



## The Golden Cage

A Two-Character Fantasy Musical  
Music, Book & Lyrics by Deborah Henson-Conant

**A mythical Birdman quests his whole life** to find the legendary symbol of Birdman security: the "Golden Cage."

**When he finally finds it**, carved into a 500,000-foot-high granite cliff, it's everything he's dreamt of -- except for one thing: **there's a woman trapped inside.**

**After that: Murder. Illusion. Desire and Transformation** - as the two discover the secret that traps you in the cage - and the only way you can escape.

**"Deborah Henson-Conant's genius is on full display in her stunning musical THE GOLDEN CAGE.** A musical and lyrical masterpiece, the score is deeply satisfying in its harmonic inventions that will remind you of both **Sondheim** and **Guettel** - but is truly the composer's own unique voice. The lyrics and the dialogue are expertly woven into this **two-person musical that will delight sophisticated audiences"**.

**Paul Gordon, composer/writer of Broadway's "Jane Eyre" and "Daddy Long Legs"** and creator of the new "Streaming Musicals" Platform

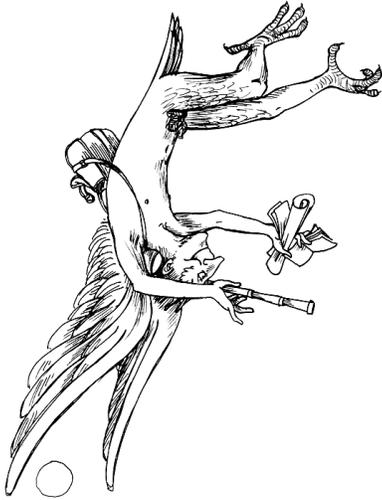
Audio & Video Clips at [GoldenCageMusical.com](http://GoldenCageMusical.com)

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## SYNOPSIS: "The Golden Cage" A Fantasy Musical by Deborah Henson-Conant

"The Golden Cage" is a 2-Character Fantasy Musical about a mythical Birdman, Boris, who's on a lifelong quest to find the legendary symbol of Birdman security: the magical "Golden Cage." When he finally finds it, carved into a remote mountain-peak, it's everything he dreamt of. Except for one thing. There's a woman trapped inside: Alpeha. She claims she doesn't know how she got there, that she's a prisoner of fate and the cage is made of iron and cement.



Boris can see the cage is made of pure gold. He realizes *she's living in an illusion of imprisonment* - so he decides to use illusion to get the cage for himself.

He tells Alpeha he knows an incantation to dissolve iron bars. He tells her she can fly - that anyone can - if they're willing to take the leap. Then he entices her with images of freedom and flight, breaks into the cage, lures her to edge of the cliff and when she cries out in ecstasy, "Push me!" he shoves her off. And watches her plunge to her death.

For a moment, he's horrified - did he really push her? No, she must have leapt! And then he realizes: the cage is finally his! Gleeefully he locks himself inside and glories replacing every single bar, gloating, "It's Mine, Mine, MINE!"

It's glorious. For a moment. But then something goes terribly wrong. His wings start to shrivel and the cage *does* look like cement and iron from the inside - just like Alpeha said. Boris knows it's an illusion but try as he might he can't break that illusion - he can't get out -- and slowly he realizes HE'S the prisoner the cage was meant for -- and he played right into the trap! He murdered her. He deserves to be imprisoned. HE is the real prisoner of fate.

As Boris sinks into despair and remorse, a glorious golden shape appears at the window with massive wings and a headdress of golden feathers. Boris is terrified. Is this Alpeha's avenging angel come to slay him? Wait - it IS Alpeha - but she doesn't seem to know she's dead.



Consumed with guilt Boris confesses that he pushed her off the cliff, but instead of slaying him, Alpeha thanks him - effusively! "Yes, you pushed me - I never could have done it myself!" She swears she's alive and tells him what happened as she hurtled towards the ground: Opening her arms in total surrender, she prepared to meet her death. But instead she found she was hovering, lifted on the wind - and flying, just like Boris said she would.

Turning in the air she saw the Golden Cage high on the mountain peak -- and suddenly her memory came flooding back: she, too, had been born a birdman; she, too, had quested after the mythical Golden Cage -- and had found it, like Boris did, and locked herself inside, and had lost her wings and her memory of everything she had been and everything she had wanted.

But the cage is beautiful again! And suddenly she understands: "It's not the cage that's a trap - It's locking yourself inside. And the key is when someone reaches in - and you reach back."

And as she reaches in to Boris, he rises to take her hand. The bars dissolve and together they stand on the edge of the cliff - this glorious golden Bird-Woman and a disheveled wingless man.

**"Push me," he whispers. And she does.**

## Characters

**BORIS Oridnikov Slepnic O'Hara** is a half-bird, half-man, a birdman who longs for security He's mercurial, devious and single-minded.

**VOICE RANGE:**  
Baritone or (Mezzo if played by a woman), legitimate voice

**BODY-TYPE, AGE, RACE, ETHNICITY:**  
Irrelevant



**Alphea J. Simpson-Hughes** is a melodramatic diva who can't remember how she became imprisoned, and tries on different costumes to suit her mood.

**VOICE RANGE:**  
Soprano/Mezzo (or Tenor/Baritone if played by a male)

**BODY-TYPE, AGE, RACE, ETHNICITY:**  
Irrelevant



## Stage, Costumes & Basic Tech

**RUNNING TIME:** Approximately 75 min without intermission

**ORCHESTRA:** Piano (or piano, cello & drums)

**SET:** Single unit set

**SETTING & STYLE:** The play takes place in a time out of time on a remote mountaintop, above, around and inside a Golden Cage which is built into a craggy cliff, 500,000 feet in the air.

The inside of the cage is filled with shelves, nicknacks, costumes, marble collections, wigs, bottles, instruments and books - and in the middle of the cage is an immense desk.

**COSTUMES:** **Boris** is a red birdman with wings, tail & crest. **Alphea** changes costume to fit her mood, pulling on a Wagnerian breastplate, a Marie-Antoinette wig filled with hair curlers, an apron, a sword, etc. Later she has her own gold wings, tail and crest.

**CURRENT PRODUCTION STATUS:** Currently in development through NOMTI (New Opera & Musical Theater Initiative - Boston), readings and feedback sessions with Paul Gordon, writer/composer of Broadway's "Jane Eyre" and "Daddy LongLegs," and his creative team.

## Scenes & Songs



SCENE 1	<b>"Flying Song"</b> <b>"The Golden Cage"</b>	Boris Boris
SCENE 2	<b>"Today" - Song</b> <b>"I Used to Dream"</b> <b>"Monsterphobia"</b> Dialogue ( <i>"Who are You?"</i> )	Alphea Alphea Alphea Alphea & Boris
SCENE 3	Dialogue & <b>"Golden Cage Reprise"</b> <b>Here I Am"</b> <b>"Can't You See?"</b> <b>"Golden Cage Reprise"</b> <b>"Prisoner of Fate"</b> Dialogue – ( <i>"But you could get out..."</i> )	Alphea & Boris Alphea & Boris Alphea & Boris Boris Alphea Boris & Alphea
SCENE 4	<b>"Humor Her Madness"</b> <b>"Then At Last"</b> <b>"Have you Ever Seen"</b> <b>"Flying Song"</b> <b>"A Capella Duet"</b>	Boris Boris & Alphea Boris & Alphea Boris & Alphea Boris & Alphea
SCENE 5	Dialogue – ( <i>"I can't fly..." and Incantation tutorial</i> ) <b>"Incantation Duet"</b> Dialogue ( <i>"What if I'm not meant to be free?"</i> ) <b>"Golden Cage" Reprise</b>	Boris & Alphea Boris & Alphea Boris & Alphea Boris & Alphea
SCENE 6	<b>"My House is Nice Like This"</b> <b>"Flying Song" Reprise</b>	Alphea Alphea & Boris
SCENE 7	<b>"It's Mine!," "The Dream is in my Hand,"</b> <b>"Today" Reprise</b> Monologue ( <i>"The prison is meant for me."</i> ) <b>"First Came the Dream"</b> <b>"Golden Cage" Reprise &amp; "Gone"</b> <b>"Flying Song"</b> <b>"Alphea's Story"</b> Dialogue ( <i>"I dreamt like you..."</i> ) <b>You Build Your Cage</b>	Boris Boris Boris Boris Alphea Alphea Boris & Alphea Alphea & Boris

For more information contact

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Images from the show created by artist Ellen Lebow



Boris wakes on top of the cage.



Boris observes Alpheia.



Alpheia and Boris meet.



Boris alone.



Boris achieves his plan.



Alpheia's return.