
Cabaret big winner in Edwina Awards

Black-tie gala features auction, review and some laughs

Greg Marshall, Of the Record

Article Launched: 06/17/2008 04:53:09 PM MDT

Janet Gray worked three hours every day for more than a month choreographing dance routines for the Egyptian Theatre's version of "Cabaret." The commitment seems doable until also considering that Gray owns and operates one of the most popular dance studios in Salt Lake City.

Gray's hard work paid off. She won an Edwina Award Saturday at the Egyptian Theatre's annual gala and fundraiser. Cabaret, the most acclaimed show of the season, won awards for set design, lighting, acting and was named best musical.

The Edwina Awards are given out every year to the cast and crew members who work on shows at the Egyptian. The four shows honored this year were "Cabaret," "Peter Pan," "Sweeney Todd," and "Tommy."

Gray said teaching 1930s swing, rhythm and blues and the Charleston in just a few weeks was a challenging proposition, especially since the cast of "Cabaret" was not composed of professional dancers.

"All these dancers were people from the community," Gray said. "And here I am asking them to do all sorts of things and give me all sorts of different looks. They really rose to the occasion. I wouldn't have won the award if they didn't do a great job."

Gray, a former adjunct associate professor in dance and dance history, beat out fellow nominees and friends Jim Christian and Brent Schneider, who recommended her for the job.

"I've worked with both of them and they're my friends," Gray said. "Had I not won, I would have challenged them to an arm wrestle. I had no idea

I would turn into a ten-year-old tomboy."

Advertisement

Set designer Shawn Fisher was nominated for both "Peter Pan" and "Cabaret," and took home the golden statue for blending the stage's historic elements with modern sets for

"Cabaret." "One of the biggest challenges designing for the Egyptian is the lack of space," he said. "'Peter Pan' is a little more basic and traditional. With 'Cabaret' I had to solve more artistic problems."

Terence Goodman, the artistic director for the Egyptian, said he and others worked to make the awards more substantive this year than in previous years. "In the past the awards have been kind of a joke, kind of funny," Goodman explained. "I think a lot of people in the audience saw for the first time how grateful and humbled they were to get recognized. We were all very pleased with the outcome."

http://www.parkrecord.com/scene/ci_9614739

Sunday, June 22, 2008 2:35:47 PM
