

The Back Row



Gerry Beltz

Take stand to see movie masterpieces

OK movie fans, it's time to make a difference.

As reported in the Daily Nebraskan Wednesday, the Douglas Theatre Co. has been looking into the possibilities of occasionally screening older movies at the Cinema Twin 201 N. 13th St., focusing mainly on the fabulous '40s and '50s (Judy Garland, Humphrey Bogart and so on).

This would not be a permanent change, but a welcome switch from the usual cinematic ooze.

However, as any intelligent business should, they first want to see if there is any audience or support whatsoever for this type of change.

Let's show them our support. DTC has had a virtual monopoly on the movie screens of Lincoln (28 out of 30) for some time now, and this has had both its benefits (lower concession and admission prices than other companies) and its problems (lack of eclectic movie selection) for the average moviegoer.

However, DTC is looking for the public opinion on this option. They are asking if there is an audience out there for this type of programming. They are asking what kinds of movies people would want to see.

Let them know. As mentioned in Wednesday's article, suggestions are being taken at the Cinema Twin, either by speaking with Cinema Twin manager Jennifer Speck, or by dropping off suggestions at the theater during box office hours.

It's not that difficult, people. Going to a movie downtown? You are only one block from the Twin, guaranteed. (OK, 1½ blocks if you're going to the Star Ship 9.)

Also, the home office of DTC is directly beneath Douglas 3 Theatre, and a note could be dropped off there if the Cinema Twin box office is closed.

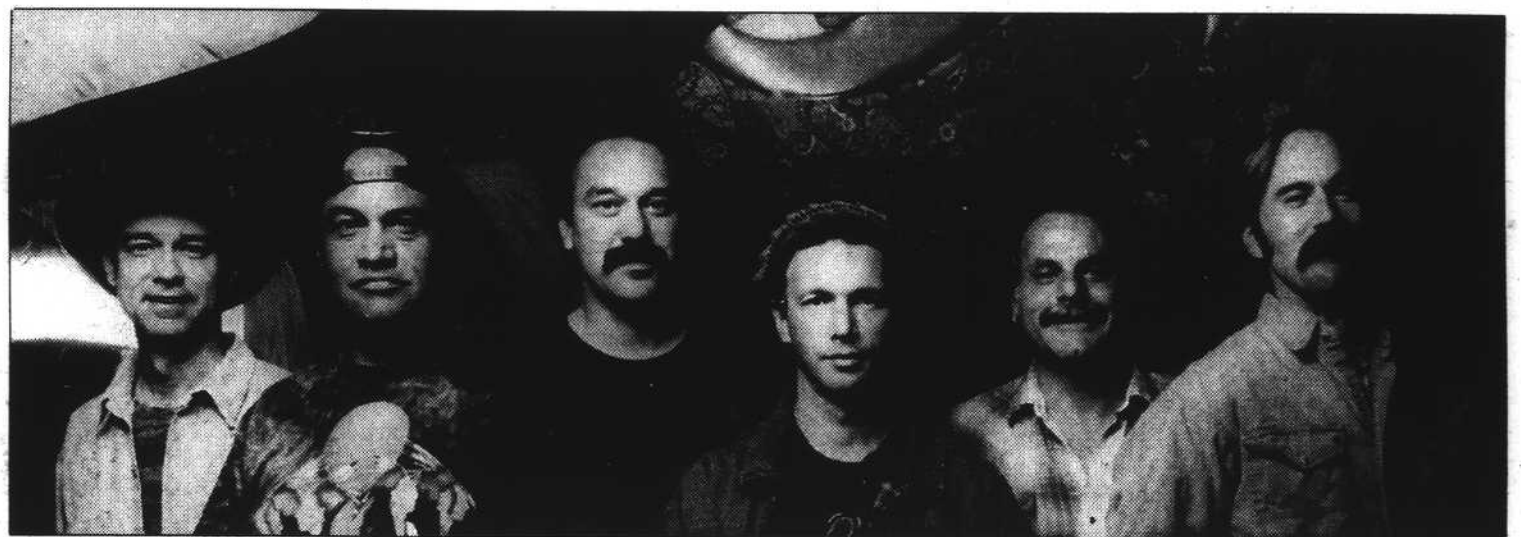
This is the '90s—the age of the Internet; DTC does have a Web site at <http://www.dougtheatres.com> and an e-mail address, douglas@dougtheatres.com, where you can leave your suggestions.

Think about it. "Gone With The Wind" on the big screen again. How about "Casablanca," "The Maltese Falcon" or "The Wizard of Oz?"

The possibilities don't stop there, either. If there's enough of a demand (wink wink, nudge

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FUNKIN' GROOVIN'



SAN FRANCISCO-BASED grass-roots band Zero (from left, Chip Roland, Martin Fierro, Bobby Vega, Steve Kimock, Greg Anton and Judge Murphy) headline a hippie-fest Friday at Pleasant Dale Amphitheater, 10 miles west of Lincoln. PHOTO COURTESY OF ZERO

Zero delivers eclectic sound

BY **BRET SCHULTE**
Music Critic

When you're going to hear the sounds of San Francisco this weekend, be sure to wear flowers in your hair.

Bay Area interpretative and grassroots funk band Zero is stopping at Nixon's Farm this Saturday for its first Nebraska show in the band's 14-year history.

The outdoor concert takes place at the Pleasant Dale Amphitheater, about 10 miles west of downtown Lincoln.

Owned by Doug Nixon, the stage is actually the concrete roof of his half-buried earth home, and the arena is his surrounding land.

Although Zero saxophonist Martin Fierro has never rocked on a roof, he said the venue was ideal for a band like his.

"We play all types of crazy gigs," Fierro said. "One time we played a Japanese business party. They thought we were someone else."

The sum of all parts

Defining Zero is like defining the quantity itself—kaleidoscopic and deceptively complex. Described by Fierro as "rock jazz electric," Zero draws on more than 150 years of collective musical experience to create a sound fabric woven with hippie folk, southern blues and West Coast jazz.

After a decade of working as an almost exclusively instrumental group, Zero recruited ex-Grateful Dead lyricist Robert Hunter five years ago to articulate the evolving sound and mood of the group.

Upon hearing Zero, Hunter recognized the similarity of the band's style to that of the Grateful Dead and suggested adding lyrics to the already powerful music. With Hunter now penning lyrics for the band, Zero has noticed a larger and more responsive audience, Fierro said.

"Hunter said, 'You guys sound real good, but you could use some lyrics,'" Fierro said. "He was right. We have pulled in a whole new audience. Grateful Dead fans love his poetry and want to hear a story."

"We are San Francisco musicians in the traditional sense. We are bringing the love of Golden Gate Park."

MARTIN FIERRO
Zero saxophonist

Comparisons to the Grateful Dead don't stop with Hunter. Primarily a road band, the group has established a hard-core following of fellow Zeros who travel with the group in much the same fashion as Deadheads once did.

"About 20 percent of our hard-core fans follow us around the country," Fierro said. "They are like family, and we love them dearly."

More than zero

The similarities to the Grateful Dead didn't happen by accident. Fierro briefly toured with the Grateful Dead in the early '70s, and drummer Greg Anton and guitarist Steve Kimock played with former Grateful Dead members Keith and Donna Godchaux in the '70s experimental folk group Heart of Gold.

Much of the blues influence so prominent in Zero's music comes from the combined life experiences of Fierro and bassist Bobby Vega.

Before he ever dreamed of playing with the Grateful Dead, Fierro played saxophone with a "left-handed guitarist that played this crazy stuff" in city parks for cash. That lefty turned out to be guitar legend and rock 'n' roll fatality, Jimi Hendrix.

Fierro eventually left the park and enjoyed stints with blues rock legends Boz Scaggs, Jerry Garcia and then the Grateful Dead, before finding his niche as a Zero.

Bobby Vega is experienced, as well. The musician turned child prodigy when he joined Sly and the Family Stone at age 16. Since then, he has been recorded on more than 100 albums and has performed with Joan Baez and Starship along the way.

The result of these life-molding West Coast experiences is what Fierro describes as a dis-

Concert Preview

tinctly San Francisco sound—brought to global attention by the Grateful Dead and still living through its survivors.

"We are San Francisco musicians in the traditional sense," Fierro said. "We are bringing the love of Golden Gate Park. We are bringing our beloved ocean and the feeling of San Francisco."

Down home

Saturday's show will be an outdoor concert in the most traditional sense, as well. Taking place on the farm of a local blues musician, the show will be set in what Nixon described as a "mini-pine-wood bowl."

"It's a really intimate setting," he said. "All the bands love to play here. They have the stars above their heads and the breeze through their hair."

Nixon has decided to offer his farm to support local interest in music and to offer an alternative to the usual Saturday night staples.

"It's about giving people a chance to enjoy music," he said. "There is nothing to do around Lincoln anymore except go to movies or to the bars. We just want to bring some good entertainment and let everybody enjoy it."

The festivities, which also include Spiral Eye, Leroy and the Gypsies and Ripple Effect, start at 6 p.m., with gates opening at 5 p.m.

Tickets to the show are \$15 in advance and \$19 the day of the show. They can be purchased at Euphoria, Smile-A-While and Hemp Fields.

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