I wasn't actually planning on going to see "A Beautiful Mind" in the first place, but as it was, I was convinced by the friend that accompanied me that it was truly something to see. And now, after seeing it, I thank her for that. Instead of spending two and a half hours watching George Clooney and Matt Damon rob casinos or Kevin Spacey and Julianne Moore dealing with their problems in New Foundland, I found myself pulled into another kind of story, a powerful, emotional story of how one man learned to battle his own demons and dazzle the world.

"A Beautiful Mind", based on the novel by Sylvia Nasar, is the story of John Forbes Nash Jr., the genius mathematician, whose life suddenly takes a turn for the worse when he is diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia. After fierce battles with his inner self, he overcomes this and returns to win the Nobel Prize in 1994 for his breakthrough game theory in economics that he had been working on during his years in Princeton University in the 1950s.

John Nash, portrayed very well by the versatile and brilliant Russell Crowe, is a partly shy, yet ironic and sometimes even arrogant, gifted young student studying in Princeton University in the late 1940s. He dedicates his time to numbers and equations, set on to solving every problem at hand, rather than mingling with co-students on the football field or in the pub.

Nash is later on introduced to Sylvia (played by the lovely Jennifer Connely), a physics student attending his classes. She helps Nash to open up and eventually discover love.

Enter William Parcher (played by Ed Harris), a shadowy and mysterious agent working for the Department of Defense. Parcher, after realizing Nash's ability to see mathematical and geometrical patterns everywhere, approaches Nash with a mission that involves national security.

Now, amidst his work and relationship, Nash is suddenly thrown into a whirlwind of emotions and disbeliefs as he is diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia. And this is the part where "A Beautiful Mind" truly shines: in portraying the disorder from Nash's own point of view. In a powerful and emotional way, it shows the viewer how difficult an illness like this can be to not only face, but overcome, something that people today may not always realize.

Before seeing this movie, I must admit that I was a bit afraid that casting such a well-known actor as Russell Crowe as the main character would ruin the image of John Nash, forcing the viewer to see Crowe, rather than Nash. This is a common problem when dealing with famous actors, but to my surprise, it didn't much bother me much. And the same goes for Ed Harris.

As a movie, "A Beautiful Mind" is absolutely great (It is so much more, but I cannot find the words to praise it enough, so I will simply go with "great" =). Not only does it have a strong point and an important message to the viewer, but it delivers it in a touching and sensitive, partly even humourous kind of way, with the help of powerful actors, a great screenplay and even a few special effects to boost it up. So for anyone whose grown tired of the constant pointless action-movies out there, and instead want to immerse themselves into a character-driven story that might actually bring a tear to your eyes, I sincerely recommend "A Beautiful Mind".

Russell Crowe
7 April 1964
Wellington, North Island, New Zealand

<<Gladiator>>2000
When a Roman general is betrayed and his family murdered by a corrupt prince, he comes to Rome as a gladiator to seek revenge.