in his moral and financial support.

Director: Vincent Minnelli
RATED PG

Taxi Driver (1976)

A mentally unstable Vietnam war veteran works as nighttime taxi driver in a city whose perceived decadence and sleaze feeds his urge to violently lash out, attempting to save a teenage prostitute in the process.

Director: Martin Scorsese
RATED R

A City of Sadness (1989) Chinese
Bei qing cheng shi

City of Sadness, brings to light the truth about the 1947 massacre known as the 2/28 incident. Its focus is not on the bloodshed but on the consequences for a particular family and how individual experience is impacted by the flow of time and history. Wen-heung (Chen Sown-yung), the oldest of four Lin brothers, tries to hold the family together with the support of Ah-lu (Li Ten-lu), the family patriarch. The second brother, Wen-sun disappeared in the Philippines and is talked about but never seen in the film. Brother number three, Wen-leung (Jack Gao) suffered mental
problems as a direct result of the war and is bedridden at a local hospital. Amazingly, he recovers enough to deal with Shanghai drug smugglers but is framed as a Japanese collaborator and, after being beaten in prison, loses his mental balance again. The fourth Lin brother, Wen-ching is deaf and runs a photography studio. Wen-ching is involved with young anti-government socialists such as his friend Hinoe (Wu Yi-fang) who is forced to flee to the mountains to join the guerillas. Wen-ching also wants to join the movement but is persuaded to stay home and care for Hinoe's sister, Hinoe (Hsin Shu-fen), a nurse, who loves him.

**Director:** Hsiao-hsien Hou
**RATED UK-15+YEARS**

### Afflictions: Culture & Mental Illness in Indonesia Volume 1: Psychotic Disorders (2010 Video)

This is a three part series, shot over the course of 12 years in Bali and Java, Indonesia, exploring the relationship between culture, mental illness and personal experience. Shadows & Illuminations follows an older Balinese man, Pak Kereta, with schizophrenia as he struggles with the intrusion into his consciousness of spirits and explores how to interpret his experiences. Family Victim follows a young Javanese man with anti-social personality disorder and explores how his family manages and deals with his deviant and disruptive acts. Bird Dancer explores a young woman's struggle with her odd movements and behaviors, and how these are interpreted and understood by her family and community.

**Director:** Robert Lemelson

### Afflictions: Culture & Mental Illness in Indonesia Series: Volume 2: Neuropsychiatric Disorders (2011)

This is a 6-part series of ethnographic films, split into two parts, on severe mental illness in Indonesia, based on material drawn from 12 years of person-centered research by anthropologist Robert Lemelson. Part 2 of the series focuses on 3 individuals of different ages and backgrounds. 'Memory of My Face' illustrates how the residues of colonialism and the pervasive influence of globalization affect the subjective experience of mental illness. 'Ritual Burdens' questions how communal spiritual obligations may be folded into personal schema's of stress to trigger episodes of mental illness. 'Kites and Monsters' follows a young Balinese from boyhood to manhood,
discovering the influential and protective aspects of culture that may guide developmental neuropsychiatric processes.

**Director:** Robert Lemelson

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**Family Victim (Documentary 2010)**

Family Victim follows Estu Wardhani, a young Javanese man, diagnosed with anti-social personality disorder, whose many deviant acts disrupts his family and leaves him feeling disrespected by them. The film explores how families manage troubled and troublesome members in the context of a small scale, rural society. Family Victim is part of the Afflictions: Culture and Mental Illness in Indonesia series which is the first film series on mental illness in the developing world. Afflictions is based on footage shot over 12 years in Bali and Java, Indonesia, Afflictions explores the relationship between culture, mental illness and personal experience. The role of traditional medicine vs. psychiatric treatment, family support, community rejection or acceptance, and beliefs about its interpretations and causes are explored in three poignant case studies.

**Director:** Robert Lemelson

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**Brushes with Life: Art, Artists & Mental Illness (2008)**

Mental illness and creativity have been linked for many years. In this film eight artists who struggle with schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and other brain disorders talk candidly about how doing their art helps them heal. All the artists are brought together by the Brushes With Life art gallery, which shows only work by mentally ill artists.

**Director:** Philip Drubaker

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**United States of Tara (TV Series 2009)**

A woman struggles to find a balance between her dissociative identity disorder and raising a dysfunctional family.

**One Woman: Multiple Personalities**

**Creator:** Diablo Cody

**Rated:** MA
One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest (1975)

McMurphy thinks he can get out of doing work while in prison by pretending to be mad. His plan backfires when he is sent to a mental asylum. He tries to liven the place up a bit by playing card games and basketball with his fellow inmates, but the head nurse is after him at every turn.

**Director:** Milos Forman  
**RATED:** R

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God’s Own Child (2011) India  
Deiva Thirumagal

Krishna (Vikram), who has the mental maturity of a five-year-old, works in a chocolate factory in Ooty. His wife delivers a baby girl and dies. The girl, Nila (Sara) is brought up in his own way by Krishna. He showers all his love and care on her. But fate takes a quick turn. Nila's grandfather Rajendran (Sachin Khedkar), a powerful and influential man in society, enters the scene. Fearing that his grand daughter is not safe under a mentally-challenged dad, he takes away the girl from Krishna. His other daughter Shwetha (Amala Paul) takes care of the child. Krishna runs from pillar to post to get back his daughter. He gets acquainted with advocate Anuradha (Anushka) and Vinod (Santhanam), her junior. They listen to Krishna's past and promise that they would do their best to get back the custody of Nila. Bashyam (Nasser), a leading advocate, appears for Rajendran. The rest is legal battle and arguments in court and who wins at last.

**Director:** Vijay  
**RATED:** PG

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Harvey (1950)

The classic stage hit gets the Hollywood treatment in the story of Elwood P. Dowd who makes friends with a spirit taking the form of a human-sized rabbit named Harvey that only he sees (and a few privileged others on occasion also.) After his sister tries to commit him to a mental institution, a comedy of errors ensues. Elwood and Harvey become the catalysts for a family mending its wounds and for romance blossoming in unexpected places.

**Director:** Henry Koster
Lewis is a young Sydney amateur theater director at his first experience: he is offered a job with a Governmental program for the rehabilitation of mentally ill patients in a Sydney institution for mentally ill. His project is overrun by one of the patients Roy who wants to put on stage Cosi Fan Tutte (Mozart). None of the patients in the cast is able to sing and none of them knows Italian which is the language of the libretto. Through a lot of difficulties Lewis and his cast develop a deep understanding. The play smartly adapted for the unusual cast is finally produced: lots of unforeseen situations solved 'a la crazy way' but indeed brilliantly. Great success and sad farewell of the director from his cast.

**Director:** Mark Joffe

**RATED R**