

PROSCENIUM PICKS

Miriam Fink

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 At the Back Alley Theater, a powerful drama, *The Deal*, is the current production. A quartet of highly skilled actors—John M. Jackson, Michael Cavanaugh, Will Nye and Charles Siebert—imbue this play with energy, depth and great interest.

In *The Deal*, FBI agents wired for sound secretly tape evidence of local politicians extorting money from business developers. Jackson plays the FBI agent who is attempting to get information for his boss, Cavanaugh, from Will Nye, a small-time

politician. He also interviews Charles Siebert, a big-time politician, who extracts bribes from any contacts he helps. (This is a far cry for Siebert, who played a prissy doctor on *Trapper John, M.D.* for a long time.)

Jackson has a change of heart in trying to set up Nye for taking bribes and gets some hard flack from his boss, Siebert, who has admitted taking bribes, suddenly denies everything, having found out that his interviewer is an FBI man. Another plus for this play is the unusual setting, most interesting treatment.

The Deal, written by Matthew Witten, has been selected by the American Theatre Critics Association to be included in The Ten Best Plays of 1987-88. It is directed by producing director Allan Miller.

The Deal will run thru Oct. 29, playing Thursdays and Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 7:30 p.m., and Sundays 3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. The Back Alley Theatre is located at 15231 Burbank Blvd., Van Nuys, just east of the San Diego Freeway. The theatre is air-conditioned and wheelchair-accessible.

For reservations or further information, call (818) 780-2240.

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