

Bonino

US TV *live* sitcom : 1953 : dir. : NBC : ? x 30 min
 prod: : scr: : dir.ph.:
[Chet Allen](#)
 Ezio Pinza; Mary Wickes

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω □ € Z ☺	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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Source: *How Sweet it Was*

Halliwell's Television Companion review:

“Half hour live comedy series for NBC, with Ezio Pinza as a widower with eight children. Naturally, he was also an opera singer.”

How Sweet it Was – Television: A Pictorial Commentary caption:

“Ezio Pinza had the leading role in this story of a retired concert singer who was the father of a large family of motherless children. Mary Wickes played Martha, the family maid. The show debuted in 1953.”

[no listing in "History of Television", "Television's Greatest Hits" or "25 Years of ITV - 1955-1980"]

The Moving Picture Boy entry on Chet Allen:

“The wandering orphan given an extended lift by medicine man Dan Dailey in Douglas Sirk’s musical **"MEET ME AT THE FAIR"** was an admired soloist of the Columbus Boy Choir. On TV he created the name part in Menotti’s popular Christmas opera **"Amahl and the Night Visitors"**, and he sang in Honegger’s oratorio "King David" at the 1952 Los Angeles Music Festival. The name "Chet Allen" is sometimes given in inverted commas, implying that it may not have been his true name.

In his only film he sang some rather awful songs very prettily, and acted with good will and a helpful smile more or less throughout. But poor Chet didn’t strike one as likely to make a successful adult career, and, unhappily, this proved the case. After 1952 most of his singing was in churches, though he had the role of an opera singer’s son in the 1953 TV series **"Bonino"**. He was credited as Art Director on Altman’s **"THE DELINQUENTS"** in 1956; but later he worked as a stockboy in stores, and as a volunteer helper at a drop-in centre. Finally, in 1984, depressed beyond endurance, he took his own life.”

No further information currently available. Chet Allen was 14 and, given his background, it seems more than likely he’d have had a singing role here also. The operetta **"Amahl and the Night Visitors"** (about a crippled shepherd boy who helps the three wise men on their journey) was commissioned specially for television by NBC and had its debut performance with Chet on Christmas Eve 1951, but in subsequent years the role was sung by Bill McIver.

See subject index under **LARGE BROODS, SITCOMS & SOAPS** and possibly **MUSIC / YOUNG MUSICIANS**.