

# Arts & Entertainment

## Game Theory here

Preview by  
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Diversions Editor

Southern California and soft-core psychedelia. Something to do with the heat maybe, with a horizon full of ocean slipping onto a rose-petal sunset, disintegrating into warm dark ether. With too much time to think. With cars and buses and people jiggling in their separate sweltering mirages like trembling paley. What emerges are groups like Rain Parade, 3 O'Clock, Wire Train (from Game Theory's new home, San Francisco) and the fragile, perfect bubble of melody that is Game Theory.

### Concert Preview

Game Theory will create their world of Leary-meets-Lewis Carroll serious nonsense Saturday night in the old Hospes Music Building, 1142 O St. This is the perfect venue for Game Theory — old-style combinatory architecture (baroque meets gothic meets bathaus) deserted and ready for demolition to make way for the bold new future Lincoln.

Game Theory began in 1983 as a recorded commodity, putting out a series of warmly received EPs that tip-toed along the lotus line of extremely intellectual experimentalism and bare-bones psychedelic pop, somewhere between Let's Active and the pure dumb pop of 3 O'Clock (not an insult).

Game Theory has enough members with differing approaches to musicianship and songwriting to fend off the mediocrity and boredom that sometimes mar the efforts of their peers. Bassist Fred Juhos came off as the prophet of gloom, normally opting for a lyrical, if not especially hooky, blend of Joy Division and Pere Ubu on his compositions. Not that the songs sound at all like those two entirely separate entities,



Game Theory will play Saturday night at the old Hospes building, 1142 O St.

but the mood scales to similar highs and lows.

Scott Miller, the still-remaining guru, is more like a less eccentric version of Robyn Hitchcock, a glut-ton for pop forms, for melodies that can't contain themselves. With melodies this solid and perfect in his mind, it's hard for him to sound ominous. Like Hitchcock, Miller's vision is a direct descendant of the King of Madcaps, Syd Barrett, spooky

the way pretty things that don't quite make sense always are.

"Real Nighttime," the band's first LP, as it were, was produced by Mitch Easter in 1985 and coincided with the band's pilgrimage to San Francisco, a regrouping leaving only Scott Miller at the helm and some completely satisfactory changes in musical direction.

At 9:30 p.m., Cellophane Ceiling, wisely, will open. Tickets are \$5.

## 'The Judge' hands down trash, sordid verdict

By Mark Hain  
Staff Reviewer

"The Judge," channel 3 3:30 p.m. weekdays

As anyone who listens to any TV evangelist knows, the blame for America's apocalyptic moral decline lies squarely on the shoulders of the breakdown of the family unit. As anyone who's seen "The Judge" knows, this is probably true.

It is probably more than coincidence that "The Judge" directly follows "Divorce Court." Together they make up one full hour of really tacky, blatantly overacted, delightfully melodramatic courtroom hullabaloo. The only flaw in all this fun is these shows tend to take themselves too seriously. The credibility the viewer gives to shows such as "The Judge" is what classifies them as either a modern-day morality play or a hilariously far-fetched exploitation of human foibles. Although "The Judge" is obviously aimed at people who live in mobile homes and believe that The National Enquirer is gospel truth; with the right attitude, anyone can get a good laugh out of the American televised judicial system.

wave to the beaming neighbors. Oh, how lucky they are to have such a man right next door. We know Judgey is even a good Christian, because he tells us so. "I pray every day to God to give me the wisdom to always temper justice with humility." With that kind of help, how can you go wrong?

You can't. Judge Franklin knows his stuff. He can tell an unruly witness to bury himself with more compassion than anyone. And he's smart, too. Take this case, for example. Mom and Dad are divorced, and stepdad is an informant on the mob. To keep the kiddies from getting rubbed out by the Horse Head Gang, stepdad and company have to relocate and assume a new identity. But then real dad will never see Billy and Susie again.

Oh dear. "The government has no right to change their lives," the dad frantically hollers. (There's a lot of hollering in this court; it's pretty informal. Sometimes there aren't even any attorneys.)

"But at least they'll have their lives," Mr. Cold Government Official responds. The teenage son, who is, of course, his school's starting quarterback, takes the stand and whimpers, "How do you tell a 5-year-old she's never going to see her daddy again?"

Cut to a tight close-up of the judge's kindly, concerned, slightly saddened face, (there are a lot of those, too). But mom testifies that she's been sent pictures of dead babies, and her 5-year-old daughter turned up from a kidnapping wearing a note that said, "I could have been dead by now." What's an ultra-wise, super-human judge to do?

Don't worry. Things get easier when dad's attorney turns out to be a conniving witch (after all, most women in a "man's job" on these shows are). It gets even easier when dad withdraws his custody petition. He loves his family (even his ex) too much to jeopardize its safety. But that's too sad an ending. Judge Franklin has a way of making everything alright. He discovers a way for dad to be smuggled off by the government once a year to see his kids in a secret location. Yea!

"It's the bond of life within you all that makes this decision possible," the judge tells the thankful family. Dab those eyes and heave your sighs, once again everything is peachy in TV land.

As the closing credits roll, the announcer reports where to write for a list of organizations that deal with the "family issues" seen on "The Judge". (After all, there are debutante sluts and stool pigeon step-dads in every family, aren't there?) But why bother? Even with all that information, no one can ever top Robert J. Franklin. Look to the horizon and shield your eyes from the blinding radiance of the savior of America's morality.

They call him The Judge.

### Tube Talk

And speaking of The National Enquirer, "The Judge" seems to be a video version. Well, actually, The Enquirer is too literate for this comparison; "The Judge" is really more of a video Weekly World News. The "gripping family dramas" featured on the program have titles such as "My Daughter the Prostitute" and "Mom is a Bag Lady." No fooling. Have these broadcasters no shame? Let's hope not.

Despite all the nasty, sordid things that take place within this TV courtroom, the producers try to soften the impact. The judge himself is far more benevolent and cuddly than the Divorce Court's Judge Keene or even ol' Judge Wopnar. The Honorable Robert J. Franklin comes off as a cross between God, Santa Claus and Grandpa. This image is achieved in part from the scene that introduces us to Mr. Wonderful: The opening shot pans to a mantlepiece and scans a vista of photos of the Judge throughout his years. Oooh, he was a soldier; what a good American. And then he walks into view, adjusting his suspenders (what, he's stylish too?)

Some of our legal officials might be in it for the money or prone to corruption, but not this guy. "I chose the law as my way of serving my fellow man," he informs us as he begins his busy day. Yes, it's a kiss goodbye to the lovely wife (an incredible Barbara Billingsley simulation), a quick romp with the dog on the painfully perfect lawn and a

## PBS series is fascinating glimpse at Africa

By Stew Magnuson  
Staff Reviewer

"The Africans," PBS. In Dakar, Senegal, all types of people walk down the dusty streets. Some men and women dress in Arabic garb; others wear brightly colored tribal robes. A lanky black man strolls down the sidewalk in a three-piece suit while he carries his briefcase.

### Tube Talk

This scene, from PBS's new nine-week documentary series called "The Africans," best shows the odd mixture of Islam, traditional African culture and the relatively recent Western influences. The series shows how these three forces influence modern Africa.

It takes a lot for me to turn the channel from my beloved "Hill Street Blues" on Thursday nights, but I've always been fascinated with the African continent. Still, this fascination wasn't enough to make me turn the channel.

When I found out the Reagan administration had labeled the documentary "anti-western" and "propagandist" in nature, I knew the show had to be good.

I had watched PBS documentaries for years about Africa's wildlife. There are so many of these wildlife shows that focus on the mating habits of the Sudanese whooping loon or whatever, that

I wondered if any human beings lived on the continent at all. Now PBS has responded to that criticism by spending millions of dollars on one of the most comprehensive TV series on African culture.

By the end of the show, I wasn't sorry I skipped "Hill Street Blues," but even I began to see the Reagan administration's points.

The show is written and narrated by Ali A. Mazrui, the descendant of Mombasan kings, who left his predominantly Islamic country to study in the West. Like Africa itself, Mazrui is influenced by Islamic beliefs and Western culture, as well as traditional African culture.

His tone is definitely anti-Western, though, which is just fine with me. I've studied some African history. Africans have every right to be anti-Western. But sometimes Mazrui goes a little overboard. At one point in the program he stands on the bank of the Suez Canal and asks why a bridge couldn't have been built over the Red Sea to link Arabia instead of using the canal to separate Africa from the Middle East. Well, I would think of quite a few reasons.

Mazrui is my only complaint about this show. I don't mind him — it's great to have a knowledgeable narrator who can relate so many interesting personal experiences and incorporate them into the documentary. He's far better than having a faceless voice simply tell us what is going on in Africa.

But he's the only voice.

Mazrui doesn't interview fellow Africans to get their point of view; he doesn't show us individual Africans beyond glimpses. His slant against the West was fine, until I realized that his was the only slant I would hear.

Just look at the images of Africa and ignore Mazrui's comments if you want. Watch a semi-truck roll along an ancient road through the desert where Arabic caravans used to trek. Watch Jomo Kenyatta, the first president of independent Kenya, address a crowd with as much charisma as John F. Kennedy. Watch white Kenyans play croquet on their plush green lawns.

Watch a Saharan sand dune slowly creep up on a forest. Nature is still the most powerful force on the continent, Mazrui said, and when I saw Ethiopians march on a seemingly endless trail to find food during a drought, I believed him.

Africa is a complex continent with complex problems, Mazrui said.

My one complaint isn't bad enough to get me to start watching "Hill Street Blues" and it's rehashed plot lines again. I'm going to run home Thursday nights to satch Mazrui like I ran home to watch Captain Furrillo and the gang.

Watch "The Africans" and learn. It's better than seeing Lieutenant Bilker bite some poor criminal on the nose for the 200th time.

"The Africans" shows at 9 p.m. Thursday Nights on PBS Channel 12.

### State of the Arts

Compiled by  
Stew Magnuson  
Staff Reporter

#### At the Zoo:

Charlie Burton is a Lincoln legend, but surprisingly, he rarely plays in his hometown. This weekend is a rare chance to see Burton and his band, The Hiccups, play the Zoo. Cover is only \$2.50 and the shows Friday and Saturday nights start at 9 p.m.

#### At Kimball Hall:

Pianist Charles Rosen will be featured at three different events at Kimball Hall starting next Thursday.

Rosen, who will be in Lincoln as the featured speaker at the "Colloquium in 19th Century French Studies," will also perform an all-Liszt concert on Thursday evening. Rosen will deliver a speech and demonstration, "Romantic Variants: Balzac and Liszt," at 1 p.m. Friday for the colloquium and will teach a master class at 3:30 p.m. for UNL

School of Music piano students. All events will take place in Kimball Hall, and the lecture/demonstration and the master class are open to the public at no charge.

Tickets for the concert are \$10 for the general public and \$6 for UNL students and may be purchased at the Kimball Hall box office between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m.

#### At Sheldon Film Theatre:

I haven't seen "A Room with a View" myself, but everyone I know who has, has been hassling me all week to go see it this weekend. "A Room with a View" is an adaption of E.M. Forster's novel of the same name.

Also showing with "A Room with a View" is a short film by director Kenneth Summers called "Fingerplay." Screenings are tonight through Sunday. Times are 7 and 9:15 p.m. Friday and Saturday, with a Saturday matinee at 3 p.m. Sunday's showings are at 5, 7:15 and 9:30 p.m. Admission is \$3.75.