

FREE THE TRIAL: METAMORPHOSIS: IN THE PENAL COLONY: PLAYSRIPT: THREE THEATRE ADAPTATIONS FROM FRANZ KAFKA PDF



Franz Kafka, Steven Berkoff | 144 pages | 01 Sep 1988 | Amber Lane Press Ltd | 9780906399842 | English | Oxon, United Kingdom

The book was interesting the way how an ordinary man just turned into a big beetle. Franz Kafka was a pretty good writer that expressed a dark way. I'm hoping to read another one of his books one day. He received a law degree at the University of Prague. After performing an obligatory year of unpaid service as law clerk for the civil and criminal courts, he obtained a position in the workman's compensation division of the Austrian government.

Always neurotic, insecure, and filled with a sense of inadequacy, his writing is a search for personal fulfillment and understanding. He wrote very slowly and deliberately, publishing very little in his lifetime. At his death he asked a close friend to burn his remaining manuscripts, but the friend refused the request.

Instead the friend arranged for publication of Kafka's longer stories, which have since brought him worldwide fame and have influenced many contemporary writers. Kafka was diagnosed with tuberculosis (TB) in August. As his disease progressed, his throat became affected by the TB and he could not eat. *The Trial: Metamorphosis: In the Penal Colony: Playscript: Three Theatre Adaptations from Franz Kafka* because it was painful.

He died from starvation in a sanatorium in Kierling, near Vienna, after admitting himself for treatment there on April 10. He died on June 3 at the age of 34. *Steven Berkoff Franz Kafka*.

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For this book I'm going to do individual reviews for each play. *The Trial*: A difficult read as it took me awhile to get used to all the different voices and direct speech while some of the parts jump over each other and are not really necessary.

One of the more dense adaptations of Kafka. *Metamorphosis*: To me, this is Kafka's finest work. Expressing the sorrows of his personal life and other lives around him at the time he was writing, his story of a boy that randomly turns into a beetle is easy to relate to. For this book I'm going to do individual reviews for each play.

Expressing the sorrows of his personal life and other lives around him at the time he was writing, his story of a boy that randomly turns into a beetle is easy to relate to metaphorically obviously and to put onstage. *The Penal Colony*: A short near duologue, save for two sentences by the guard at the end, about an Officer trying to impress an Explorer with a torture machine and persuade him to keep it.

Although nothing much happens there is some great dialogue to keep you interested and it is the shortest out of the three plays. I finished reminded of *Waiting For Godot* slightly, if it was set in Germany and they were discussing torture methods, morals and politics.

Would be very interesting to see performed. To conclude Berkoff's *The Trial: Metamorphosis: In the Penal Colony: Playscript: Three Theatre Adaptations from Franz Kafka* well with his adaptations of Kafka's work, using his own style of theatre and direction to bring the stories to the stage. Mar 18, Luke Parr rated it it was amazing. I actually managed to be in a production of *The Trial* and it was brilliant! I played Narrator, Guard 2 and Huld.

I love Berkoff's work there are so many ways to explore it! Apr 02, Malcolm rated it really liked it. Berkoff takes Kafka and adapts it to the stage.

The three pieces presented here are wildly different in staging and Berkoff clearly had a flair for mounting productions in different ways. He also picked the three most visceral Kafka works for this volume so *The Trial: Metamorphosis: In the Penal Colony: Playscript: Three Theatre Adaptations from Franz Kafka* is a lot to dissect. *The Trial* is the story that, more than anything else, gives us the term 'Kafkaesque'.

The script utilizes a Greek chorus in a way that I don't think is entirely successful but does allow for the show to move locations quickly with characters coming in and out of the chorus. The play does change the ending of the script but envisioning the ending as written here is powerful. The company slowly tightens a rope that has been run around the play space until it becomes a noose around Joseph K's neck. *Metamorphosis* is probably Kafka's most famous work even being lampooned in a single line of Mel Brooks's *The Producers*.

Gregor Samsa awakens one morning to find he has been transformed into a gigantic insect. The play uses a lot of movement work to suggest the transformation but Gregor does not have an absurd costume nor does it resort to a puppet. Gregor is still human in his mind and has a wide range of emotions that the dramatic format allows to be on full display.

We also get a lot of insight into his sister, the only one who stays loyal to him until, at last, she bitterly breaks away. The show uses a lot of metaphor and the suggested staging is of a set that is an abstract sculpture of a beetle. I think this works better than *The Trial* and having Gregor's thoughts vocalized could be very effective and the way that it handles Gregor's transformation has the potential to elicit pity even if the premise seems laughable.

The final piece is a short version of *In The Penal Colony*. Another piece about a broken justice system. The bulk of the story is of a penal colony officer gleefully explaining the workings of a gruesome execution machine before being rebuffed by a visitor and then putting himself through the machine.

The play initially looks like it'll be hopeful. That resistance to inhumane punishments will win out but the ending leaves that in doubt as a lowly guard picks up the officer's mantle with the implication that the cruelty will continue in perpetuity.

So, what's the point here? Kafka builds impenetrable worlds with heartless systemic machines that inflict cruelty with utter apathy toward the victims.

While Joseph K isn't a good man, he hardly deserved execution. Gregor Samsa's sole crime seems to have been enabling the indolence of his parents. The explorer from In The Penal Colony helps to disrupt a corrupt system but doesn't finish the job and leaves us with the implication that it will continue. But, ultimately they all accept the system as it is. The Explorer doesn't really DO anything, just announces an intention to speak against the execution machine to the colony commandant.

The Commandant, the man in charge of colony, already dislikes the manner of execution but refuses to halt it! Gregor's family, while vacillating between sympathy for him and antagonism, only moves on when they begin to resist their circumstances. Joseph K makes only half-hearted attempts to upend the system, mounting no real resistance to it.

I think Kafka demanded more than lukewarm resistance to the corrupt systems in our lives and shows us the results of complacency in his work. Jan 01, Roberta rated it liked it Shelves:books-i-own.

Berkoff presents his own unique in depth interpretation of the books for stage production, which don't detract from the original but add more substance. Also interesting to read Berkoff's comments on each piece. Jun 22, Lottie rated it really liked it. I like this book, The Trial is my favourite of the three. Down a star because Metamorphosis is my stimulus for A Level Theatre Studies devised and its a wind up.

Jul 25, Caitlin Baker rated it it was amazing. Berkoff gets it man. I find theatrical adaptations tend to get a bit on the nose, and this is no different, but somehow with Metamorphosis it works in just the right way. Maybe it's the actor in me, but this is just that bit better than the book. Mar 12, Chloe rated it really liked it.

Review to appear shortly. Dec 11, Matt rated it it was amazing Recommends it for: anyone. Shelves: classicmust-readthought-provoking. My first introduction to Kafka and I feel like Berkoff has adapted the three selected works very well. Each one left my mind reeling and wanting more. The sparknotes for the Trial and Metamorphosis are particularly interesting and the shmoop page for In The Penal Colony I liked the link to a possible religious analogy.

Aug 11, Jon Chater rated it it was amazing. Unfortunately in England explored to death by A level students as it has become mainstream standard. I can imagine Mr Berkoff sticking two fingers up to that. Feb 25, Kris rated it it was ok Shelves: school-bookstheatreplayhalf-read. Read "Metamorphosis". Didn't like the story, but the staging was very interesting.

Jul 18, Pedication rated it really liked it. Sam rated it liked it Aug 15, Caroline rated it really liked it Feb 23,

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