

2021 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE



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ENNIO MORRICONE (Film Music Composer)

By O.J. Sikes

Italian composer Ennio Morricone wrote the theme and soundtrack music for some of the most famous films in the post-B-Western film era. Western titles include *The Good, the Bad & the Ugly*, *A Fist Full of Dollars* and *For a Few Dollars More* among others, starring Clint Eastwood, *My Name is Nobody* and *Once Upon a Time in the West* starring Henry Fonda, *Guns for San Sebastian* (Anthony Quinn & Charles Bronson), *Revenge of a Gunfighter* (Jack Palance) and *Death Rides a Horse* (Lee Van Cleef).

According to historian Larry Hopper, “The importance of Ennio Morricone is not that he presented western soundtrack music in the familiar forms of the past but that he created a new dynamic in the use of instrumentation, voice and orchestration that has come to immediately identify the genre while establishing a new milepost in film scoring. The sounds can be as gentle as a music box or a strongly cadenced accompaniment to encroaching violence, a whistled theme or an agonizing shout each indelibly marking this west, this west that never was, as a world unto itself with a life of its own yet still evocative of the mythic west we’re accustomed to.”

In the Jan/Feb 2018 issue of *Western Clippings*, film music authority David Fuller suggested that none of the many Italian composers who have written for Spaghetti westerns has done more than Ennio Morricone to establish the distinctive sound of that sub-genre. Fuller says, “His unique combination of instruments, matched with organic sounds and sterling vocalizations, lifted the entertainment value of countless motion pictures and TV programs.”

Morricone’s score for *Once Upon a Time in the West* is one of the best-selling original instrumental scores in the world today, with approximately 10 million copies sold. And *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* is in the Grammy Hall of Fame.