

Cy Howard

Seymour Horowitz, better known to old-time radio fans as Cy Howard, was born September 27, 1915 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. After studying at the Universities of Wisconsin and Minnesota and earning a degree in economics, Howard spent his professional life in show business.

Howard first tried earning a living as a stage actor, but finding few opportunities there he eventually turned to writing. He was hired in 1943 as part of the writing team for the *Jack Benny Show* and despite a short tenure on the program he parleyed the experience into long-term writing success. In 1946 Cy Howard was hired by CBS to work in a writer-director-producer role.

He immediately set to work on what would become the first of his two radio legacies; *My Friend Irma*. CBS was very upbeat about his new series and with Lever Brothers signing on as sponsor in 1947 *My Friend Irma* arrived on the airwaves with much hype. The show was an immediate success and spent much of its eight-year run in the Hooper and Neilson top 15 ratings.

A year and a half after his first creation found commercial success Cy Howard unleashed a second classic series upon the radio listening public. *Life With Luigi*, detailing the story of an Italian immigrant family, debuted in 1948 and aired until 1953.

Both *My Friend Irma* and *Life With Luigi* transitioned to television and Howard moved with them, writing steadily for the small screen into the 1960s. His most notable television writing credits include *Harrigan and Son* and the late 1960s *Smother Brothers Comedy Hour*.

Howard semi-retired in the late '60s though he was involved in a handful of motion pictures during the 1970s as a director and writer. He was married three times and had one daughter. After a long illness Cy Howard passed away in Los Angeles in 1993.

Information for this biography was taken from *Radio Drama and Comedy Writers*, *Variety* magazine, and the Wikipedia and Find-a-Grave websites.