

Entertainment

Ethel Simmons 100-101 644-1362



Thursday, January 17, 1991 O&G

Coincidence led to his success

By Dan Greenberg
special writer

ROBERT CICCHINI is now appearing in 1,820 screens nationwide in *Lois Pennino* and *Anna and the Signifiers*, he said in Francis Ford Coppola's *"The Godfather Part III."*

The former Bedford Township resident assessed his career by declaring, "I recognized the insecurity of it, having to audition continually, but I had always been interested in acting, ever since I was a little kid."

His success in being cast in *"The Godfather"* (as lieutenant to mobster Vincent Mancini, played by Andy Garcia) represents more than a decade of determination, hard work and careful preparation, to say nothing of luck and coincidence.

There's also talent, intelligence and education. "The right agent is important, too," Cicchini said, describing the arduous years that transformed this all-sport high school athlete into a stage and film actor.

FOOTBALL, BASEBALL, basketball, track and field — I competed in all these sports at Bishop Barresi High School, where I graduated in 1976," he said. Cicchini went on to Central Michigan University. "I suppose if I had been able to compete in one of those sports on a college level I would have, but I wasn't big enough or good enough," he said.

"Acting was a natural progression. If the university environment is supposed to be a place where the world is open to young people, well, it certainly wasn't my world."

After considerable acting experience at Central, he left school to travel in Europe, where he had the opportunity to meet his parents' relatives. His mother is French and his father, Italian. The second Cicchini emigrated to Bedford Township and is a custom tailor. Besides Robert, the Cicchinis have two sons and a daughter.

Bob Cicchini spent two years at Wayne State University, receiving his bachelor's degree in the theater program, where he appeared in 18 shows in Hilberry Studio Theatre



Bob Cicchini was a struggling stage actor who got his big break when he was cast in the film *"The Godfather Part III."*

productions and at the Bonstelle Theatre. He also worked in a dance troupe at the same time.

Then came auditions and acceptance at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts where, he said, "I did three years of hard training in their private master's program. We were out working 12-14 hours a day, rehearsing, going to class, doing shows."

IN THE ROMANTIC tradition of stage actors, he lived in a trashed out-of-the-East Village on 15th Street in Manhattan with his buddy Paul. We were so poor and NYU was expensive, so we ate a lot of pizza and drank Algerian wine. We had these mice that used to crawl around and were so brave they would sit there and hang around with us watching television.

CICCHINI'S BREAK came more than a decade of study and hard work. And it happened because of a coincidence. He said, "It was a very fortunate set of circumstances which all fell in place."

Although no one season had it all, it was clear that noted producer cast and director Fred Roos was working on a major production. His casting assistant in New York, Alida Chap-

pell, wasn't available so Fred hired

"But I couldn't get film auditions because the kind of agent I had dead-

mostly in theatrical work," he said. Cicchini received the call and was cast by Roos. Of course, it was exciting to learn the scope of the production. Even a small role in a film like *The Godfather* can open doors to more work, which agents can get for you. And agents, who would be powerful enough to get me seen by the people I need to see and who would be impressed by the fact that I had gotten this role, that just wasn't a fluke or some kid just out of school."

Many nervous months passed af-

ter that audition. For one thing, he was told he had the role before he traveled. Then the phone call came from Coppola. Was he cast in the part? The delays continued, extending 1989 through January 1991.

"I GOT SICK and depressed. I was devastated. Cicchini said. Finally I started auditioning again and got a role in *New York* in March of 1990.

Then the calls started. He finally traveled to London in October and began to work.

Finally, in May of 1991, he started shooting *The Godfather Part III* in Sicily and Brian liked my work.

Brian asked him about young actors and he recommended me. He didn't know my agent so he gave her my home phone.

Cicchini received the call and was

excited to learn the scope of the

production. Even a small role in a

film like *The Godfather* can open

doors to more work, which agents

can get for you. And agents, who

would be powerful enough to get

me seen by the people I need to

see and who would be impressed

by the fact that I had gotten

this role, that just wasn't a fluke

or some kid just out of school."

Many nervous months passed af-

ter that audition. For one thing, he

was told he had the role before he

traveled. Then the phone call came

from Coppola. Was he cast in the

part? The delays continued, extending 1989 through January 1991.

"I GOT SICK and depressed. I was

devastated. Cicchini said. Finally I

started auditioning again and got a

role in *New York* in March of 1990.

Then the calls started. He finally

traveled to London in October and began to work.

Finally, in May of 1991, he started

shooting *The Godfather Part III* in

Sicily and Brian liked my work.

Brian asked him about young

actors and he recommended me. He

didn't know my agent so he gave her

my home phone.

Cicchini received the call and was

excited to learn the scope of the

production. Even a small role in a

film like *The Godfather* can open

doors to more work, which agents

can get for you. And agents, who

would be powerful enough to get

me seen by the people I need to

see and who would be impressed

by the fact that I had gotten

this role, that just wasn't a fluke

or some kid just out of school."

Many nervous months passed af-

ter that audition. For one thing, he

was told he had the role before he

traveled. Then the phone call came

from Coppola. Was he cast in the

part? The delays continued, extending 1989 through January 1991.

"I GOT SICK and depressed. I was

devastated. Cicchini said. Finally I

started auditioning again and got a

role in *New York* in March of 1990.

Then the calls started. He finally

traveled to London in October and began to work.

Finally, in May of 1991, he started

shooting *The Godfather Part III* in

Sicily and Brian liked my work.

Brian asked him about young

actors and he recommended me. He

didn't know my agent so he gave her

my home phone.

Cicchini received the call and was

excited to learn the scope of the

production. Even a small role in a

film like *The Godfather* can open

doors to more work, which agents

can get for you. And agents, who

would be powerful enough to get

me seen by the people I need to

see and who would be impressed

by the fact that I had gotten

this role, that just wasn't a fluke

or some kid just out of school."

Many nervous months passed af-

ter that audition. For one thing, he

was told he had the role before he

traveled. Then the phone call came

from Coppola. Was he cast in the

part? The delays continued, extending 1989 through January 1991.

"I GOT SICK and depressed. I was

devastated. Cicchini said. Finally I

started auditioning again and got a

role in *New York* in March of 1990.

Then the calls started. He finally

traveled to London in October and began to work.

Finally, in May of 1991, he started

shooting *The Godfather Part III* in

Sicily and Brian liked my work.

Brian asked him about young

actors and he recommended me. He

didn't know my agent so he gave her

my home phone.

Cicchini received the call and was

excited to learn the scope of the

production. Even a small role in a

film like *The Godfather* can open

doors to more work, which agents

can get for you. And agents, who

would be powerful enough to get

me seen by the people I need to

see and who would be impressed

by the fact that I had gotten

this role, that just wasn't a fluke

or some kid just out of school."

Many nervous months passed af-

ter that audition. For one thing, he

was told he had the role before he

traveled. Then the phone call came

from Coppola. Was he cast in the

part? The delays continued, extending 1989 through January 1991.

"I GOT SICK and depressed. I was

devastated. Cicchini said. Finally I

started auditioning again and got a

role in *New York* in March of 1990.

Then the calls started. He finally

traveled to London in October and began to work.

Finally, in May of 1991, he started

shooting *The Godfather Part III* in

Sicily and Brian liked my work.

Brian asked him about young

actors and he recommended me. He

didn't know my agent so he gave her

my home phone.

Cicchini received the call and was

excited to learn the scope of the

production. Even a small role in a

film like *The Godfather* can open

doors to more work, which agents

can get for you. And agents, who

would be powerful enough to get

me seen by the people I need to

see and who would be impressed

by the fact that I had gotten

this role, that just wasn't a fluke

or some kid just out of school."

Many nervous months passed af-

ter that audition. For one thing, he

was told he had the role before he

traveled. Then the phone call came

from Coppola. Was he cast in the

part? The delays continued, extending 1989 through January 1991.

"I GOT SICK and depressed. I was

devastated. Cicchini said. Finally I

started auditioning again and got a

role in *New York* in March of 1990.

Then the calls started. He finally

traveled to London in October and began to work.

Finally, in May of 1991, he started

shooting *The Godfather Part III* in

Sicily and Brian liked my work.

Brian asked him about young

actors and he recommended me. He

didn't know my agent so he gave her

my home phone.

Cicchini received the call and was

excited to learn the scope of the

production. Even a small role in a

film like *The Godfather* can open

doors to more work, which agents

can get for you. And agents, who

would be powerful enough to get

me seen by the people I need to

see and who would be impressed

by the fact that I had gotten

this role, that just wasn't a fluke

or some kid just out of school."

Many nervous months passed af-

ter that audition. For one thing, he

was told he had the role before he

traveled. Then the phone call came

from Coppola. Was he cast in the

part? The delays continued, extending 1989 through January 1991.

"I GOT SICK and depressed. I was

devastated. Cicchini said. Finally I

started auditioning again and got a

role in *New York* in March of 1990.

Then the calls started. He finally

traveled to London in October and began to work.

Finally, in May of 1991, he started

shooting *The Godfather Part III* in

Sicily and Brian liked my work.

Brian asked him about young

actors and he recommended me. He

didn't know my agent so he gave her

my home phone.

Cicchini received the call and was

excited to learn the scope of the

production. Even a small role in a

film like *The Godfather* can open

doors to more work, which agents

can get for you. And agents, who

would be powerful enough to get

me seen by the people I need to

see and who would be impressed

by the fact that I had gotten

this role, that just wasn't a fluke

or some kid just out of school."

Many nervous months passed af-

ter that audition. For one thing, he

was told he had the role before he

traveled. Then the phone call came

from Coppola. Was he cast in the

part? The delays continued, extending 1989 through January 1991.

"I GOT SICK and depressed. I was

devastated. Cicchini said. Finally I

started auditioning again and got a

role in *New York* in March of 1990.