

## The Metamorphosis of Mr. Samsa

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Sand animation of Kafka's novel 'Metamorphosis' in surrealist and abstract style.

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### Why did you select it?

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I studied the story in high school and reflected upon the societal pressure and expectations of a family and the dying individuality/emotions in a mechanized society. I have thought about exploring sand animation and this was extremely well done.

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### Theme and Tone

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The style of the animation looks alike to the surrealism/ cubism. I like how unrefined the art style looks, which is more expressive than perfected outlines. Coupled with the dark mono colors of the sand it communicates the daunting, depression and suffocating atmosphere.

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### Technique / Cinematography / Direction

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Experimental/ abstract sand art in stop motion, with dim light shining through thick sand it creates a doomed feeling foreshadowing on Gregor's tragedy. The camera angles are mostly looking up, sympathetic of the belittled view of a bug, the figures are dehumanized, enlarged and depressed. The transitions are done by manipulating negative space, mushing up and reforming shape or smooth transitioning between perspectives or camera angles. The process made me a little dizzy but the process was magical. The story is straightforward, narrating the pathetic life of Gregor as a beetle. The fact that the story is so straightforward has taken away a lot of the sub context than reading the novel. This is unavoidable as animations can only portray the eternal actions whereas most conflicts happens internally. There may be a way to visualize the character's thoughts by transforming the reality. But this could get confusing.

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### Sound and Music

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No background music being used unless it is voice overs(when the sister is playing music). All the sounds are kept to feel realistic and uncanny. There are sounds such as breathing, sighs or gasps to indicate the character's emotions along with muffled German. This worked with the less polished image emphasizing on the eerie visual atmosphere leaving more space of imagination for the audience stressing the inhumanness of the characters.

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## Last thoughts

Would you recommend it to someone ? Was it interesting ?  
Thought provoking? Is it relatable ? What could perhaps be done differently ?

I really like the style and would learn/ highly recommend it.  
Personally I prefer less polished works, as it feels more personal with more strength with it. The style of this sand animation cannot be defined as 'pretty' , the characters are twisted and grotesque, but is a style I relate to. If I were to do it, I'd use more material than just sand, such as mesh, strings, paper to create more colors and texture.