



Film 5

Beyond *Psycho*

The Musical Genius of Bernard Herrmann

Hollywood's supreme film composer was a casualty of the standard narrative – as he himself was bitterly aware. Not only were his movie scores high creative accomplishments; Bernard Herrmann was a formidable – and formidably unfashionable – concert composer whose *Clarinet Quintet* may be the most beautiful chamber music by an American. His *Psycho Narrative*, which we also sample, surpasses the *Psycho Suite* we normally hear. He honed his gift for dramatising the spoken word as the pre-eminent composer for a genre no longer remembered: the radio drama. We sample *Whitman* (1944) – a Norman Corwin radio play that deserves to live as a concert work. It also exemplifies how radio, an unprecedented mass medium, once consolidated the American experience, its biggest star being Franklin D. Roosevelt. Our participants include the *Whitman* scholar Karen Karbiener, the critic Alex Ross, Murray Horwitz on radio lore, and William Sharp on playing Walt Whitman to music by Bernard Herrmann. – J.H.

This PostClassical Ensemble 'More than Music' film is part of the Naxos film series, *Dvořák's Prophecy – A New Narrative for American Classical Music*, aligned with Joseph Horowitz's book *Dvořák's Prophecy and the Vexed Fate of Black Classical Music*.

Written and produced by Joseph Horowitz
Visual presentation by Peter Bogdanoff

Music by Bernard Herrmann performed by actor William Sharp
and PostClassical Ensemble conducted by Angel Gil-Ordóñez

'These six beautiful films reveal a compelling, inclusive musical tradition, deeply interwoven with American culture.'

– J. Peter Burkholder,
author of *A History of Western Music*

Commentary by:
Angel Gil-Ordóñez
Joseph Horowitz
Murray Horwitz
David Jones
Karen Karbiener
Alex Ross
William Sharp

As the *Dvořák's Prophecy* films were undertaken during the pandemic, interviews were conducted virtually and in many cases do not meet normal technical standards.

Support for this project was provided by the National Endowment for the Arts

The 1944 radio drama *Whitman*, by Norman Corwin, was musically reconstructed by Christopher Husted. It was recorded with permission from the Norman Corwin Estate.

Total playing time: 61 minutes • NTSC 16:9 • PCM stereo • Region: 0 (worldwide) • DVD 9
Language: English

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