

Novel

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dreamed that I was playing a violin with a baby next to me,” Gerritsen said. In the dream, the melody of the music made the baby’s eyes glow red. Gerritsen awoke with a tale already forming in her head that explored the “power of music to awaken the savage beast and to transmit evil.”

“It’s described as being hauntingly beautiful and then hauntingly disturbing,” Gerritsen said.

Gerritsen, who plays the violin, also composed music to accompany the book. It’s available for digital download from services, including iTunes and Amazon Digital.

“I’ve never done this before. And certainly, because it’s classical music, I think that’s highly unusual,” Gerritsen said. “The music is so important to the story.”

A step outside her previous work, Gerritsen said the process of creating this book was different because it was so unexpected.

“Authors have this phrase: the book of your heart. ... It’s a book that you feel you are forced to write,” Gerritsen said. That’s what this book is for her.

As for the music, for those inclined, listening to it while reading could be an interesting way to experience it.

“I think if they hear the music while they are reading the book, it will make it far more alive for them,” Gerritsen said.

Theatre

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man, who began volunteering with the company.

His duties were simple at first — mostly painting. But one fateful day, the master carpenter at the time quit.

“This was right before the opening of ‘Peter Pan,’” Newman said.

There was a crisis at hand — the windows of one of the set pieces had to open, but the walls had to open, too, to let Peter Pan’s flying line go through. No one could figure it out.

Then Newman stepped forward.

“I think I know how to do it,” he remembered saying.

He had a background in carpentry, and his idea, which used dowels to maneuver all the working pieces, worked perfectly.

“The set designer said, ‘I want that guy working here,’” Newman recalled.

And he has been with the Penobscot Theatre Company ever since.

“I feel like I have the best job here. I smile when I get here. I smile when I leave. I have a really good day every day,” Newman said.

“Carpentrywise and architecturally sometimes the



GABOR DEGRE | BDN

Bob Rogers (from left), Will Newman and Gregg Hanscom assemble the set of “It’s a Wonderful Life” at the Bangor Opera House for the Penobscot Theatre Company’s production of the play. The panels that make up the set must be precisely crafted so they fit together properly when put together on the stage.

design gets really challenging,” he said. “With theater you look at something and it looks substantial — like it’s a house — and sometimes it’s just a wall. The rules you would use to build something normal don’t apply. Which works for you and against you. ... It’s definitely a place to be creative, and it demands that you think outside of the box.”

Newman also has to remember that sets built at the

Theatre Factory must be moved a few miles and set up for plays at the Bangor Opera House.

“Yeah, you can build something incredibly enormous here, but it has to get through this door, onto a vehicle, across town, into the

theater. It has to be built to disassemble and tour, essentially. ... In the back of your mind when you’re building, you have to be sure you don’t paint yourself into a corner,” Newman said.

The latest show will feature Bangor high-schoolers

Elisabeth Budd, Robert Brangwynne and Lana Sabagh, along with actors and actresses Ben Layman, Jen Shepard, Tony Larkin, Mark Chambers and Blythe Coons, who together will play more than 50 characters. Recent Bangor high school graduate Luke Cote will man the sound effects table, providing more than 170 sounds to complement the show, which will run Dec. 3-27.

Original music by Larance Fingerhut of ImprovAcadia played by three musicians will round out the show.

“It’s a beloved American story. We chose it not only because it’s a classic but because it elevates the importance of the individual within one’s community, and being that Bangor is such a tight-knit community, it seems particularly apropos,” producing artistic director Bari Newport said.

By the time audiences start enjoying the production, Newman and production manager and technical director Bob Rogers already will be working on the next set.

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