

‘Rock of Ages’ cast talks production, careers

BY SHELBY HARTIN
BDN STAFF

BANGOR — Over a year ago, the Penobscot Theatre Company mailed a number of items to Samuel French Inc., a theatrical licensing and publishing company in New York that holds the rights to the rock musical “Rock of Ages.”

The package contained a plea, comprising the show’s song titles, a variety of Maine rocks from the Rock and Art Shop in Bangor and a clever letter filled with descriptions of Maine’s scenery. The small professional theater company from Bangor, Maine, wanted to be the first professional company to stage “Rock of Ages” in the Pine Tree State.

Mary Budd, executive director

of Penobscot Theatre Company, and Bari Newport, producing artistic director, thought their package might just sway the rights holders to say yes.

“We endeavored — kind of against all odds, because Ogunquit [Playhouse] was planning on doing this — to get the rights to this so that we were not the second company to do this in the state but the first,” Newport said. Ultimately, the efforts worked. Now, the PTC is gearing up for the Maine premiere of the production, which will be staged at the Bangor Opera House from June 9 to July 2. Budd said she imagines it was PTC’s “chutzpah, our moxie and our creative tenacity,” that convinced the rights holders they could put on a show they would be proud of.

“Rock of Ages,” a Tony Award-nominated Broadway musical, features hit music from the 1980s, including songs from popular acts such as Journey, Bon Jovi, Pat Benatar, Poison and more. It’s staged with a live, onstage band named Arsenal. The cast includes five band members and 16 other cast members. And much like many of the characters these actors and actresses will portray, they’re performers.

For actress Christie Robinson, a 32-year-old originally from Bucksport, her character Sherrie is relatable to many.

“She’s just a good ol’ girl with a dream, and that’s what I love about her,” Robinson said. “She takes a big risk and leaves her little town to go to [Los Angeles] and

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MAGNUS STARK
Director and choreographer Michele Colvin teaches new choreography to the ensemble for Penobscot Theatre’s production of “Rock of Ages,” which will be staged June 9 through July 2.

New gallery coming to Rockland

Facility to feature contemporary art

BY KATHLEEN PIERCE
BDN STAFF

ROCKLAND — “It could’ve moved anywhere,” Suzette McAvoy said, standing before Rockland’s gleaming, newly constructed Center for Maine Contemporary Art.

The June 26 opening of the new facility returns McAvoy, the center’s executive director, to familiar turf. The former chief curator at the Farnsworth Art Museum, located a two-minute walk away, charted the course that kept CMCA in Penobscot Bay.

“We wanted to stay in the mid-coast and create that energy here so that there was more balance in the state,” she said.

Brunswick and Bangor were possibilities for the reimagined center, founded in Rockport in 1952, that showcases artists working in Maine today. But for a number of reasons, Rockland won out.



McAvoy

“It was conscious on our part. We wanted to stay in the mid-coast. We are the Center for Maine Contemporary Art,” she said. “But our roots are here in the midcoast.”

The museum, built for \$3.8 million from the ground up, is designed to “reflect the change in contemporary art,” McAvoy said.

From the public courtyard, designed by the project’s architect Toshiko Mori to feel like an embrace, a great deal of art will be on view.

“We are going to be showing work that is very new to Maine audiences and outside of Maine. We will be able to feature artists in a way that has not been done,” McAvoy said.

The 16-foot-high main gallery has the proportions to handle installation work from large-scale sculptors, such as Jonathan Borofsky of Ogunquit. He told McAvoy, “there has not been a venue to show the kind of work that I do” in Maine until now. That was just what she wanted to hear.

“It think it’s really important that CMCA always keeps its mission of supporting artists with a tie to Maine,” McAvoy said. “Many people have asked me, ‘Are you going to broaden your mission?’”

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LON CAMERON

Liz Crawford of Boone, North Carolina, relaxes in a hammock at Lon Cameron's tiny house Airbnb.

Trying out a tiny house

Maine man offers up 200-square-foot home as vacation rental

BY JULIA BAYLY
BDN STAFF

When it comes to the great American dream of owning a home, some people are thinking smaller is better. The tiny house movement, which favors simple living in small spaces, has swept across the country over the last decade with new and aspiring homeowners slamming the doors on those giant McMansions in favor of structures that would fit in a McMansion’s generous walk-in closet.

According to several architectural and building websites, a “tiny house” is one

that’s generally smaller than 500 square feet.

But is this for everyone?

For those wanting to try out small space living without the commitment, Lon Cameron has the solution. For the last two years Cameron, 34, has offered up his own 200-square-foot tiny house located 100 feet from the Class A Crooked River in Waterville through online vacation rental site Airbnb.

“I started renting it out in February 2014, and it immediately became a big hit,” Cameron said. “People really wanted something that was not a traditional bed

and breakfast experience, [and] they wanted to pay a bit less to do more.”

Cameron rents his tiny house for \$100 per night and is very upfront on what people can expect.

For instance, there is no running water — unless his guests run and get it. In fact, bringing in drinking water is one of Cameron’s three hard and fast rules, which also include bringing their own sleeping bags or linens and leaving the house as clean — or cleaner — than when they arrived.

The “plumbing” is a composting toilet in a separate small shed.

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Yvette Stewart of stands in front of doughnuts at Gosselin's Bakery, a family-owned business, on Tuesday.



SHELBY HARTIN | BDN

Gosselin's Bakery will sate your appetite for good doughnuts



SHELBY HARTIN

As I sat at my desk at work and took a bite into a soft, sweet chocolate coconut doughnut, I couldn’t help but smile. It reminded me of the fresh doughnuts my mother brings home every so often from the Amish who live in the community I grew up in.

My morning hadn’t started off well — I’d just returned to Bangor from a long weekend spent outdoors in Aroostook County and dreaded leaving the warm tangle of blankets on my bed. But then I remembered that I had plans for the morning.

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To see more events visit:
watervillecreates.org
207.616.0292




Colby College Museum of Art • Maine Film Center
Waterville Public Library • Common Street Arts
Waterville Opera House • Waterville Main Street

June 2, 12 PM / *Waterville Creates*
Waterville Cultural Blueprint Planning Meeting Help us guide the future growth of arts and culture in greater Waterville!

June 10, 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM / *The Framemakers*, downtown Waterville
Extraordinary Maine Opening Reception Come see the Waterville Area Art Society’s “Unusual Maine with Textures” collection at this lively event with food, drinks, and live music. Everyone is invited!

June 13, 7:15 PM / *Railroad Square Cinema*
Gurukulam This film will immerse you in a remote forest ashram in India, exploring—by taking us into—the daily life of the followers of Swami Dayananda, one of the last teachers of Vedanta.


Nana's Naughty Knickers

June 10, 11, 17, 18 at 7:30 PM; June 12, 19 at 2 PM

Bridget and her Grandmother are about to become roommates. However, what Bridget saw as a unique opportunity to stay with her favorite Nana in New York for the summer quickly turns into an experience she'll never forget! For tickets: 873-7000 or www.operahouse.org