

CBS Radio

Top 10 films you probably haven't seen, but should: 2004 Edition



1. Purgatory House (www.purgatoryhouse.com)

Entirely written by and starring a 14-year-old girl, this amazing and brilliant film is an honest snapshot of how it feels to be a teen in today's media-saturated, fast-paced, disconnected world. "Purgatory House" chronicles the after-life journey of Silver Strand, who has abandoned her life of drug addiction in search of unconditional love. Landing somewhere between Heaven and Hell, Silver finds herself at a shelter for dead, wayward teens. Here she must choose whether she will accept her drab existence, or discover within herself the power to change. Revealed in non-linear fashion and peppered with moments of visionary wonder, this groundbreaking feature dances delicately between childhood and adulthood, between worlds both real and dreamed. This is a cinematic gem that demands to be seen.

2. Mujaan (www.mujaan.com)

On the distant steppes of Mongolia, using only simple tools, strength and ingenuity, a nomad builds a home much the way his ancestors have for the past one thousand years. *Mujaan (The Craftsman)* is a vivid window to a disappearing way of life in one of the most remote corners of the world. An utterly fascinating glimpse into a way of life that very few Americans will ever have the opportunity to experience firsthand. With the help of a glorious, simple soundtrack, what we observe on the screen almost takes on a mystical, hypnotic quality.

3. Hummingbird (www.hummingbirdmovie.com)

In the beautiful coastal city of Recife, Brazil – a world capital for sex tourism - a couple of determined women decided they would try to break the cycle of domestic violence and get kids off the streets. *Hummingbird* goes onto the streets and sees the harsh reality these kids face and shows how these programs help break the cycle, giving people a chance.



4. In the Land of Milk and Money (www.inthelandofmilkandmoney.com)

When Mothers are the "Monsters" how can we react? "Are you now, or have you ever been... a Mother?" This outrageously daring comedy turns the '50s style sci-fi on its head. A scathing social satire that is scarily relevant to today's world. Bold, experimental, and subversively funny.

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5. Lifers (www.lifers.us)

Lifers is a documentary film that examines the life without parole (LWOP) prison sentence in America. According to the Sentencing Project there are currently over 31,000 men, women and children serving life sentence in the united states with no opportunity for parole. With the growing number of lifers, prisons are starting to resemble old age homes, complete with wheelchairs, walkers and hospice centers.

6. Mad Song (www.madsong.com)

Inspired by a Henry James story with it's title taken from William Blake, *Mad Song* is an intense psychic thriller that primes us for a multi-dimensional ride. To experience this decidedly original film is to embark on a journey into madness under the guidance of Dr. Tessa Crystal. "Crazy or not" is the films underlying theme. In reality, we all have secret thoughts that obsess us, jeopardize our safety and even our sanity. Memories become ghosts when lost opportunities go unanswered. In this sense, the past is always with us.

7. Runaways (www.runawaysthefilm.com)

Steve Moore is sixteen and lives with his younger sister, mother Cheryl and her boyfriend John, in a modest house in Bakersfield, California. An abusive and often intoxicated man, John rules the household, and though his attacks on Steve result in emergency hospital visits, Cheryl's loyalty is to her boyfriend. To protect her relationship with John, she "ditches" her son, having him arrested and locked in a correctional "mental" facility, before coercing her older brother Burt, who lives in Hollywood, to take him. Steve quickly discovers that Burt cannot even provide temporary lodging, but an administrator at his new high school directs him to a shelter for runaway kids where he soon learns to navigate his way.

8. I am Stamos (www.iamstamos.com)

When character actor Andy Shrub makes a wish to be a leading man, he magically begins to photograph as John Stamos ... provoking the unholy wrath of Stamos.

9. Hell House (www.hellhousemovie.com)

Though the pay-off of the film is seeing the concept in action, much of *Hell House* is devoted to the preparation for the event and the lives of some of its participants. Several months in advance, the Hell House organizers meet and brainstorm ideas. One of them thinks this year's Hell House should counsel visitors on the dangers of the rave scene. The others, probably having no idea what he's talking about, seize on this idea as an example of how current and relevant their program is.

10. Life is the Only Thing Worth Dying For

(www.valleyfilmfest.com/2004/films/lifeistheonlythingworthdyingfor.jsp)

A broke and despondent music teacher tells a stranger in a bar how his family would be better off if he were dead, due to a large life insurance policy. The stranger, a hitman, offers to help, popping up in the strangest of places attempting to close the deal.