

Former Glenforest student star of film festival movie

By STEPHANIE INNES
Staff Reporter

For former Glenforest Secondary School student Edward Clements, school the second time around was a whole new ballgame. And this time, they paid him to show up and have fun.

Clements, star of the film *Metropolitan*, showing at this week's Festival of Festivals in Toronto, says his high school days were a far cry from the non-stop socializing in which his movie character Tom Townsend partakes.

"I was more of a loner in high school," says Clements, now 27. "My interests were in the drama club and academics. I wasn't that socially adept."

Under the guidance of drama

teacher Karen Borzak, Clements played a footman in *Pygmalion* during his Grade 9 year at Glenforest, and in his final year played a T-Bird in the school's production of *Grease*.

After his high school graduation, Clements went on to study accounting and marketing at Brampton's Sheridan College. Following stints as a manager for both Eaton's and Toronto's Pickle Barrel restaurant, Clements spent three years selling advertising space for a Catholic Church publication.

While selling ad space by day, Clements moonlighted as an actor for the University of Toronto Alumni Theatre, performed *West Side Story* for the Etobi-

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EDWARD CLEMENTS



forest high school student Edward Clements in a scene from the much-
etropolitan, showing at the Festival of Festivals.

A long way from Glenforest to the big time

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oke Music Theatre, and appeared in the Canadian television series *The Campbells*.

But then two family tragedies — his brother and mother died within two years of each other — prompted Clements to reconsider his career options.

"I just decided life's too short, and I'd always wanted to pursue a career in acting. So I went for it," said Clements, whose father George was a CBC cameraman for 35 years and still lives in Mississauga.

Clements, a former paper carrier for *The Mississauga News*, auditioned for theatre schools in both Canada and the United States, before being accepted into the prestigious Circle in the Square Theatre School in New York City.

Four months before graduation, Clements beat out 1,000 other actors for the lead role in Whit Stillman's *Metropolitan* — a film

that cost just \$200,000 to produce, but has already received acclaim at the New York Film Festival, the Sundance Festival in Utah, and a standing ovation at the Cannes Film Festival in France.

In the film, Clements stars as Tom Townsend, a newcomer to a group of UHB's — Urban Haute Bourgeoisie enjoying their Christmas vacation from the Ivy League with a rash of social functions. The film becomes a debacle of the debutante, with outsider Tom ultimately unearthing the group's foibles.

Tom is a west-side Manhattan resident with a rented tux who slips in with the group of east-siders as a much-needed escort for their Christmas social season. Clements says Tom's foray into east Manhattan pegs him as somewhat of an alien with the upper east crowd, something he could identify with as a Canadian in New York City.

Since working on *Metropolitan*,

Clements has starred in a Vermont play entitled *Do Black Patent Leather Shoes Really Reflect Up?*. He has also since toured New Eng-

land in *The Mikado* and used his French-speaking abilities touring the United States in a play by Moliere.