

Stronger Forest

Kiki_miserychic

Achievement in Use of Music: Shortlist 2007

Achievement in Innovation: Shortlist 2007

The review below may contain spoilers for Heroes up to the end of season 1.

Brad: Music, motion, textures, colors; everything here - every frame - feels so meticulously crafted and placed. Affected doesn't begin to describe it. You feel like you're watching a piece of visual artwork. But at the same time, the vidder's influence so completely matches the character. When I see Sylar bent over the watch at the beginning, I see kiki_miserychic making the vid... which is at the same time awe-inspiring and a little bit frightening.

Nicky: Watching this vid, it's like getting unprecedented insight into kiki_miserychic's mind. I have no doubt that she could totally kill us all with her brain. I have no idea how she even began to conceptualise this piece - it's so twisted, frenetic and layered. I think Sylar has found a soulmate. Hopefully minus the psycho killer tendencies.

Brad: It begins with the censored medical reports placed over Bennet's measuring gaze, which connects to imprisoned Sylar, which connects to the first character overlay to the painting of "dead" Peter in a similar position; all of it popping in on beat. It establishes the clockwork feel and the elements of the character, which come together - like the watch - as the vid progresses.

Nicky: One thing I particularly loved was the innovative opening credits. So many different fonts popping out and jumping around, each of them seemingly pointing toward another facet of Sylar's personality.

Brad: I think the textures through the opening and the watchmaker scene really help the viewer make that connection between the vid and the character.

Nicky: They feel like a filter through which we see the character, or else the way the character sees the world. It's not quite transparent; it's - here's that word again - densely layered, all serving to emphasise that a subjective truth is all we can see in here: Sylar's worldview through a mind that is so twisted that it's hard to grasp.

Brad: When the elder Suresh shows up and sets things in motion, another layer of drums comes in and everything picks up speed.

Nicky: I absolutely love the pacing in this vid. The song has a very distinctive pace, going absolutely mad with it toward the last third; the visuals match this perfectly.

Brad: Love the push-in at 0:55 on power/better.

Nicky: I love the rapid pull-out straight after. Some very evocative zoom work going on here.

I also really liked the red filter over Sylar's hand at 1:19. It's incredibly telling.

Brad: By the time we get to 1:30, textures and overlays, each reflecting a layer of the music, have built to a critical mass.

Nicky: Don't you just love that? In some ways this bit is like several vids rolled into one - each musical aspect has a corresponding visual element, and they're all rolled on top of each other. It's astonishing.

Brad: And then it all gets wiped away at 1:39 as Sylar takes control, and we're on to a section of clean, dramatic motion and mirrored connections from throughout the season. I love how all of these scenes are linked - the attacks, the attempts to kill him - and reflect each other so well. My favorite is probably the syringe connection at 2:11.

The quick dissolves reflect the vocal echoes, like at 1:43 (brilliant!), in such a perfect way that they always make me grin a little.

Nicky: This part just makes me sit there open-mouthed in awe. There is **so much** detail - so many connections throughout the season, as you said, and all of this done in a meticulously musical way that perfectly reflects the building manic pace.

Personally, I love the very faint overlay around 1:52 - 1:59 of Gabriel sitting on the floor, beating his head against his mother's door. You can just make out that visual against all his killings, and it really shows a balance between what he's doing and what a part of him is feeling.

Brad: The pace continues to build, and when I see the shot at 2:04 of Sylar turning, I feel almost like he's now juggling the different characters, the whole timeline at once, to the different elements of the music as more and more of them are tossed at him. And, by extension, I feel like kiki_miserychic is doing the same thing.

Nicky: "Juggling" is a really cool and apt way of describing it. I feel the same way.

Brad: The reverse section at 2:41 looks so incredibly cool, but I also like what it says about the overall season 1 timeline and the attempts to change it. You feel like past and future is happening at once.

Nicky: For me it felt like the segment was more geared to the "Five Years Gone" timeline, but regardless I think we got the same kind of reaction out of it, which is that of reversing a certain chain of events and building a different future. I loved the quick flickers between the two paintings of the President at 2:51; that's the bit that brought home the timeline-changing aspect of the segment.

I really loved the overlays at 3:04, all images of Sylar and Peter facing off at different times in the past and in the future.

Brad: The use of Mohinder holding the door at 3:19 is one of the real definitive moments of the vid for me, both in its reflection of the music and the overall tone of trying to stop Sylar and his machinations.

The motion, which is certainly not the centerpiece for the bulk of the vid, ticks along beautifully in the background. From Sylar's eye movement to the first few vocals at 0:40 to

Sylar testing Ted's power on the roof at 4:02, it's always there, whether it's in the forefront or not.

Nicky: That's what's most amazing about this vid - that there's always something more behind what you see. As you said, it's a juggling exercise - there are so many discrete elements, both technical and thematic, that it's impossible to keep track of them all.

Brad: The ending shot of the laugh at 4:08 behind the credits looks and feels like an exclamation mark at the end of the vid.

Nicky: For me, it's a definitive remark that he isn't really dead, and that he will eventually return. It's actually really reassuring - because we've been inside Sylar's head all through this vid and it's a damn interesting place. We're definitely sympathising with him by the end. The laugh, coupled with the overlay of the open drain cover, is the character's way of being gleeful that he managed to escape. And by this time the audience is laughing right along with him.

Kiki_miserychic did an absolutely stellar job of delving into Sylar's brain and bringing the audience completely to his wavelength.



THE FOURTH WALL
