

# Doc Severinsen

Biography

## Biography

*Doc Severinsen, best known to late night television audiences as the Tonight Show's flamboyant Grammy Award-winning musical director, has established a multi-dimensional career beyond his late night repertoire, including symphonic jazz and big band concert appearances, recordings, and commercials plus designing and manufacturing trumpets.*

*Although Severinsen's signature has been his superb trumpet playing, quick witted banter and original style of clothes on the Tonight Show, he is one of today's pre-eminent instrumentalists. Today, Doc continues to tour across the country performing concerts in an array of musical styles - he performs classical and pop music as a guest conductor/performer with symphony orchestras. In addition to guest assignments, Doc is Principal Pops Conductor of the Phoenix Symphony, the Buffalo Philharmonic, the Minnesota Orchestra and the Milwaukee Symphony. Severinsen also plays sizzling jazz with his jazz group, Facets, and big band tunes with the famous former Tonight Show Band, now known as Doc Severinsen and His Big Band.*

*This summer, he's added a new dimension to his gifted repertoire. Art Modell, owner of the Browns, thought their old Fight Song needed dusting off. Originally composed in the 1940's, the mascot tune had become out of step with the 90's. So, art turned to Doc. With a spiffy new arrangement, Doc has given the forty year old melody a new lease on life - an upbeat, very modern, jazzy rhythm.*

*Doc's big band tour of eleven cities up and down the Mississippi was completely sold out. Doc conducted a fifteen member band, with some of the Tonight Show's best - Ed Shaughnessy on drums, Ernie Watts on sax, and Chuck and Bob Finley on trumpets. In March, 1996, Doc went to eight cities south of the Mason-Dixon Line for a dashing tour of the Southern states.*

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## Recordings

*In a professional career that spans over 40 years, Severinsen has recorded over 30 albums, ranging in style from Big Band to Jazz Fusion to Classical. Severinsen's recent recordings have included the Grammy nominated, Once More With Feeling and Merry Christmas from the Tonight Show Orchestra. Both recordings, from Amherst label, were*

*performed by Doc and the Tonight Show band and received rave reviews. His last album, Unforgettably Doc, on the Telarc label, highlights Severinsen's musical diversity with the trumpet with the backdrop of the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra.*

*Devoted to his instrument, Severinsen practices a minimum of two hours a day. He has been voted Top Brass Player more than ten times in Playboy's' prestigious annual music poll and received a Grammy Award in 1987 for Best Jazz Instrumental performance - Big Band, for his world premiere digital recording on the Amherst label, Doc Severinsen and the Tonight Show Band - Volume I album. Other recordings on Amherst include Facets. His most recent award was in July 1994 when he received the Honorary Minnesota Musician Award from the Minnesota Symphony.*

*In addition to his performing career, in partnership with Dick Akright, has designed "The ultimate horn." Christened the Bel Canto, the instrument was passionately designed for the professional player to encompass the best of Old World craftsmanship and modern technology and is available in limited production.*

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## *Background*

*Severinsen's success dates back to his childhood hometown of Arlington, Oregon, Nicknamed Little Doc after his father, a dentist, Dr. Carl Severinsen, Little Doc had originally wanted to play the trombone, but the senior Severinsen, a gifted amateur violinist, urged him to study violin. The younger Severinsen insisted on the trombone, but had to settle for the only horn available in their small community - a trumpet.*

*One week later with the help of his father and book of instructions, the seven-year-old was so good that he was invited to join the high school band. At the age of twelve, Little Doc won the Music Educator's National Contest and while still in high school, was hired to go on the road with the famous Ted Fio Rito Orchestra.*

*After completing his education and serving in the Army, Severinsen toured with the Tommy Dorsey, Benny Goodman and Charlie Barnet bands. He finally settled down in New York as a NBC staff musician in 1949, joining the Tonight Show Orchestra in 1962, and becoming the musical director in 1967. Somewhere along the line the "Little" was lost, but "Doc" stayed and became known to late night audiences across America.*

*In his non-musical moments, Doc enjoys horses, cooking (Italian is his specialty), collecting American art and keeping fit with daily runs and workouts - interests he shares with his wife, television producer/writer Emily Marshall.*

*From:  
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