

## Musical Comedy Wins over Met, Molars, Monastery



Sporting a new black beard for his role in Town and Country's current hit, "The Boys From Syracuse," actor Tom Urick looks a bit like an Eastern Rite priest or perhaps a star of the Met ready for a Verdi opera.

And, in truth, he once gave careful consideration to both of these careers. There was a time, too, when he was drawn to the idea of hanging out a shingle — Tom Urick, D.D.S. — but the dentist's sign has turned into a star on a dressing room door.

Handsome and personable, young Tom Urick made a hit

with Rochester audiences in the East Rochester theatre's season opener "Fainsticks." His jet black hair and eyes echo his Slavic ancestry.

Born in an Ohio village, Toronto, he attended the parochial school there. His family was one of few Greek Rite Catholics in the area. He took a whirl at Ohio State University and then settled down to a four-year stint in the Air Force.

Tom had the good fortune to become involved in the Air Force "On Target" productions, week-long situation comedy entertainment that

took him on tour with over 50 shows throughout the British Isles, Germany, France, Portugal — an invaluable experience for anyone getting the grease-paint itch.

Returning to Ohio, Tom was granted a scholarship at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. He majored for a while in voice, dived at opera, until the professor shook his head — musical comedy, it — Metropolitan, not. The next morning Tom switched to the Speech and Drama Department and graduated in 1962.

During his Conservatory days Tom received his first

taste of "straight" drama at Our Lady of Cincinnati College, famous for its theatre department, under the direction of the Mercy Sisters. There he took lead roles in "Oedipus Rex" and the Moliere comedies and finally got his teeth into the acting profession.

Following a run with the St. Louis Community Opera and while performing in Dayton, Ohio, he was offered the position of understudy to the lead role in the National Company of "Carnival." The leading man was far too healthy, so Tom never got the chance to step into his shoes during the six-month run.

Next week, however, he will come on stage at Town and Country Musicals as Paul, the Puppeteer, star of "Carnival."

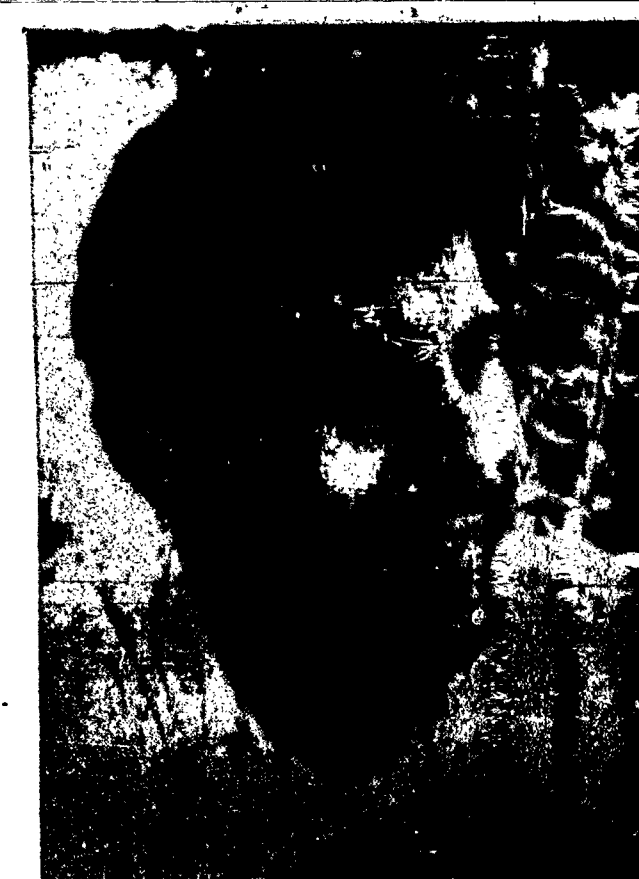
"The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts," according to Longfellow, and Tom Urick's have taken him from Monastery to Metropolitan Opera to Molars to Musical Comedy. Whichever profession he might have chosen would obviously be a loss to the others.

When you see him in Town and Country's "Carnival," you'll be glad he decided on Musical Comedy.

Story by Bob Smett

Photos by Paul Contestable

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