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THE SMOTHERS BROTHERS BIOGRAPHY

It was five decades ago that Tom and Dick Smothers first took the stage together professionally. Comedy was about to change.

Many comedy duos have had success but none as enduring as the Smothers Brothers whose lengthy career has surpassed all other comedy teams in history. Their cutting-edge humor has not only been ahead of its time but has remained timeless as well.

With their singular blend of comedic and musical talents, the irrepressible brothers have made a sweeping impact on diverse generations of fans. Such lasting power is a testimonial to their intuitive humor, natural warmth, superlative showmanship and the pure unadulterated joy they bring to audiences of all ages.

Tom and Dick's first professional appearance as the Smothers Brothers was at the Purple Onion in San Francisco in February, 1959. Their first national television appearance was on "The Jack Paar Show" on January 28, 1961 following which they guested countless times with Johnny Carson and on the variety shows of the era. In the early 60's they also recorded the first of twelve top-selling albums.

But it was February of 1967 that was a defining moment in their career. The #1 show on TV was the long-running series "Bonanza." Many shows had fallen in its wake. CBS-TV decided to schedule "The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour" against the western never suspecting that it would soon unseat "Bonanza" from its lofty perch. According to Wikipedia "it started out as only a slightly 'hip' version of the typical comedy-variety show of its era, but rapidly evolved into a show that extended the boundaries of what was considered permissible in television satire." The irreverent show featured many writers and series regulars who went on successful comedy careers including Steve Martin. The show also presented the top musical acts of the day, many of whom were shunned elsewhere on TV due to the nature of their music, including The Doors, Joan Baez, Buffalo Springfield, Jefferson Airplane, Pete Seeger and a stunning performance by The Who which climaxed with the literal explosion of their drums.

"The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour" had become as controversial and influential as it was popular, satirizing politics, racism and the unpopular Vietnam War among other topics. Despite the show's success, in April of 1969, the Smothers Brothers were fired by the CBS Television Network. "Smothered," a film by award-winning director, Maureen Muldaur, documents the Brothers' struggle against censorship and, as a lawsuit later determined, the wrongful firing by CBS.

Although Tom was integrally involved with the writing of "The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour," when it came time to submit the names of the writers for Emmy consideration in 1968, he refused to include his name for fear that he had become too controversial and it would hurt the show's chances of winning. The show did win the Emmy for Outstanding Writing Achievement in Comedy Variety that year. It took 40 years but in September, 2008, during the live television broadcast of the 60th Annual Emmy Awards, Steve Martin presented Tom with an Emmy acknowledging his contributions as a writer on "The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour" in 1968.

Time Life has released "The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour: The Best of Season 3," as a four-DVD boxed set. This is the first DVD set released of shows from the popular series and features 11 uncensored star-packed episodes from the third and final season including appearances by The Doors, Bob Newhart, Ike & Tina Turner, Ray Charles, George Harrison, Harry Belafonte, George Carlin, Jackie Mason, Jonathan Winters and many others. The set also features rare, informative, historically important bonus features, interviews and censored material. The first and second season DVDs will be released soon.

In the 70's and 80's the Smothers Brothers returned to TV with new primetime comedy series and specials. They continue to perform for sold-out audiences in Las Vegas as well as concert halls throughout the U.S. Their continuous coast-to-coast concert tours often include performances with symphony orchestras. The ever-popular YoYo Man (Tom) and the Voice of Yo (Dick) travel and appear with the Smothers Brothers in concert.

The contributions Tom and Dick have made to the entertainment world throughout their careers were so highly respected that the Museum of Television and Radio produced a retrospective and seminar on their work; an honor not lightly accorded. They have also been honored with a star on the historic Hollywood Walk of Fame and been inducted into the illustrious Hollywood Bowl Hall of Fame. In 2003 they were presented with the George Carlin Freedom of Expression Award from the Video Software Dealers' Association recognizing their "extraordinary comedic gifts and their unfailing support of the First Amendment." Later that year, they also received Honorary Doctorate Degrees from their alma mater, San Jose State University. In 2008, The Boston Comedy Festival bestowed a Lifetime Achievement Award on the brothers.

On the personal side, both Tom and Dick pursue their interests with the same fervor as their work. Whenever the opportunity presents itself, Dick can be found cycling or practicing yoga. Even on the road, he maintains a disciplined regimen of robust workouts at the nearest health club. Equally at home in the kitchen, Dick is known to conjure up delicious heart healthy cuisine.

Tom's pastime passion is for golf. Ever inventive, he decided the game needed an added feature: the yo-yo. Tom is the only golfer known who can sink a putt with the popular toy. Tom also enjoys tending to his vineyard and his award-winning winery, Remick Ridge Vineyards.

Tom and Dick were born in New York City, graduated from Redondo Union High School in Southern California, and attended San Jose State University. Tom was a gymnast and Dick was on the track team.

Tom's wife is the former Marcy Carriker and they have two children, Bo and Riley Rose. Tom also has a son, Tom Jr.

Dick is the father of six children – Susan, Dick Jr., Steven, Andrew, Sarah, and Remick.

The Smothers Brothers have been described as comedic treasures, comic geniuses, rare, original and peerless. Time has been an essential ingredient in their success. They have been considered ahead of their time, masters of timing and practitioners of timeless comedy. Justifiably, time has provided another term.... An American Classic.