

Chris Cornell is a rock icon who thrives on contradictions. An innovator who resists genre labels, he was nonetheless the chief architect of the 90s grunge movement. Frequently ranked as one of the best voices in music history, he has successfully maintained his own unique identity over more than two decades as a multi-Grammy award winning musician and universally acclaimed singer, songwriter and lyricist.

Seattle trailblazers Soundgarden were a law to themselves, edgy, dark and deeply individual. Their savage soundscapes, coupled with Cornell's incisive lyrics and predatory roar, seduced audiences hungry for musical depth and complexity while leading trends in street fashion and iconic design. In 1989, they became the first Seattle band to sign to a major label. Their sound continued to change and evolve over the course of five pioneering albums.

Celebrated side project Temple of the Dog had already shown Cornell's more soulful side and introduced future Pearl Jam frontman Eddie Vedder to the world. Later, Cornell shocked the business once again with richly melodic, critically acclaimed solo album "Euphoria Morning", swiftly recognized for its alienation and despair. And as the millennium turned, he joined with three other musical pioneers from rap-rock's Rage Against The Machine to create Audioslave - a multi-platinum supergroup which lived to deny its detractors, producing three top-selling albums, touring the world and becoming the first American band to bring rock to Castro's Cuba.

Since then, Cornell has redefined his sound and vision to encompass new music, new collaborations and new activities. Having contributed solo songs to movie soundtracks from "Great Expectations" to "Mission Impossible II", he became the first American male singer to write the theme song for the James Bond franchise in its most successful film to date, "Casino Royale." His bold and bluesy reinvention of Michael Jackson dance classic "Billie Jean" courted controversy and attracted imitators. And his triumphant 2007 world tour brought together songs from every stage of his career, reinterpreting them for new audiences and blending their original fire with the shock of the new.

Outside music, Cornell fronted fashion designer John Varvatos's Spring 2006 collection and settled in Paris with his family, where he has helped revive a historic restaurant, the stylish Black Calavados.

Only the most confident would claim to predict exactly what comes next for Chris Cornell. Always eclectic, always experimental, his new collaboration with super-producer Timbaland – who calls their album "the best work I've done in my career" – will take him into fresh territory, establishing a new sound and marking the creation of a masterpiece that breaks all musical boundaries. Only one thing's for sure – Chris Cornell will continue to break rules, make history and challenge everyone's expectations.