

What if you were trapped in a cage
that no-one else could see?



"A magical, original, modern fairytale ...
Trent Sellars (TheatreHaus)

"A musical and lyrical masterpiece ...
that will remind you of both **Sondheim** and **Guettel**"
Tony-Award Nominee, Paul Gordon ("Jane Eyre" & "Daddy Long Legs")

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The Golden Cage is ...

“ ... a magical trip through an original and modern fairytale that simultaneously feels familiar and new.

A blend of **The Wizard of Oz**-style escapism and **Waiting for Godot**-like philosophic layers, *The Golden Cage* has the ability to both **inspire and entertain across generations.**”

TheatreHaus ”



Photo: Emily Hewitt

Imagine chasing a dream your whole life only to find out it's someone else's hell.

The Golden Cage is an original mythical musical about a legendary cage that's irresistible from the outside and inescapable from the inside.

It's about the cage of isolation we trap ourselves in and the power of human connection to free us.

It's about the wings we've forgotten we have and how a single push can remind us we can fly

A **universal story for multi-generational audiences** "*The Golden Cage*" teaches us that we each have a key to freedom - but only when we hand it to someone else.



Photo: Emily Hewitt



Photo: Rachel Monteleone

A Producer's Dream...

A universal theme - for multigenerational audiences. An orchestra of one to three, a single set, two characters of any gender, age, race or body type. A lush, colorful score.

“A musical and lyrical masterpiece ... that will remind you of both Sondheim and Guettel” says Tony-Nominee Paul Gordon.

The story is about perception, ambition and isolation, of how we trap our lives in cages we can't see, the quests we undertake to avoid intimacy - and the one thing that can set us free: human connection.

Character Breakdown

Open casting: any age, race, gender, body-type

Alphea: Soprano or Tenor

Boris: Baritone or Mezzo

Alphea, a melodramatic Diva, has lived in isolation so long she can't remember how she got there. Her invisible cage is impenetrable, but filled with costumes and props, all labeled beautifully, and used to play out each dramatic persona of the moment.

Boris, half-human half-bird, has searched for the legendary security of the "Golden Cage" for a lifetime. Charming, mercurial, Boris is driven by a single life's passion: to be INSIDE the cage - and he'll use any means to do it - even murder.

Production Requirements:

SET: Single set; no special production needs

ORCHESTRA: Piano (currently) / Piano, cello & percussion in production



Photo: Emily Hewitt



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Photo: Video Still

For Review Materials & Video & Audio Preview:
<https://www.hipharp.com/tgc-producers-info>

Length, Set & Scene

- In a time out of time, inside and outside a glorious golden cage, perched on a remote mountaintop. From inside, the cage is cement and iron - yet cozy. From outside it's irresistible with bars of gold.
- The show runs approx. 80 minutes

Plot Points

- Boris, half-bird half-man, falls asleep on a remote mountaintop, weary from a life-long quest to find the legendary "Golden Cage" - the ultimate symbol of Bird-Person security on a remote mountaintop, weary from a life-long quest to find the legendary "Golden Cage" - the ultimate symbol of Bird-Person security
- As the sun rises, he discovers he HAS found the cage - but it's occupied by Alpheia, a melodramatic Diva who hates her life trapped inside a cage she sees as inescapable.
- To get her out, Boris invents an incantation he claims will unlock the cage, convinces her she can fly, coaxes her to the edge of the cliff, pushes her to her death and locks himself in the cage. A safe home at last!
- But wait - now HE's the one who can't get out.
- Not until Alpheia returns, having learned the key that unlocks the cage When she reaches in and he reaches back, it is this simple connection that finally locks the cage.

Production History

2022: Produced Live in NYC's CreateTheater "New Works Festival" at Theatre Row, winning awards for Best Actor, Best Musical Score and Most Innovative Production - and filmed for distribution by StreamingMusicals.com

2023: Film release on "Streaming Musicals"



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Photo: Video Still



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Deborah Henson-Conant

Composer - Performer - Mentor

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Artist Overview

Deborah Henson-Conant is a Grammy-nominated composer, performer and creative mentor, whose work combines story and music. Her works range from one-woman operas and song cycles, to musical theater, suites, and concertos.

She has premiered dozens of her own works for electric harp, voice and orchestra with national and regional ensembles from the Pittsburgh Symphony to Chicago's Fulcrum Point Ensemble. She has performed her music-theater works at the Chicago Humanities Festival, the Kennedy Center, and theaters like Boston's Lyric Stage and Central Square Theater.

Her TEDx talk chronicles her collaboration with the French CAMAC Harp Company to create the world's top-selling electric body-harp, named after her, the "DHC Harp."

As a mentor she has developed "Hip Harp Academy," an international online academy teaching harpists the skills of performance and improvisation. She also mentors dozens of harpists in professional development and concert creation in her mentorship program, "Harness Your Muse."

She received a major private grant from philanthropist Peter Wege to develop "Invention & Alchemy," a symphonic collaboration with the Grand Rapids Symphony for live performance, CD, DVD and PBS broadcast. The CD received a 2007 GRAMMY- Nomination for "Best Classical Crossover Album," and the video appeared on PBS Stations throughout the US.

Her operatic works for soprano and chamber ensemble were the focus of Boston University's 2014 "Mythic Women" project. Her harp concertos are performed worldwide.

In 2022 her concerto "Soñando en Español" was featured in a new recording by Salzburg Philharmonic and her new musical "The Golden Cage" received awards for Best Musical Score, Best Actor and Most Innovative Production at the CreateTheater New Works Festival in NYC. **In 2023** "The Golden Cage" film will be released worldwide by the "Streaming Musicals" platform.

Music Theater: Opera, Operetta, Song Cycles & Musicals

- **The Golden Cage** – Two-character musical. (CreateTheater New Works Festival 2022; Streaming Musical release 2023)
- **Songs of the Pyre (Song Cycle) & Persephone Lost** (One-Woman One-Act Opera) – for soprano, harp, cello and piano (Boston University Chamber Ensemble Project 2014)
- **Electra's Lyre** – One-Woman music theater (2011 Regent Theatre, Arlington, MA)
- **Shrunk (or Honey, I Shrunk the Harp)** – One-woman music theater movement piece (2010 Regent Theatre, Arlington, MA)
- **In the Wings (or What the Hell are you Doing in the Waiting Room for Heaven??)** – One-woman musical (2009 Central Square Theatre, Cambridge, MA)
- **The Frog Princess** – An allegory for singer and symphony. (2001, Buffalo Philharmonic, The Kennedy Center "Imagination Celebration," Chicago Humanities Festival)

Orchestral & Chamber Ensemble Works

- **Invention & Alchemy** – Voice, electric harp, symphony. DVD & CD 2005-2006
- **Soñando en Español** – Harp Concerto (2016 Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra)
- **Concierto Dobles** – Concerto for 2 harps and symphony (2001 Prague Radio Orchestra)
- **Stress Analysis of a Strapless Evening Gown** – 5-Movement suite for narrator, harp and symphony (2001 premiere with the Springfield Symphony (MA))
- **Season of Celebration** – Two 5-movement holiday suites for harp and string orchestra (1996-97 premiere with the New England String Ensemble)
- **Single-Movement Works for Electric Harp, Voice and Orchestra** – Premiered with more than 15 US orchestras.
- **Chamber Ensemble arrangements** – Harp, string quartet, bass, percussion, flute and clarinet (At 2010 International Harp Festival in Caernarfon, Wales, and 2014 International Harp Festival in Sydney, Australia)

Prizes, Awards, Private Grants & Commissions

- **2022 “The Golden Cage”** at CreateTheater New Works Festival – Best Musical Score, Most Innovative Production, Best Actor
- **2018 TEDx Speaker** – Natick MA
- **2013 Citizen Cultural Ambassador** to Paraguay
- **2007 Grammy Nomination** (Classical Crossover) for "Invention & Alchemy" CD
- **2007 International Songwriting Competition** First Prize in Instrumental category for "Danger Zone" for electric harp and orchestra
- **2007 Mass Council on the Arts** production grant for "Inviting Invention" Cross-Discipline Collaboration Series with the Cambridge Science Festival
- **2005 Private Grant** (Peter Wege / Steelcase Corporation). Development and production of original DVD/CD and TV special “Invention & Alchemy” for symphony and soloist
- **1985 NEA Study Grant; 1985 Meet the Composer** Grant for "The Zero Club"
- **1984 & 1982 Massachusetts Artists Fellowship** for Composition

Recording Projects & Public Television Specials

- **Essential DHC** (2018) – Double-Album Compilation
- **Invention & Alchemy** (2007) – Public Television Special (PBS Stations nationwide)
- **Invention & Alchemy** (2007) – GRAMMY-Nominated (Classical Crossover) with symphony
- **Artist's Proof** (2004) – Solo harp, voice, bass and strings (Singer/Songwriter)
- **The Frog Princess** (2000) – Spoken word, voice and orchestra (Musical Theater/Spoken Word/Children's)
- **The Celtic Album** (1998) – Solo harps (Celtic)
- **Altered Ego** (1998) – Solo harp and voice (Singer/Songwriter)
- **Just for You** (1995) – Harp, voice, bass and percussion (Jazz-Influenced Originals)
- **The Gift** (1995) – Solo harps (Traditional Holiday Music)
- **'Round the Corner** (1993) – Harp, bass and drums (Jazz Standards)
- **Naked Music** (1994) – Solo harp and voice (Singer/Songwriter)
- **Budapest** (1992), **Talking Hands** (1991), **Caught in the Act** (1990), **On the Rise** (1989) – Harp, bass, guitar, percussion and synthesizer (Contemporary Jazz)
- **Songs My Mother Sang** – Solo harp and voice (Children's)