



JAZZ FUSION VIRTUOSO BILLY COBHAM AT 70:
A legendary musical explorer meets milestone with visionary endeavors

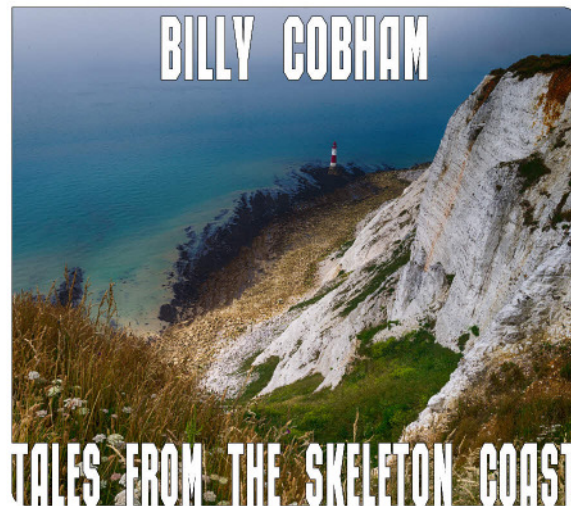
(BERN, SWITZERLAND, Winter 2014)-Widely regarded as the "world's greatest drummer" and revered for his musical ingenuity, jazz fusion virtuoso Billy Cobham reaches his seven-decade milestone as creative as ever, looking ahead to the next era in his lifelong artistic evolution with several visionary projects on the horizon.

The pioneering and versatile Cobham has contributed seminal as a master drummer, percussionist, composer, producer, educator, clinician and tireless musical explorer. With the same energy and exuberance he displayed in his youth, he forges ahead with an everpassionate commitment to innovation and service to the world through his music.

2014 PROJECTS

Early 2014 marks the release of the much-anticipated "*Tales from the Skeleton Coast*", which is the third installment of four recordings produced as a commemoration and celebration of Cobham's mother and father, both of whom were musicians. In his words, "*Tales from*

the Skeleton Coast reflects life experiences that I shared with my parents that I hold dear in my heart and mind, including impressions instilled in me while touring the region of what was previously called southwestern Africa but is now known as Namibia. The images of the Skeleton Coast in particular, still burn within me and through the music, I've created a sonic reflection of those cherished experiences. "



This year, Cobham continues to develop his ingenious Extended Works series, a trailblazing musical exploration that will take shape in collaboration with local jazz orchestras around the world. This performance series will bring his critically acclaimed, widely appreciated material to the orchestral jazz stage, sharing his vast musical history with diverse audiences globally. Cobham remarks, *"This project is a natural musical metamorphosis that was destined to take place when the time is right. The time has come and we have arrived!"*

In the summer of 2014, Cobham will release a live CD recording from last year's celebrated *Spectrum 40* tours, which dazzled audiences around the world in commemoration of the 40th anniversary of *Spectrum*, the defining album of the jazz-fusion genre.



Born in Panama on May 16, 1944, and raised in Brooklyn, New York, Cobham got his first paid gig at the age of eight as a member of St. Catherine's Queensmen, a drum and bugle corps in St. Albans, Queens. He attended New York's renowned Fiorella H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and the Performing Arts, where he studied music theory and drum technique.

While in the military from 1965 to 1968, Cobham played with the U.S. Army Band as percussionist. After his service, he played in Horace Silver's Band, performed with Stanley Turrentine and Shirley Scott, and recorded with George Benson.

In 1969, Billy Cobham co-founded the jazz-rock combo, Dreams, which included Randy Brecker, Michael Brecker, John Abercrombie, Don Grolnick, Barry Rodgers, and Will Lee. The following year, he joined Miles Davis' new fusion ensemble, and contributed to *Live-Evil*, *A Tribute to Jack Johnson* and the *Bitches Brew* sessions, where he collaborated with guitarist John McLaughlin.

In 1971, Cobham became a founding member of the jazzfusion Mahavishnu Orchestra, along with McLaughlin, Jan Hammer, Jerry Goodman, and Rick Laird. This original group released three critically acclaimed albums: *The Inner Mounting* (1971), *Birds of Fire* (1973) and *Between Nothingness and Eternity* (live album released in 1973).

In 1973, Cobham released his debut solo album, *Spectrum*, a breakthrough in jazz-fusion that is universally recognized as one of the genre's most significant and influential creations. *Spectrum* was recorded at Jimi Hendrix's Electric Lady Studios in New York City. Cobham's lineup for the album featured Tommy Bolin on guitar, Jan Hammer on electric piano, moog synthesizer & piano and Lee Sklar on bass.



Also in 1973, Cobham toured with John McLaughlin and Carlos Santana, performing material from the album, *Love Devotion Surrender*.

In 1974, the original lineup of the Mahavishnu Orchestra disbanded. Cobham continued to create innovative fusion material with the release of *Crosswind* (1974), *Shabaz*, (1974) *Total Eclipse* (1974), *A Funky Thide of Sings* (1975) and *Life and Times* (1976).

During the 70's and 80's, Cobham recorded for Atlantic, CBS, Elektra, and GRP. He collaborated with George Duke, John Scofield, Tony Williams, Jack Bruce, and The Grateful Dead spinoff band Bobby & the Midnites.

In 1992, Cobham was appointed to work with UNICEF to work with autistic outpatients and street children in Santos, Brazil in a musical project that lasted for several years.

In 2001, Cobham released the two-CD retrospective, *Rudiments: The Billy Cobham Anthology*. **In** 2002, he began releasing a series of CD's featuring special artists, entitled *Drum n Voice*.

By 2005, Cobham had recorded and released over 30 recordings under his name. He developed and enjoyed a special musical collaboration with the Cuban group, Asere.

In 2007, he released *Fruit from the Loom*, which is a wide-ranging representation of Cobham's roots and journeys. **In** 2010, Cobham released *Palindrome*, the second installment from the *Fruit from the Loom* series.

In 2011, Cobham began teaching drums online at The Jazz & Fusion Drum School with Billy Cobham.

In 2013, Cobham celebrated the 40th anniversary of the release of *Spectrum* by touring the U.S., Canada and Europe with the Spectrum 40 Band. Also that year, Purple Pyramid Records released the Billy



Cobham Compass Point two-CD set, recorded live at Compass Point Hotel in the Bahamas in 1997, which was never released before.

In early 2014, "*Tales from the Skeleton Coast*" will be released, and a live CD from the *Spectrum 40* Tour is expected later in the year.

Watch Billy Cobham's website for Tour dates, news and more information about new projects, <http://www.miooow.com>