



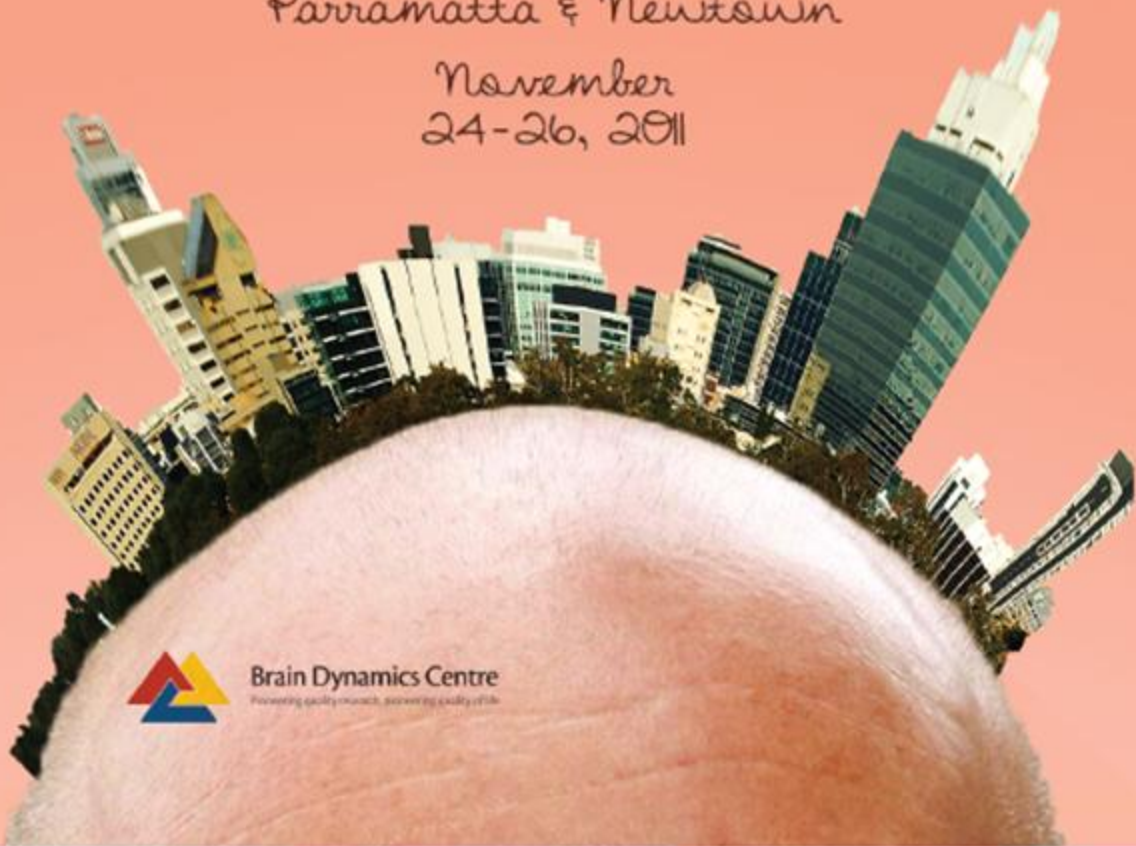
oneofus

A film festival exploring
Mental Health

www.oneofus.org.au

Parramatta & Newtown

November
24-26, 2011



Brain Dynamics Centre
Powering quality research, powering quality of life



MEDIA RELEASE

The *One of Us* film festival will take place from the 24-26th of November, 2011 in Parramatta and Newtown.

One of Us will be the largest film festival on the theme of mental health ever to take place in Sydney and is being organised by the Brain Dynamics Centre at Westmead Hospital. It will showcase a range of Australian and international films that explore peoples' different experiences of mental health as well as films that inspire resilience and enjoyment of life.

The event aims to increase knowledge and understanding of some common mental health issues in our society, and open up a discussion about mental illnesses. *One of Us* will also give audiences the opportunity to hear talks from researchers, presenting their new discoveries in cutting edge mental health research, and keep abreast with new directions and advances in psychology and neuroscience. All proceeds from the films will go towards furthering mental health projects at the Brain Dynamics Centre.

“Our view of mental health is going through its own change in climate at the moment with brain science and new research approaches. The festival is a chance to share this new knowledge of mental illness and health and also we hope, a chance to discover some great, thoughtful films.” said Festival Director Anna Watters.

Featured films are *The Black Balloon*, *Vincent Wants to Sea*, *Happy*, and *Veronika Decides to Die*, plus bonus short films and special guest speakers at each screening. Films deal with themes including happiness, depression, autism, Tourette's, and anorexia. *One of Us* is taking place across Sydney, with three venues in Parramatta: Event Cinemas, the Roxy Theatre, and Mars Hill Café, as well as screenings at Dendy Cinema, Newtown.

The Brain Dynamics Centre is part of Westmead Millennium Institute for Medical Research, Sydney University. It conducts research into mental illnesses, including depression, psychosis, ADHD, anxiety and wellbeing.

Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased at www.oneofus.org.au, or by calling 02 9845 8179.

Who: The Brain Dynamics Centre, Westmead Millennium Institute, University of Sydney

What: Four films over three days on themes of mental health

When: Thurs 24th, Friday 25th, Sat 26th November 2011

Where: *Parramatta:* Event Cinemas, Roxy Theatre, Mars Hill Café. *Newtown:* Dendy Cinema

Why: To promote understanding of mental illness in the community through film and highlight advances in mental health research

Anna Watters
Festival Director
Coordinator of the Family-D Study
Brain Dynamics Centre
(02) 9845 8178 / 0439 741018
anna.watters@sydney.edu.au

Kathryn Harvey
Media and Communications
Research Assistant
Brain Dynamics Centre
(02) 9845 8179
kathryn.harvey@sydney.edu.au

PROGRAMME; 24-26th of November

	Thursday 24 th	Friday 25 th	Saturday 26 th
Parramatta	Vincent Wants to Sea 7.00pm, Event Cinemas	Veronika Decides to Die 8.00pm, Mars Hill Café	Happy 6.00pm, Roxy Theatre
Newtown		Vincent Wants to Sea 7.30pm, Dendy Cinema	Happy 4.00pm, Dendy Cinema The Black Balloon 7.00pm, Dendy Cinema

TICKETING

All tickets are \$15 plus a \$2.15 booking fee. Tickets are available to be purchased online at:

www.oneofus.org.au or <http://oneofusfilm.eventbrite.com>

Tax-deductable donations over \$2 can be made at the event.

ABOUT *ONE OF US*

One of Us is the concept of Anna Watters, a PhD Student and researcher at the BDC, and Festival Director. It is a new initiative to raise awareness and understanding of mental health issues, and encourage open discussion of mental illness. The aim is to allow for interaction between the community and our research and clinical workers, especially from our team at the BDC, to share their experiences about mental health, inspired by the topics in each film.

There is much progress being made in shifting attitudes towards mental health, but it still remains an issue which is too often fraught with stigma and cloaked in taboo. One of Us will present stories of people who have experienced mental illness in order to increase the understanding of these different experiences, as well as to find stories that demonstrate the spirit of strength and resilience. Film is enjoyable and a great way to be let in on the lives of others.

As well as the screenings, the festival will include guest speakers, a discussion panel on closing night, competitions and prizes, and stalls where broader information about mental health care services in the community will be displayed.

FACTS

- About **45%** of adult Australians will experience a mental illness at some stage in their lives, including alcohol or substance abuse disorders.
- **One in five** Australians will experience a mental disorder in any 12-month period.
- **Anxiety disorders** are the most common, affecting **1 in 7 adults** (14%), followed by affective disorders at 6.2% (of which depression is 4.1%), and substance use disorders at 5.1% (of which 6.5% is alcohol related).
- **Depression** is the leading cause of disability worldwide. The WHO ranks depression second only to ischemic heart disease in terms of social and economic burden of disease, and it is predicted to rise by 2020.
- In Australia, **\$3.3 billion** in productivity and 12 million working days are lost each year as a result of **depression**.
- **Women** are more likely than men to experience depression and anxiety disorders, while **men** are more likely to experience substance abuse.
- Mental illnesses are most common among young people **aged 18-24**.

EVENTS & SPECIAL FEATURES

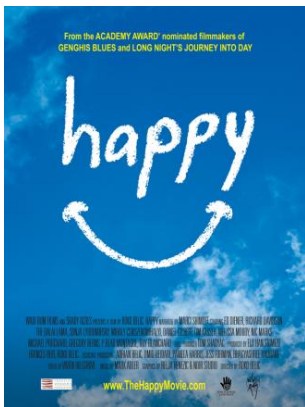
- Keynote speakers before films
- Panel discussion on closing night
- Information stalls: The lobby of each venue will contain further information on the BDC, our research, and local mental health services.
- Networking with researchers: BDC researchers will be in attendance at each screening and happy to answer any questions
- Raffle prizes at each screening (tickets \$5)

FILMS

Vincent Wants to Sea

dir. Ralf Huettner, Germany, 2010

Unreleased in Australia, this German hit tragicomedy follows Vincent, a man with Tourette's syndrome, and the unlikely friendship he strikes up with two fellow inmates from his psychiatric institution, on a madcap road trip to the Italian coast. Fraught equally with calamity and charm, *Vincent Wants to Sea* embraces the absurdity of life and the chaos of the human experience.



Happy

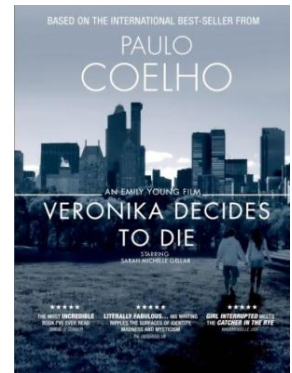
dir. Roko Belic, US, 2011

Why is it that some of the world's poorest countries rank the highest on the Happy Planet Index? And why is Beverly Hills one of the unhappiest places in the world? *Happy* is a cinematic documentary adventure that is not just a movie, but a movement. Academy award nominated director Roko Belic (*Genghis Blues*) journeys across 5 continents in search of the keys to happiness, from the deserts of Namibia to the beaches of Brazil to the kingdom of Bhutan. Through the compelling wisdom of remarkable human stories, to cutting edge science and happiness research, *Happy* seeks to uncover the truth about why and how we can live happier, healthier lives.

Veronika Decides to Die

dir. Emily Young, US, 2009

From the bestselling novel by Paulo Coelho comes the life-affirming and thought-provoking *Veronika Decides to Die*. Veronika (Sarah Michelle Gellar) is a beautiful, successful young woman who, fed up with the complex machinations of modern society, decides to give up. After an unsuccessful suicide attempt she wakes in a mental home and, with nothing left to lose, embarks on a journey of discovery and abandonment, and ultimately discovers what it means to live.



The Black Balloon

dir Elissa Down, Australia 2008

In this tender and funny portrait of family, love and happiness, Thomas and Charlie are brothers in an otherwise regular Australian family - except that Charlie has Autism and ADHD. When the family moves to a new town, they are faced with the challenges of life and fitting in. Set in Western Sydney in the early 1990s, *The Black Balloon* expertly explores Thomas' struggle for normalcy in a colourful cast of eccentrics to become "an enjoyable and heartfelt slice of life" (SBS review).

SHORTS

Flying Anne Australian Premier

dir Catherine Van Campen, The Netherlands 2010

One of Us is the Australian premiere of this short film documentary, fresh from a wave of critical and audience acclaim in European festivals. Eleven year old Anne is a beautiful young girl who suffers from Tourette's syndrome, meaning her body does things she can't control: she might suddenly twirl around, or need to lick objects around her. *Flying Anne* follows her struggle to fit in at school, teach others about her tics, and ultimately learn to live with and accept her condition.



The Lost Thing

Dir Andrew Ruhemann & Shaun Tan, Australia 2010

Based on the picture book by Shaun Tan, AFI winning and Academy award nominated *The Lost Thing* is a modern day animated fable. A boy discovers an unusual creature while out collecting bottle tops on a beach, and tries to discover where in the world it belongs.

Winner of the Melbourne International Film Festival 2010.

Intangible

Australia 2011 (5 minutes)

A project of the Family & Carer Mental Health Program NSW, Project Partners and the carer participants.

A carer supporting her son with Schizophrenia from the Far West of New South Wales shares a snapshot of her journey.



The Big Empty

USA 2005 (20 minutes)

Director: Lisa Chang and Thomas Sigel

Malibu Film Festival 2005: Best Live-Action Short

A bittersweet tale of Alice, her vagina and the infinite nature of the tundra.

OUR SUPPORTERS

One of Us is proudly presented by BDC:



Endorsed by:



Venue Sponsors:



Film Sponsors:



Thank you to the following local businesses for their generous donation of raffle items:

