

RADIO COLLECTION: CBS Radio Mystery Theater

(Broadcast: January 6, 1974 – December 31, 1982)

Prompted by the decline of commercial radio drama during the 1960s and 70s, veteran radio producer Himan Brown was given the chance by CBS to revive the form in 1973 with the hour-long mystery anthology, *The CBS Radio Mystery Theater*. Covering a range of topics and styles within the genre, the show featured a mix of original scripts from staff writers George Lowther and Sam Dann and guest writers, and adaptations from a diverse collection of authors ranging from Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens) to Arthur Conan Doyle who had enriched or experimented in the field of mystery.

CBS initially ordered a premiere range of 195 original programs that were to be fed to its affiliate stations across the United States. For Brown, this meant working with a limited budget and a production schedule of about two days in which he had to coordinate script production and recording. Burdened with a tight production schedule and limited funds for talent costs, Brown was still able to attract an impressive roster of performers from film, television and radio. Notable performers that made appearances on the show include E.G. Marshall, who hosted the show until 1981, Agnes Moorehead, Kevin McCarthy, John Lithgow, Casey Kasem, Zero Mostel, Mariette Hartley and Sarah Jessica Parker.

The initial reception of the program varied, and the show was frequently bumped by local affiliates from the national broadcast network feed and replaced with live regional sports coverage. The show persevered however, and backed by CBS funding would garner formal critical and industry acclaim, receiving a Peabody Award in 1974 for, "creating a new era of radio entertainment."

The UCLA Film and Television Archive holds multiple titles of *The CBS Radio Mystery Theater* available for use on-site at the Archive Research and Study Center.

Radio

(Please contact the Archive Research and Study Center for additional titles)

Blizzard Of Terror (1974-02-18). Broadcast on CBS.
Audio Study Copy: AA389

The Rat (1974-06-03). Broadcast on CBS.
Audio Study Copy: AA520

The Picture Of Dorian Gray (1974-08-07). Broadcast on CBS.
Audio Study Copy: AA10

Murder To Perfection (1974-09-30). Broadcast on CBS.
Audio Study Copy: AA436

You Only Die Once (1974-10-08). Broadcast on CBS.
Audio Study Copy: AA441

The Hands Of Mrs. Mallory (1974-10-18). Broadcast on CBS.
Audio Study Copy: AA445

Return Of Anatole Chevenic (1974-10-26). Broadcast on CBS.
Audio Study Copy: AA447

The Bride That Wasn't (1974-11-19). Broadcast on CBS.
Audio Study Copy: AA454

How Eberhard Won His Wings (1974-12-25). Broadcast on CBS.
Audio Study Copy: AA635

Guilty (1975-07-07). Broadcast on CBS.
Audio Study Copy: AA503

The Smoking Pistol (1977-03-30). Broadcast on CBS.
Audio Study Copy: AA21

Love After Death (1979-07-27). Broadcast on CBS.
Audio Study Copy: AA422

The Death Disc (1980-07-30). Broadcast on CBS.
Audio Study Copy: AA648