

Topic Page: [Serkin, Rudolf \(Mar 28, 1903 – May 8, 1991\)](#)

Definition: **Serkin** from *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate(R) Dictionary*

 [pronunciation](#)

Rudolf Serkin 1903–1991 Am. (Bohemian-born) pianist

Summary Article: **Serkin, Rudolf**

From *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*

Austrian-born US pianist and teacher. He lived in the USA from 1939, and is remembered for the quality and sonority of his energetic interpretations of works by Johann Sebastian Bach and Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and Brahms. He founded, with German violinist Adolf Busch, the Marlboro Festival for chamber music in Vermont, and served as its director from 1952 until his death.

Serkin first appeared at the age of 12 with the Vienna Symphony, having moved to Vienna with his family, on the advice of the Emperor Franz Josef's court pianist. During this period he studied composition with German composer Arnold Schoenberg, whom he regarded as one of the three main influences in his life; the other two were Italian conductor Arturo Toscanini and Adolf Busch. Busch and Serkin formed a successful duo in the 1920s and also worked together in the Busch's Berlin-based chamber orchestra. In 1936, Serkin played with the New York Philharmonic orchestra in Switzerland. Emigrating to the USA, he joined the piano faculty of the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia, where he taught until 1975, serving as director from 1968 to 1975.

Serkin led an active concert career while teaching in Philadelphia and understood the significance of the influx of musical talent to the USA in altering that country's perception of music's contribution to cultural life. He did much to further this development by serving on the National Council of the Arts and establishing the Marlboro Music School and Festival.

APA

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Chicago

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