

## Late arrivals----September /October

### **Billy Cobham: Total Eclipse**

This turned out to be an album of contrasts but always interesting ones. Cobham put together a band of first rate improvisors in the early nineteen seventies although they were not as well- known and respected as they later became. Cobham's solar system anthem featured heavy, churning guitar from Abercrombie and crashing drum work interspersed with some more lyrical and occasionally softly melodic solo contributions from the likes of the Brecker brothers, Glenn Ferris on trombone and Sue Evans on marimba. The opening Solarization is in five parts and runs for eleven minutes give or take a second or two. Alex Blake's electric bass and the leader's drums drive it along forcefully for the most part except for the marimba solo. Ferris plays a choppy, stop and start type trombone solo but it is not without a melodic twist and turn. Total Eclipse is a wild workout for guitar, drums and bass and Bandits rounds off, side one. Cornell Dupree gets his only extended guitar solo on Moon Germs and the drummer leader thrashes away to favourable effect before leaving the drum stool to play softly lyrical acoustic piano on The Moon Ain't Made Of Green Cheese. Randy Brecker accompanies here with soft focus trumpet.

Sea Of Tranquillity begins in tranquil enough mood but opens out later to encompass power guitar solos in the progressive rock style of the time but also has smooth, probing tenor sax from Mike Brecker. When we get to the final track Last Frontier Cobham plays an extended solo demonstrating his percussive skill well and utilizing most of his battery of drums and cymbals. It is a loud, thrusting, comprehensive work out but even this peters out as he leaves the drums and plays a few well- chosen chords on acoustic piano. You see what I mean about contrasts? This is though one of the best examples of jazz rock which has obvious roots in the mainstream tradition.

### **Discography**

*Solarization, Second Phase, Crescent Sun, Voyage, Solarization Recapitulation; Lunarputians; Total Eclipse; Moon Germs; The Moon Ain't Made Of Cream Cheese; Sea Of Tranquillity; Last Frontier (44, 12)*

John Abercrombie, Cornell Dupree (elg); Mike Brecker (ts, ss, f); Randy Brecker (t, flh); Glenn Ferris (tb); Milcho Leviev (ky); Alex Blake (elb); Billy Cobham (d, pc, p) NYC 1974.

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