

R.I.P. Donald Byrd

[youtube]TwW3Nmr-_pI[/youtube]

[youtube]VFGTEW5FWA8[/youtube]

[youtube]hyd8_vz0PYQ[/youtube]

Detroit born Jazz trumpeter Donald Byrd passed on Monday in Delaware according to his nephew Alex Bugnon. Byrd's jazz legacy started in the '50's with bebop when he joined Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers. He performed and recorded with Sonny Rollins, Eric Dolphy, Max Roach and John Coltrane among others during this time. Byrd furthered his education by earning a Masters Degree from the Manhattan School of Music and he began teaching at various universities in the '60's. In the '70's he became known for his jazz/R&B output like his 1973 best-selling *Black Byrd* album that did commercially better than any other Blue Note release at the time. He also formed The Blackbyrds with some of his students. The band did well thanks to songs like "Happy Music," "Rock Creek Park" and "Walking In Rhythm." In the '80s he created Donald Byrd & The 125th Street Band that had success with the dance classic "Love Has Come Around." His jazz/R&B catalog is regularly sampled by various hip-hop producers most notably J.Dilla's version of "Think Twice." He was also included in two of Guru's *Jazzmazztazz* projects even appearing in the video for "Lounging." Byrd later earned a law degree and a doctorate. In 2000 he was named a Jazz Master by the NEA and that was also the year of his last recording on the *Touchstone* album that included Herbie Hancock whose career he helped in the '60's, longtime collaborator Pepper Adams, Teddy Charles and Jimmy Cobb.