

(Name of Project)

by  
(Name of First Writer)

(Based on, If Any)

Revisions by  
(Names of Subsequent Writers,  
in Order of Work Performed)

Current Revisions by  
(Current Writer, date)

Name (of company, if applicable)  
Address  
Phone Number

(BIRD SOLO, DUET/EXIT - ARISTOPHANES ENTERS)

ARISTOPHANES

Folks say THE BIRDS is one of my two great masterpieces but I remember with chagrin (which is no kind of grin at all) at the comedy contest in 414 - THE BIRDS finished second.  
(RIM SHOT)

Yes, I am an actor playing Aristophanes -  
the **dead** author of THE BIRDS

which the director renamed Aristophanes in Birdonia.

If a playwright is **dead** long enough

a **living** director can do any damn thingeroo with his script  
and this director -

not content to use my play to make his points -  
is using my finger to do the pointing.

He put me in this bloody show - put his words in my mouth  
and he told me to dance around while I talk.

Well, I said - a fifteen hundred year old greek comedy writer  
wouldn't be doing a lot of dancing - in this actor's opinion.

Well, he said - an actor is welcome to have an opinion

but a director is the boss and this is a Dance space

and when I get a job at a Theater space I can stand still -

but for now I have to keep moving

and every time I stop moving

some bird or other comes bounding in - watch this

(stands still - bird enters)

see what I mean?

He also relocated THE BIRDS from Greece to America -

and then he changed the name of America to Hysterica -

The United States of Hysterica.

(RIM SHOT)

(STAN/OLLIE ENTER SINGING W/BIG STUFFED BAGGAGES)

STAN/OLLIE

Hysterica - Hysterica -

gods shed their grace on thee

and crown thy good with - birdie hood -

ARISTOPHANES

The director also decided the two scheming Hystericians in search of a new world should be called Stan and Ollie.  
(STAN/OLLIE SING/TALK & DANCE W/ARISTOPHANES)

STAN

When the red, red robin comes bob, bob bobbin a...

OLLIE

Oh, there'll be bluebirds over the white...

STAN

Bob, bob bobbin along - along. There'll be no more sobbin' - when he starts throbbin' - is that right, Ollie?

OLLIE

The white Cliffs of Dover - tomorrow just you wait and see  
There'll be "something" and laughter now and forever after -

STAN

Love and laughter - does a robin "throb" an old sweet song?

OLLIE

Now and forever after - tomorrow when the world is free

ARISTOPHANES

Stan and Ollie got old and got fed up with their lives.

STAN

How many bags did we have, Ollie?

ARISTOPHANES

Life gets unfamiliar and unfriendly when you get old  
in the place you were once young.  
There's too many steps and too few bannisters.

STAN

I can't find the frying pan bag.

OLLIE

The frying pan bag?

STAN

I'll have to buy bird frying pans.

OLLIE

Bird frying pans?

STAN

To fry eggs.

OLLIE

To fry "bird" eggs, Stanley? Another fine mess.

STAN

Well, I hope birds believe in some kind of breakfast.

ARISTOPHANES

"Believe" is a verbal segue. Stan and Ollie believe - what anyone believes is anyone's own business.

STAN

Do birds chew?

ARISTOPHANES

Stan and Ollie got fed up  
with self-pronounced emissaries of the gods  
and spiritual bureaucrats telling them what not to do.

OLLIE

Birds swallow.

ARISTOPHANES

And all small minded self important and ungracious  
civil service employees telling them what else not to do.

STAN

Did you ever see a swallow swallow?  
Did you ever give a bird the bird?  
Does a cuckoo really cuckoo or a parrot really parrot -  
how often is a noun a verb?

ARISTOPHANES

They grew weary of kowtowing to supermarket cashiers and  
postal workers - bank tellers and internal revenue auditors.

OLLIE

You mailed the estimated tax check, Stanley?

STAN

No, Ollie, I did not.

OLLIE

You did not mail the tax check?

STAN

I thought we got away from taxes and subpoenas.

ARISTOPHANES

And accountants and lawyers who charge by the hour.

OLLIE

You did not mail the tax check - another fine mess.  
Care and woe - something, something here I go -

STAN

Here I go, singing low - Bye bye blackbird.  
Birds eat bread crumbs, Ollie - bread crumbs means bread -  
where there's bread there's gotta be toast.

ARISTOPHANES

I'll drink to that.

STAN

Do birds eat jam?

ARISTOPHANES

"Jam" is another verbal segue -  
We Athenians got ourselves in a jam -  
a litigious traffic jam -  
(RIM SHOT)  
we salivated over celebrity criminals and celebrity judges -  
we wanted to see them - we wanted to be them -  
We dramatized and sensationalized  
the "richer than us" and "more famous than we"!

STAN

Ohhhhhh - she's only a bird in a gilded cage -

ARISTOPHANES

Embezzlers or guzzlers, knifers or shooters -  
"inappropriate touchers" of innocent kiddos -  
and they remained guilty until proved innocent!

STAN

in a gilded cage - a beautiful sight to see -

ARISTOPHANES

We fell in love with juris (im) prudence -  
and "law and order" and "crime and punishment"  
We sued each other up the kazoo -  
"Your honor he swore he'd pay me back when he got a job."  
"Your honor she never said it was a loan."  
"Your honor he won't pay child support."  
"Your honor that kid doesn't look like me."

STAN

Do birds know popular bird songs, Ollie?

OLLIE

I'm scheming, Stanley.

ARISTOPHANES

While the mass media - The Daily Hysterican  
or The Weekly Word of Mouth -

STAN

You may think she's happy and free from care -  
she's not though she seems to be.

OLLIE

I can't scheme with you singing, Stanley.

ARISTOPHANES

pandered and pounded with up to the hour - up to the half  
hour - up to the minute dramatic re-enactments of events  
and editorializing of armies of retired ex-government officials  
and other dubious temporary pundits  
who could always use an extra drachma.

STAN

Tis sad when you think of her wasted life -  
For youth can not mate with age -

ARISTOPHANES

So here is Ollie - scheming up a utopian state.  
A partnership with Stan and the birds - between Heaven -  
over which he feels he never had control - and Earth -  
over which he feels they've lost control.

OLLIE

I'm all schemed out.

STAN/OLLIE

Ohhhh - her beauty was sold for an old man's gold -  
she's a bird in a gilded cage.

STAN

I'm really hungry, Ollie. Are we there?

ARISTOPHANES

Stan and Ollie followed a map to this rocky forest.

STAN

Are we where the birds are? What does the map say?

OLLIE

That map seller was a swindler. He swore the map would lead us to the bird who used to be a mortal.

ARISTOPHANES

"The bird who used to be a mortal"  
was once married to the son of the King of Athens.

STAN

The ex-mortal who had sex with her brother-in-law.

OLLIE

She cut out his tongue so he couldn't tell her husband.

ARISTOPHANES

But he told her husband anyway.

STAN

He told anyway - maybe he wrote a note.

ARISTOPHANES

Maybe he wrote a play.

OLLIE

For revenge her husband killed their son -  
cooked up his parts and fed his parts to his wife.

ARISTOPHANES

In a Greek salad.



STAN

When he finished eating, the tongueless brother-in-law  
threw the dead son's head on the table.

ARISTOPHANES

And everyone - one two three four - turned into birds -  
husband became a nightingale -  
brother-in-law became a swallow -  
son came back to life as a goldfinch -  
and "the bird who used to be mortal"  
became Hoopoe the Epops -  
Queen of the birds.

OLLIE

Maybe we should sue that map chap.

ARISTOPHANES

Historically and mythologically Hoopoe was a man.  
He became King of the birds -  
but not in this production.

STAN

Let's not sue anybody.  
Anyway, where is anybody?

ARISTOPHANES

I admit some people think the husband became a swallow  
and the brother-in-law became the nightingale but not me.

OLLIE

(SHOUTS) Hello? Anybody home?

STAN

(SHOUTS) Hello? Hoopoe?"

OLLIE

(SHOUTS) Hey, Hoopoe!

STAN

(SHOUTS) Yoohoo, Hoopoe!

ARISTOPHANES

Come on out Hoopoe - wherever you are!

WREN

(ENTERS) Stop yelling. What noisy birds are you?

OLLIE

Hysterican birds - and what balding bird are you?

ARISTOPHANES

Hoopoe the Epops hired Ver-wren-ica the running wren.

WREN

I'm Ver-wren-ica. If Hoopoe wants something I run for it.

ARISTOPHANES

The Greek word for "wren" is derived from the same root as the Greek verb "to run". It's a Greek running bird joke.  
(RIM SHOT)

WREN

I'm molting.

STAN

Melting?

WREN

Molting. It's seasonal.

STAN

We want to see your mistress, molting wren.

WREN

Impossible. She ate grubs for lunch - she's napping.

OLLIE

We walked a very long way so wake her up, please,  
or we'll molt you balder, wren.

STAN

And there's nothing badder looking than a bald brown wren.  
(OLLIE/ARISTOPHANES JOIN STAN)

No, there's nothing badder looking  
than a bald brown wren.

There's nothing badder looking -  
no, there's nothing badder looking -  
nothing sadder, nothing badder  
than a bald brown wren.

Absolutely nothing worse - not in prose and not in verse -  
nothing sadder, nothing badder than a bald brown wren.

WREN

All right, I'll wake her but she won't be happy. (EXITS)

ARISTOPHANES

This is a rocky forest with doors in the rocks in the forest  
because in Greek the words for forest and door sound alike.

Greek joke.  
(RIM SHOT)

HOOPOE

(ENTERS) Who wants me? I'm molting.

STAN

Melting?

HOOPOE

Molting. It's seasonal.  
I was once a married person - I am now a married bird -  
I had skin like you -

ARISTOPHANES/HOOPOE

Then feathers grew -

HOOPOE

I know the story sounds absurd.  
I was daughter-in-law to a very great king -  
now I'm -

ARISTOPHANES/HOOPOE

Queen of all the birds.

HOOPOE

I've come to terms - with grubs and worms -

ARISTOPHANES

For dessert she eats her words.

HOOPOE

It's true I slept with my brother-in-law -  
I cut out his tongue so he couldn't tell -  
but my husband got even - he roasted our child  
and we all fell victim to an avian spell -

ARISTOPHANES/HOOPOE

One two three four - everybody's birds!

HOOPOE

My husband's here too - he fought to no avail -  
he didn't have a choice - now he's a nightingale -

ARISTOPHANES/HOOPOE

with a great big baritone voice.

STAN

What a song - brings tears to my eyes. I'm Stan.

OLLIE

I'm Ollie - we're from Hysterica.

STAN

We heard you got to be a bird and flew.

OLLIE

You must have had a bird's eye view.  
Maybe you know a nice cozy town -

STAN

where we can settle down.

ARISTOPHANES

And live it up.

HOOPOE

A town?

ARISTOPHANES

A town among the poultry.

STAN

Not too expensive.

ARISTOPHANES

Their pensions are paltry.

HOOPOE

Birds don't need money.

STAN

No money?

OLLIE

No money?

HOOPOE

No money!

STAN

What do you eat for breakfast?

ARISTOPHANES

Stan is still hungry.

HOOPOE

Sesame seeds, poppy seeds, bugs and grubs and worms.

STAN

Lunch?

HOOPOE

Sesame seeds, poppy seeds, bugs and grubs and worms.

STAN

How about dinner?

HOOPOE

Sesame seeds, poppy seeds, bugs and grubs and worms.

ARISTOPHANES

Limited options can be fun.

OLLIE

We have a plan.

HOOPOE

What plan?

OLLIE

Look down.

HOOPOE

I'm looking down.

OLLIE

What do you see?

The earth. HOOPOE

Now look up. OLLIE

I'm looking up. HOOPOE

What do you see? OLLIE

The heavens. HOOPOE

Okay, what's between the earth and the heavens? OLLIE

Just the air. HOOPOE

Smart as a whip-poorwill. ARISTOPHANES  
(RIM SHOT)

Exactly, just the air. Okay, what if we build a city? OLLIE

Build a city? HOOPOE

Build a city in the air. OLLIE

In the air. STAN

OLLIE

A city in the air which is owned by the birds -

STAN

By the birds in the air! He means it - don't you Ollie?

OLLIE

A city in the air which is owned by the birds  
and anyone who wants to send a message -

ARISTOPHANES

Or take a message from the heavens to the earth  
or from the earth to the heavens -

STAN

has to go through the air - through the city in the air.

ARISTOPHANES

And pay for passports and tariffs and tolls!

HOOPOE

I never heard of anything cleverer  
and I'm ready to build that city in a minute.

ARISTOPHANES

But -

HOOPOE

But I have to get a majority of the birds to approve.

ARISTOPHANES

And every little birdie has an opinion all his own.

HOOPOE

Some birds won't talk to some other bird's birds.

ARISTOPHANES

And every species of bird has a specious opinion.



HOOPOE

Some birds won't even talk to some of their own birds and forget about "bird turn out" at "bird board meetings." Half the time they don't fly out to vote at all but they squawk about what other birds flew out to vote for and since some birds only vote against what some other birds vote for some birds always need to vote last.

ARISTOPHANES

They get their tail feathers in a spin about early birds and worms.

HOOPOE

Birds vacation at the same place at the same time of year every year and they fight to fly in the same flight position they flew in last time and they always build their nests the same and they always toss their kids out at the same time.

ARISTOPHANES

Birds are not fond of change.

HOOPOE

When I came here all the birds just sang and sang and sang but I taught them all to speak - and to speak out and I taught every bird that every bird gets a vote.

ARISTOPHANES

Which may not have been the smartest thing she ever did.

STAN/OLLIE

Can you get them all together? We can talk to them.

HOOPOE

Okay, come with me. (THEY ALL EXIT)

ARISTOPHANES

It's time for the chorus. The all bird chorus.  
(CHORUS ENTERS ONE BY ONE)

The partridge, the pigeon, the parrot, the pullet -  
peacock, parakeet, plover and pipit -  
the purple cap, red-cap, red-foot, red-breast -  
the ring dove, turtle dove, dicky bird, diver -  
the blue jay, the blue bird - the osprey, the owl -  
the eagle, the seagull - the swan and the swallow -  
budgerigar, buzzard, sandpiper, snipe and sparrow -  
cardinals, crows, canaries and cuckoos - the crane, the cock,  
the stork, the lark - the hawk and the vulture - the kestrel,  
kingfisher, finch and the falcon, magpie, mud hen,  
hummingbird, heron - rook and the raven - the quail and the  
loon - the thrush and the toucan - nightingale, chickadee,  
the grebe and the grouse - the bearded tit mouse - the blue  
tit mouse - coal tit mouse - the crested tit mouse - greater  
tit mouse - marsh tit mouse - the long tailed tit mouse -  
tree warbler and willet - titwillowtitwillowtitwillow -

HOOPOE

(ENTERS) Here you are.

WREN

We are.

CHORUS

We are. We are. We are. We are.

We are molting, revolting - bits falling, appalling  
Dropping pieces from places we can't even see  
Undressing, depressing - we feel silly and chilly  
A big naked bird's not what we want to be

HOOPOE

I want to talk to you.

WREN

What for?

CHORUS

What? What? What? What for?  
We are crumbling and grumbling - shredding and dreading  
Knee deep in dandruff and plaid potpourri,  
Peeling and flaking, revealing, heart breaking -  
A big naked bird's not what we're meant to be.

HOOPOE

No, a big naked bird's not what you're meant to be.  
You remember those two Hystericans?

WREN

Who? What?

CHORUS

Who? What? Who? What?

HOOPOE

The two Hysterican persons have a plan.

LEADER

Uh no.

CHORUS

Uh no. Uh no. Uh no.

HOOPOE

The two Hysterican persons want to live with us.

LEADER

Uhhh no.

CHORUS

Uh no. Uh no. Uh no. Uh no.  
Persons are foes, they catch us and cage us  
they hunt us with arrow and bow - and with gun  
they pluck us and cook us or roast us and chew us  
glue our feathers on hats for fashion and fun -

WREN

I once saw a person - a terrible person -

CHORUS

I once saw a person wearing part of my son!

HOOPOE

Oh, that wasn't very nice.

CHORUS

Uh no. Uh no. Uh no. Uh no.

Persons are foes, let's peck them and strike them  
flay them and claw them - snatch them and then  
when nothing can save them - let's tear them, devour them -

WREN

And when we're all done - let's do it again!

CHORUS

And again and again and again and again -  
when we're all done - let's do it again  
and again and again and again and again.

HOOPOE

Oh come on birds.

(STAN/OLLIE ENTER)

I understand about the feathers on the hats  
and chicken fricasee and pheasant under glass -  
I agree that persons in general may be your natural foes  
but these two Hystericans came to give you useful advice  
and a wise bird can profit from the lessons of a foe.

CHORUS

Va foe! Va foe! Oh, va foe!

HOOPOE

At least listen to what they have to say.

WREN

Say what?

CHORUS

What? Say what? What? Say what? What?

STAN

We want to live with you, right Ollie?

OLLIE

We want to build a new city in the air -

STAN

In the air - and we want to live with them, right Ollie?

OLLIE

To live with you.

CHORUS

Why? Why? Why? Why?

HOOPOE

Tell them, Ollie.

OLLIE

Because you once were kings.

WREN

Kingsawhat?

CHORUS

Kingsawhat? Kingsawhat? Kingsawhat?

OLLIE

Of everything - the birds came first -  
before the earth - before the heavens -

WREN

What?

CHORUS

What? What? What? What?

OLLIE

Once upon a time there was only Chaos.

ARISTOPHANES

Ollie's theory - once upon a time - only Chaos.

STAN

Tell the egg.

ARISTOPHANES

Chaos laid an unfertilized egg - along came Eros.

OLLIE

Along came an egg - along came Eros.

STAN

(SINGS W/HOOPOE) Along came Eros.

OLLIE

Eros, the lover, had glittery wings.

HOOPOE

Eros could fly like a bird.

ARISTOPHANES

Eros, with his glittery wings, fertilized the egg of Chaos.

OLLIE

Eros fertilized the egg and along came the birds.

STAN

(SINGS W/HOOPOE) Along came birdies.

ARISTOPHANES

Eros brought together heaven and earth and the oceans  
but nothing existed - says Ollie - before the birds!  
This is Ollie's "big bird" theory of evolution.

OLLIE

That's my theory in a nut shell.

STAN

In an egg shell.

ARISTOPHANES

"Theory", of course, means something different in science  
than it means in everyday life.

OLLIE

The birds came first -

ARISTOPHANES

The term "theory of evolution" is misleading because  
a scientific theory is not a guess or a temporary hypothesis -

OLLIE

Gods came later.

WREN

Later.

CHORUS

Later. Later.

ARISTOPHANES

It's supported by experimental and observational data.

OLLIE

Read the data.

CHORUS

Data. Data. Data.

ARISTOPHANES

Data - data - data.  
Babble and battle with your buddies all you like -  
take whatever position - however dull - however silly -  
argument is arguably life's greatest pleasure -  
so a scientific theory - mustn't be abandoned willy nilly.

OLLIE

Survival of the you know what!

STAN

Tell about the cock.

WREN

What cock?

CHORUS

What cock? What cock? What? What?

STAN

The cock still wears a crown on his head like a king.

OLLIE

The cock crows and everybody jumps out of bed.

ARISTOPHANES

I suppose you can do anything  
in twenty first century Hysterica  
by dressing up your opposing ideology  
in pseudo-scientific-jargon-oody -  
then go get yourself a battery of  
three piece suit big buck lawyers -  
and take the whole kit and caboodle  
to Supreme Court Justice Joody.



STAN

I once lost a good quality camel hair coat because of a cock.

CHORUS

What cock? What cock? What? What?

STAN

A cuckoo cock crowed - I figured it was dawn -  
I began my morning walk - a mugger knocked me down -  
he stole my camel coat - I loved that coat by god -

ARISTOPHANES

Keep your ears tuned to this "god" segue.

OLLIE

In the good old days we swore by the birds - not the gods  
and before the gods actually got there -  
the birds voted for the separation of church and state -

HOOPOE

Or they should-a done.

CHORUS

Should-a done. Should-a done. Church n' state.

ARISTOPHANES

Of course the founding fathers said faith was fine -  
they all believed in the great divine.  
But what's mine is mine and what's thine is thine, they said  
So before they put the baby constitution to bed  
they decided what would really make Hysterica great  
was the absolute separation of church n' state.

CHORUS

Church n' state.  
Should-a done. Should-a done.  
Church n' state.  
Should-a done. Should-a done.

Church n' state.  
Should-a done. Should-a done.  
Church -----n"-----State.

STAN

In the good old days birds were sacred -  
now kids throw stones and bird catchers set snares -  
and birds get caught and sold in heaps -  
and buyers finger you to be sure you're fat.

OLLIE

And they marinate you in barbecue sauce.

HOOPOE

Barbecue sauce.

WREN

BQ ooh.

CHORUS

BQ ooh. BQ ooh. Ooh.

HOOPOE

Ouch. Your words hurt.

WREN

Ouch.

CHORUS

Ouch. Ouch. Ouch. Ouch.

OLLIE

It's a pity your feathered forefathers and fore-mothers  
didn't transmit to you the high rank they once held  
from their feathered forefathers and fore-mothers.

STAN

And fore-aunts and fore-uncles - oh my eyes.

CHORUS

My eyes. My eyes.

STAN

It's not too late. Ollie has a plan.

WREN

What?

HOOPOE

Has a plan.

OLLIE

All the birds have to get together in one place in the air.

WREN

What?

HOOPOE

In the air.

CHORUS

In the air. In the air.

ARISTOPHANES

Good luck.

OLLIE

All the birds build a big brick wall to keep everyone else out.

HOOPOE

How big?

ARISTOPHANES

Very big.

STAN

Big enough to fill the space between earth and the heavens.

HOOPOE

And that's our city.

ARISTOPHANES

That's it.

OLLIE

Then make the gods give back your old power.

ARISTOPHANES

What if they say no?

STAN

And don't take no for an answer. There's no "no" about it.

OLLIE

No matter what - don't let the gods pass through your city.

ARISTOPHANES

Just say no to the gods.

OLLIE

Then, send a messenger to all the persons on earth  
to remind them of the power of the birds -

HOOPOE

Power to the birds!

WREN

Power.

CHORUS

Power.

ARISTOPHANES

Power to the birds!

OLLIE

Birds always got their share of sacrifices  
before the gods in the good old days.

STAN

So, everyone has to send sacrifices first to the birds.

OLLIE

Figure which god and which bird have the most in common.

STAN

If you send a cow to Heracles - send honey cake to a gull.

ARISTOPHANES

Because the gull, like Heracles, is always hungry.

OLLIE

Sacrifice sheep to Posidon - send wheat to a duck.

HOOPOE

Wheat to a duck.

ARISTOPHANES

Because they both live in the water.

CHORUS

To a duck. To a duck.

ARISTOPHANES

Bird/god references don't mean much anymore - do they?  
These days you send checks instead of chickens -  
to the self appointed representatives of your gods.  
They would rather have lolly than livestock anyway.  
But birds and gods used to be big greek jokes folks.  
(RIM SHOT)

HOOPOE

Why will anyone think of us as anything more powerful  
than the same old tweet tweeting fly babies?

WREN

Fly babies.

OLLIE

Because everyone knows there are gods with wings who fly.

CHORUS

Fly babies. Fly babies.

STAN

Homer says Iris is like a dove -

ARISTOPHANES

Read any good Homer lately?

OLLIE

If they won't recognize bird power - attack them.

ARISTOPHANES

We know how to do that.

OLLIE

Send the sparrows to eat up all their corn -  
send the crows to peck out the eyes of their horses.

STAN

I better sell my horses.

HOOPOE

Is there any way but war?

CHORUS

Way-but-war! Way-but-war!

HOOPOE

Birds have other talents - we can point to the richest mines -  
the most fertile soil - we can tell where to dig a well for water  
and before any ship sails - we can say don't start today -  
bad weather is brewing - or go ahead sailor -

CHORUS

Go ahead sailor. Go ahead sailor. Go ahead.

HOOPOE

Go ahead, sailor - you'll get there and you'll make a profit.

STAN

I better buy some ships.

HOOPOE

We can tell where treasure is buried -  
everybody always says nobody ever knows  
where somebody's treasure is buried - except the birds.

STAN

I better sell my ships and buy a shovel.

HOOPOE

All in favor - say aye!

WREN

Say aye.

CHORUS

Say aye! Say aye! Say aye! Aye! Aye!

ARISTOPHANES

Birds on a roll.

HOOPOE

What do we do next?

Name your city. OLLIE

Birdsburgh - HOOPOE

Birdingham - WREN

Birdingham - Birdington - CHORUS

Birdchister - Birdahoma - HOOPOE

Birdabama - WREN

Birdabama - Birdsylvania - Birdimore - CHORUS

Birdachusetts - OLLIE

Birdanooga - STAN

Birdafornia - HOOPOE

Birdaquerque - Birdayama - Birdemala - CHORUS

Birdalajara - HOOPOE

Birdywood - OLLIE



HOOPOE

Birdastan - Birdingham - Birdhampton -

CHORUS

Birdiago - Birdidad - Birdianapolis -

HOOPOE

Birdos Aires -

STAN

West Bird - East Bird - North Bird - South Bird -

CHORUS

Birdaragua - Birdamingo - Birdsacola -

HOOPOE

Birdonia

OLLIE

Birdonia - that's it!

STAN

That's it - Birdonia!

CHORUS

That's it! Birdonia! Birdonia! Birdonia! Birdonia!

HOOPOE

Hail Birdonia!

CHORUS

Hail hail Birdonia!

ARISTOPHANES

The birds name the city Birdonia and time passes -  
the flag gets designed -  
the constitution gets written -  
the congress gets elected.

Soldiers get drafted -  
uniforms get tailored -  
a big wall gets erected -  
the citizens must be protected.  
Here comes a general.  
(GENERAL ENTERS)

GENERAL

With a standing bird army -  
with beaks, claws and tanks -  
no aggressor will attempt to dethrone ya.  
Who wants to go to war -  
after all - there's no oil -  
in this city in the sky called Birdonia!

CHORUS

Hail hail Birdonia!

ARISTOPHANES

(GENERAL EXITS)  
There goes the general - more time passes -  
cornerstones get laid -  
court buildings get built -  
real estate taxes and bribes get collected.  
Birds get themselves lawyers  
who get themselves juries -  
Judges get themselves appointed -  
don't have to get elected.  
Here comes an inspector.  
We might get inspected.  
(INSPECTOR ENTERS)

INSPECTOR

Impossible to snail mail ya -  
impossible to email ya -  
impossible to telegraph ya -  
impossible to telephone ya  
You Birdonians better open

better lines of communication or we'll sue the administration -  
in this city you all call Birdonia.

CHORUS

Hail hail Birdonia!

ARISTOPHANES

(INSPECTOR EXITS)

There goes the inspector and more time passes -  
Usual laws get made -  
usual laws get broke -  
usual suspects get suspected.  
Usual government scandals -  
usual government hearings -  
as usual "no crime is detected."  
Here comes a parson.  
(PARSON ENTERS)

PARSON

You must pray for guidance -  
you must pray for mercy -  
you must pray every day  
in the way gods have shown ya.  
You must pray for mass transit with no deficit  
in this city you all call Birdonia

CHORUS

Hail hail birdonia!

ARISTOPHANES

(PARSON EXITS)

There goes the parson and more time passes -  
heat wave - hurricane -  
mud slide - tsunami -  
global warming still gets neglected  
drought, plague, ague  
and avian flu -  
guess who's gonna get infected?

Actors become celebrities -  
athletes become celebrities -  
with celebrity size salaries  
they're "a listed" and respected.  
Birds who want to host a Birdonian Olympics  
try to bribe the committee -  
so Birdonia's selected.  
But the billion dollar sports stadium  
is proposed and rejected -  
and here comes a producer  
(PRODUCER ENTERS, STAN EXITS)

PRODUCER

Where are the medium size flexible stages?  
The moveable and re-moveable comfortable seating?  
How do I produce side by side sex shows and sinfonia?  
unconventional theater and dance pandemonia?  
Where do I produce Aristophanes comedies?  
Is there an affordable Experimental Workshop Theater  
in this city,  
this great city,  
this city you all call Birdonia?  
(PRODUCER EXITS)

CHORUS

Hail, hail, Birdonia.  
(CHORUS EXITS)

ARISTOPHANES

There goes the producer. There goes the chorus.  
(STAN ENTERS W/BAGS READY TO TRAVEL)  
Here comes Stan. Where's he going?

OLLIE

Where are you going?

STAN

I want to go home to Hysterica.  
I know you weren't happy with everything where we were  
so you came here to make something new happen -  
to make a new life somewhere else in your old age.

OLLIE

And in your old age.

STAN

And in my old age.

ARISTOPHANES

And in my old age. If I was about eight hundred years  
younger I might try writing TV sitcoms.

STAN

And I came with you because I always come with you  
and I stayed with you because I always stay with you  
but now I want to go home to Hysterica.

ARISTOPHANES

Beginning of the end.

OLLIE

I thought you liked it here.

ARISTOPHANES

In my play the character of Stan just disappears.

STAN

You remember when my father moved my mother to Florida?

ARISTOPHANES

In my play Stan exits to do something or other and never  
comes back. I don't remember why I did that.

STAN

My father thought she and he would be happy there -  
a new life in their old age - he bought short sleeve Hawaiian  
shirts with two pockets for his glasses and his cigarettes.  
He played pinochle and smoked three packs a day.

OLLIE

In the game room where she couldn't see him.

ARISTOPHANES

This director uses Stan to guide the journey to an end.

STAN

She cried for a year in a bathing suit.

OLLIE

At the pool - under a house dress - she was shy.

STAN

Until he moved her back to where she came from - to public  
transportation and her kosher butcher and four real seasons

OLLIE

and her four real sisters -

STAN

and to me too.

ARISTOPHANES

Tears to my eyes -  
this director avows his pessimism and undying cynicism  
but evidently he wants to leave you with hope.

STAN

Oh, Ollie - everything here in Birdonia  
which you hoped would not be like Hysterica  
is turning out to be just like Hysterica -

just like everything there - where we were -  
and if everything's going to be just like there here -  
then I'd rather be there there.

ARISTOPHANES

There, there, Stanley.

OLLIE

Well, here's another fine mess you got me into.

ARISTOPHANES

What will Ollie do?

OLLIE

Okay, Stan, wither thou goest.

ARISTOPHANES

Birds of a feather.  
Here comes the chorus. Here comes Hoopoe.

HOOPOE

(ENTERS) Where are you going?

STAN

Where we came from.

STAN/OLLIE

Hysterica - Hysterica - gods shed their grace on thee -  
and crown thy good with birdie hood -

OLLIE

We could take you with us.

STAN

From sea to shining -

OLLIE

Whattaya say?

HOOPOE

No thanks -

STAN

Why not?

HOOPOE

In Hysterica I'd be just another homeless bird  
searching for crumbs in the park.

ARISTOPHANES

Chased by dogs and cats and kiddies.

HOOPOE

In Birdonia I'm still the Queen in spite of the Bird Congress.

ARISTOPHANES

They voted for a limited constitutional monarchy.

HOOPOE

I still get to dress up when I'm not molting.

ARISTOPHANES

Fabulous feathered finery for formal festivities.

HOOPOE

I attend openings of supermarkets and fast food chains.

ARISTOPHANES

And other Birdonian architectural wonders.

HOOPOE

And I get to peck away at elaborate dinners  
with other heads of states and an occasional god or two.

ARISTOPHANES

And she gets to nap in big feather beds in big birdhouses.



HOOPOE

And birds in the trees do still bow to me  
when they aren't busy writing to The Daily Birdonian.

ARISTOPHANES

About the high cost of the outmoded monarchy.

HOOPOE

Thanks for thinking there might be a better new world.

ARISTOPHANES

Where there's hope.

STAN

Pack up all your care and woe -

OLLIE

Care and woe - something, something, here we go.

STAN/OLLIE

Bye bye, Hoopoe. Bye bye, Birdies.  
(STAN AND OLLIE EXIT)

ARISTOPHANES

David Gordon read The Birds  
and felt at once connected  
to thoughts of new performance  
with old performance sins corrected.

He examined, re-examined  
and resurrected Stan and Ollie -  
deconstructed and dissected the bird chorus  
and the gods -  
then effected the king of birds a queen  
no mean feat of transformation.

HOOPOE

I'll say.

CHORUS

I'll say. I'll say. I'll say.

ARISTOPHANES

He dreamt of music, dance and theater  
Lubitch-esque and Bertolt Brecht-ed  
with me, a woman, as Aristophanes  
on a rocky stage erected -  
of selected metal folding chairs -  
then affected genuine-ly by his own good luck -  
he knelt and genuflected.

HOOPOE

Let's dance.

WREN

What?

CHORUS

Dance. Dance. Let's dance. Dance.  
(BIRD FINALE BEGINS)

ARISTOPHANES

He thought, rethought and reinspected  
politics and politicians -  
washed and dried and iron-eyed  
till contempo-rarity was projected.

He nursed performers -  
pleaded, petted -  
rehearsed till perfected -  
the steps and words of this respected ancient comedy -  
The Birds -  
to which you've been subjected.  
And now the comedy is ended -  
just as you expected.

(ARISTOPHANES EXITS)

BIRD CHORUS CONTINUES TO DANCE  
ARISTOPHANES RE-ENTERS AS DANCING BIRD  
LIGHT FADES/MUSIC PLAYS THROUGH BOWS)

THE END