

Mr. Trumpet Man



Passion can be both inspiring and contagious. It is also immediately recognizable. I saw it for myself recently as I was transferring some videotaped footage for a client.

The footage was of her father, renowned Grammy award winning jazz musician Doc Cheatham, who at 91 was still traveling the country, touring and playing to packed venues. He died while doing what he loved, playing the music he loved to play.

Doc's career spanned over seven decades during which he played with such notable talents as King Oliver, Louis Armstrong, Cab Calloway, Bessie Smith, and Benny Goodman. He continually worked at perfecting his technique and successfully managed the transition from lead trumpeter within various bands to having a career as a soloist – a feat he accomplished at the tender age of 60.

He didn't begin singing, in addition to his playing, until he passed 70 but it was well received and he continued the practice until his death. His final performance was at the Blues Alley Club in Washington in 1997. He died two days later, eleven days short of his 92nd birthday.

That is an accomplishment we should all believe to achieve – to be able to work at what we love right up to the time we

take our last breath. To continue to learn and grow, developing our passions and providing them with the fuel that keeps them burning strongly within our souls.

Thanks Doc, for the music and the memories.

PS. His passion was certainly contagious. His grandson, Theo Croker, is an accomplished trumpeter in his own right having just been named as one of the top jazz artists to watch in 2019 by Jazziz Magazine.

Michael Ondrasik and Home Video Studio specialize in the preservation of family memories through the digital transfer of film, videotape, audio recordings, photos, negatives and slides. For more information, call 352-735-8550 or visit our [website](#).