

# FILM MUSIC

## MYSTERY

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FM-MY1 United States 1959

### THE BAT – THE BAT

Film – Jazz – Big Band – Instrumental

**Comp:** Louis FORBES

**Rts:** Miller Music Corp. (ASCAP)

**Scr. (Film):** Crane Wilbur (Based on the stage play  
by Mary Roberts Rinehart & Avery Hopwood)

**Perf:** Alvino REY & his orchestra

**Dir. (Film):** Crane Wilbur, 1958

**Prod. Co. (Film):** Liberty Pictures

**Prod. Co:** Capitol Records; Hollywood, CA

**Matrix:** 45-31795

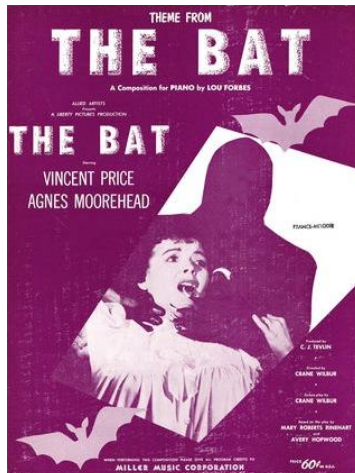
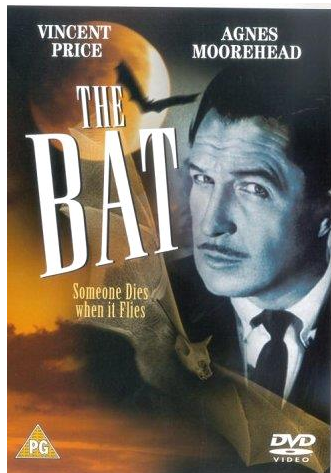
**Rel. Date:** June 1959

**Time:** 1:56

**Label:** Capitol F4239

**Flip Sd:** Rock Gently

**Spec:** 7" 45rpm



**Notes:** This was the theme music for the 1958 film adaptation of a very successful Broadway stage play detective story about a killer who uses the image of the bat to instill terror in the population.

An exception has been made here to include this music, which shows definite inspiration from the popular horrific conceptions surrounding bats. Elsewhere in this discography music inspired by men dressed as bats has consistently been rejected for inclusion. In the beginning of Johann Strauss' operetta "Die Fledermaus (The Bat)," a man wears a bat costume to a masquerade ball, whereas the masked crime fighter, Batman, the character from American comics,

television, and films, dresses in a bat costume to go on mission (see here under Film Music – Action and under Rock Music – Surf). The difference in this story is that the image of real bats plays a more important role in the atmosphere of the tale.

In the novel (based on the play) the killer is described as – "The Bat – they called him the Bat. Like a bat he chose the night hours for his work of rapine – like a bat he struck and vanished, pouncing, noiselessly – like a bat he never showed himself to the face of day." And furthermore – "Sometimes he draws the outline of a bat at the scene of the crime. Once, in some way, he got hold of a real bat, and nailed it to the wall." (Rinehart & Hopwood 1920)

Alvino Rey was a steel rhythm guitar virtuoso who formed his first band in 1938. This is a big band arrangement of the music for the film that starts with weird whining sounds on steel guitar, then muted brass blasts and a strident brass ensemble followed by the tuba and the horns alternating.

Two bloggers wrote – “The theme from ‘The Bat’ is a jazzy little piece, totally unlike any of the rest of the music in the film, but the intriguing part is, that when you listen to this music, you’ll hear, no, it’s not a theremin this time, but instead, an odd guitar slide in a couple of places to lend that eerie effect, *and* that is because the man who composed the music for the theme was Alvino Rey, who is also known as ‘The Father Of The Pedal Steel Guitar’ because of his early involvement in the development of the pedal, and electric steel guitar.” (Eegah!! and Tabonga! 2008)

In 1964 The Ventures did a very different arrangement of this theme for a rock version (see under Rock Music – Surf).

**Ref:** Alvino Rey, Bio, [Wikipedia](#)

Alvino Rey, The Bat, [Discogs](#)

Alvino Rey, The Bat, (1:54), [YouTube](#) (◀ **COMPLETE AUDIO SAMPLE**)

The Bat, Film Credits, [imdb](#)

The Bat (1959 film), Plot, [Wikipedia](#)

Eegah!! and Tabonga! 2008, The Bat, Alvino Rey, The Bat Theme, [monstermoviemusic.blogspot.fr](#)

Lee, Walt 1972, *Reference Guide to Fantastic Films Vol. 1 – A-F*, Chelsea-Lee Books, Los Angeles, CA, p. 26

Rinehart, Mary Roberts & Hopwood, Avery 1920, *The Bat*, [novel based on the stage play], Triangle Books, New York, N.Y., p. 11, 112

Simon, George T. 1967 (1978), *The Big Bands*, Collier Books, New York, NY, p. 400-403

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