

BEST DIRECTOR ▶

Eva Tessler served as director, choreographer and translator in Borderlands' "Desire" — and she didn't fall down on any of those jobs.

Jon Jory's reimagined Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night" was a frolic at the beach for the Arizona Theatre Company production, and the result was a play that looked as luscious as the story was improbable.

Kevin Johnson's direction of Arizona Onstage's "Elegies" was eloquent and sensitive without ever becoming sentimental.

Brent Gibbs directed Invisible Theatre's "Exonerated" with restraint, which made the production even more powerful. And Stephen Elton took a complex play,



ANN MARSDEN

Lou Bellamy wins a Mac for directing August Wilson's "Jitney."

"Frozen," and made it smooth and understandable.

Lou Bellamy, who directed "Jitney," moved us to tears with the rich-with-real-life production of the August Wilson play. His painfully honest, raw direction translated into one of the most powerful theatrical experiences on Tucson stages in many years. The 2006 Mac for Best Director is his.



JAMES GREGG / ARIZONA DAILY STAR

From left, Marcus Terrell Smith, Aryo Wicaksono, Diane Thomas and Kit Runge rehearse "Elegies," winner of the Mac for Best Musical.

▲ BEST MUSICAL

Arizona Repertory Theatre did a cartoony creation with its "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying." It was a perfect treatment of the play, which was a fun trip back to the days when women wore high heels and tight tops, and "hubba-hubba" was central to conversations between men.

Arizona Theatre Company's "Ella" had a thin script but was a deliriously wonderful production thanks to its star,

who gave Fitzgerald's music immediacy.

But it is to Arizona Onstage Production's "**Elegies**" that we give the 2006 Mac for Best Musical. The only thing connecting the all-song script was death, the set was minimal, costumes even more so, but the play overflowed with heart and powerful emotion, thanks to a cast that committed itself completely to giving full life to the songs and the characters.

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