

*b* New York, June 28, 1911; *d* Los Angeles, December 24, 1975

Bernard Herrmann attended New York University and the Juilliard School, studying with Bernard Wagenaar, Philip James and Percy Grainger. At age 20, he formed the New Chamber Orchestra and then joined CBS Radio in 1934, eventually becoming the conductor and staff composer of the CBS Symphony Orchestra. Herrmann championed new works and debuted unfamiliar music by William Walton, Frederick Delius, Arnold Bax and Charles Ives. He is also renowned for his participation in the broadcast of Orson Welles' infamous *War of the Worlds* broadcast.

Herrmann is chiefly known for his cinematic scores, and the inventory of films for which he has composed is prestigious and daunting. *Citizen Kane*, *The Magnificent Andersons*, *The Ghost and Mrs. Muir*, *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*, *The Man in the Grey Flannel Suit*, *North by Northwest*, *Psycho*, *Vertigo*, *The Bride Wore Black*, and *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (in which he appeared in his own Hitchcockian cameo role as a conductor in Royal Albert Hall) are among the most famous in a pantheon of over 50. Though he raised the genre to a new level, Herrmann also had an irascible temperament and made few friends, ultimately leading to only one Academy Award and eventual banishment from Hollywood after the failure of Hitchcock's *Torn Curtain*.

He spent his final years in England recording and guest conducting. Several up-and-coming directors engaged him to write film scores again in the early 1970s. His final score was for the motion picture *Taxi Driver* – he died in his sleep immediately after completing the final editing session and Martin Scorsese dedicated the film to him. In 2011, we celebrate the centenary of his birth.



*Wuthering Heights* was completed in 1951, after eight years of toiling. Lucille Fletcher, his first wife and an accomplished Broadway writer (*Sorry, Wrong Number* is among her most notable works), wrote the libretto and the arduous project likely put an end to his first marriage. In fact, Herrmann took a trip to the Twin Cities to complete the score. Minneapolis Symphony conductor Dmitri Mitropolis was a good friend and Lucy Anderson (the future second Mrs. Herrmann) lived nearby. He was inspired by a trip to Manchester in 1946, when Herrmann was invited by Sir John Barbirolli to conduct the Hallé Orchestra.

The orchestra intended to premiere the work, but once he received the score, however, Barbirolli got cold feet, and Herrmann then approached San Francisco Opera with Leopold Stokowski in mind as the conductor. When Stokowski's illness prevented this collaboration, he went next to New York City Opera. Again, Herrmann's feisty temper got in the way when Julius Rudel asked for some cuts (the opera ran over three hours) and the composer refused to omit a single note. Herrmann angrily encountered other obstacles and finally decided to record the opera in 1965 at his own expense. Following his death, Herrmann's daughter Dorothy pushed for a public performance, but the excessive length and huge orchestration was preventative for most opera companies. *Wuthering Heights* would not receive its world premiere until 1982 (with the necessary cuts and a new ending), an opera as described by Louise Fletcher as "closest to [Herrmann's] talent and heart."