

INVITATION

Cultural and Global Mental Health Film Initiative

Date: Wednesday, 12 February 2014

Time: 5:30pm-7:30pm

Venue: 207 Bouverie Street,
Basement Lecture Theatre 1,
B1.03

**Film screening (73 min) to be followed
by a Q&A Session with Dr. Robert
Lemelson**



In what ways do gender and mental illness intersect? In Indonesia, understanding local patriarchal systems in which males dominate many aspects of social life is crucial to untangling the complex webs of stigma, inequality, village politics, poverty, lack of opportunities, and violence that constrain the lives of women affected by mental illness. Based on over a decade of person-centered ethnography, anthropologist Robert Lemelson's films, *The Bird Dancer* and *Standing on the Edge of a Thorn*, complement each other in depicting the lived realities of gender and mental illness in the developing world.

The Bird Dancer focuses on Gusti Ayu Suartini, a young Balinese woman living with Tourette's syndrome. Members of Gusti's rural community regard her with scorn or pity, in particular because her uncontrollable tics make her an undesirable marriage partner and thus a family burden.

Standing on the Edge of a Thorn explores the rural origins of the Indonesian sex trade through the film's narrator, Lisa Ariyani. The film documents Lisa's struggle to understand her parents' predicaments and find stability as she matures and resists being drawn into the sex trade herself.



About the Filmmaker

Dr. Robert Lemelson is a documentary filmmaker and anthropologist whose work focuses on culture, psychology, mental illness, and personal experience. Robert is based in US where he is Adjunct Professor at [UCLA Dept. of Anthropology](#), President of the [Foundation for Psychocultural Research](#), and Founder of the documentary film company, [Elemental Productions](#).

**No RSVP required and
all are welcome.**

**For more information, please
contact Dr. Erminia Colucci at
ecolucci@unimelb.edu.au**

The Centre for Mental Health (School of Population and Global Health) hosts a monthly screening of film-documentaries relating to cultural and global mental health, followed by discussion. This initiative is free and open to the general public.