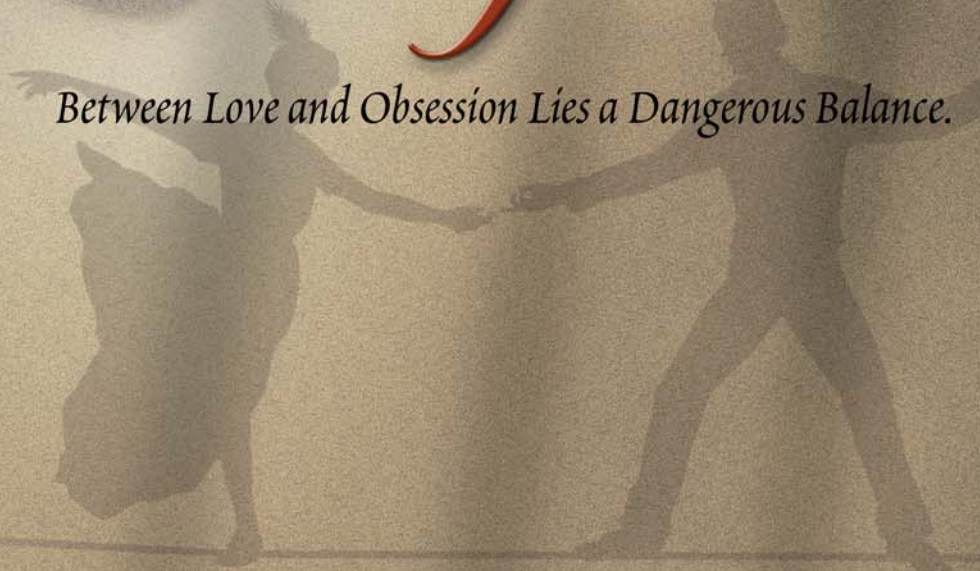




# *The Songbird*

*Between Love and Obsession Lies a Dangerous Balance.*



# The Songbird

A young man, fleeing the brutality of his staunchly upright Victorian father, sets out to command the attention of the world, and of a beautiful circus performer (Oriel) who captures his wounded heart. He becomes a master tightrope walker, known as 'The Amazing Argenti', and his daring high-wire crossing above Niagara Falls catapults him into the finest drawing rooms of Europe, as well as the arms of the exquisite Oriel. Unable to shed his past or the memory of his loveless childhood, Argenti's adoration of Oriel becomes an unshakeable and dangerous obsession when she begins to drift away from him, searching for artistic perfection. Though she loves him and becomes a part of his "act", Oriel's unyielding quest for an elusive ideal turns his all-consuming love to terror.

Classic in its telling, THE SONGBIRD is a Victorian love story that invokes all the pathos and emotion of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* and the sweeping romance of *The Illusionist*. It is a story fulsome with passion and obsession, unrequited love and tragedy. Set against the backdrop of a Dickensian London and the mystique of 19th Century Niagara Falls, THE SONGBIRD captures the ambient mood of the Victorian fascination with all things bizarre and dangerous.

With a singular visual style evocative of the silent film era, THE SONGBIRD unfolds in a contemporary manner while vividly capturing the essence of Victorian melodrama. Its tragic romantic theme and rich and mesmerizing visual detail will engage adult audiences who seek intelligent, compelling films that stir the emotions.

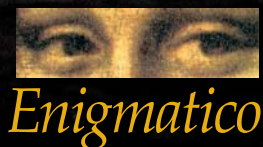
**Writer/Producers:** David Mortin and Patricia Fogliato, Enigmatico Films Inc.  
*Black Widow, Youkali Hotel*

**Director:** David Mortin  
*Black Widow, Youkali Hotel*

**Executive Producer:** Daniel Iron, Foundry Films Inc.  
*Away From Her, The Red Violin, Cairo Time*

**Production Designer:** Matthew Davies  
*Blindness, Fugitive Pieces, Snow Cake*

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EXT. ABOVE NIAGARA FALLS – DAY – 1870  
EXTREME WIDE SHOT of the Falls; two tiny figures – a woman straddling a man’s back – make slow progress along a thread of wire. The woman wears a brightly coloured gown that billows in the wind.

TIGHT 2-SHOT of Oriel and Argenti above the Falls. She is clearly thrilled by the experience, but also profoundly moved. She leans in close to his ear and whispers:

**ORIEL**

This is heavenly...

**ARGENTI**

Are you frightened?

Oriel suddenly appears to slip from Argenti’s shoulder.

EXT. OBSERVATION DECK - CONTINUOUS  
A GASP runs through the crowd.

EXT. ABOVE THE FALLS - CONTINUOUS  
Argenti quickly swivels on the wire, catching Oriel by the arm and slinging her back onto the wire. She lands with perfect balance, then performs a delicate curtsy.

**ORIEL**

Why would I be frightened?





**INT. STAGE - CRYSTAL PALACE - NIGHT**

Time and motion seem to slow as Oriel hurtles through the air; she appears to be floating freely in space, somehow held in a gravity-defying moment of grace. She languidly stretches to the full extension of her body, her arms reaching outward, awaiting the firm grasp of her lover's arms.

CLOSE UP of Argenti's chiselled hands slapping hard against Oriel's wrists. Time and motion suddenly snap back into focus as Argenti catches her mid-flight, ripping her from her transcendent reverie. The pair swipe through the empty black space above the stage.

The audience spontaneously erupts, jumping to their feet and CHEERING madly.

CUT TO:

**INT. DRESSING ROOM - CRYSTAL PALACE - NIGHT**

Oriel and Argenti triumphantly burst through the door of their dressing room and are immediately wrapped in each other's arms, passionately kissing while fumbling to remove the other's costume. They look as if they are trying to consume one another.

**ORIEL**

(between kisses)

That was incredible...

**ARGENTI**

You were wonderful...

**ORIEL**

I flew! Because of you...

