

# ROLLING STONE

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# SANTANA COMES HOME





The Mission Street Mystic  
Returns to His Earthly Ways  
**SANTANA  
COMES HOME**

by Rich Wiseman

IT  
WAS AUGUST  
OF 1973

.....and Devadip  
Carlos Santana was feeling ill at ease. He was on tour



with Mahavishnu John McLaughlin, who, like himself, traveled the path of Sri Chinmoy. But lately their jazzy, lofty music—showcased on their *Love Devotion Surrender* album earlier that year—had not been jelling. He doubted whether drummer Billy Cobham, keyboards player Larry Young and bass player Doug Rauch were into the music; nobody was playing together, and Carlos knew you can't have four sergeants in a platoon.

When the tour reached Seattle, Santana heard that Elvin Bishop was playing at the Aquarius, a cavernous beer club. He went back a long way with Bishop, to 1968 at Fillmore West, in fact, when the Paul Butterfield Blues Band with Bishop and Mike Bloomfield had "started the whole thing" for him. They were the blues band that was happening—they were so strong, they jelled so well together, they played such human, practical music that Carlos couldn't help but be attracted to it "360 degrees-wise."

Filled with curiosity, Santana dropped in on his old inspiration at the Aquarius after his own show. That night, Bishop was playing a more free-form style of blues, with jazz arpeggios and Indian ragalike riffs. Carlos was entranced, but not only by the music: *they were having fun.*

When Bishop asked him onstage, Carlos asked himself, why not? The music had put him in a happy frame and his own music hadn't done that recently. So Santana and Bishop jammed. As Carlos became more and more delighted by the sounds they were making, he began to dance.

In the audience, another disciple of Sri Chinmoy watched, confused. Was this the same Devadip Carlos Santana who just the previous year had sworn off "earth music"—music that only moved people's pelvises—and who had committed himself to "universal" music, which moved their souls?

The disciple wanted an explanation. After the set, he walked over to Santana and said he had expected more from his brother. In responding, Carlos found himself uttering words he realized were to comprise a new truth for him: "I think the highest form of spirituality is joy. If you don't have that, man, then I don't care for spirituality."

## NURSING A FRESHLY FILLED

front tooth and numb mouth, Carlos Santana wasn't in any rush to be interviewed. Besides, he was enjoying looking at some of his photos and slides at manager Bill Graham's offices in San Francisco. Gazing over the shoulder of this vision in off-white—sweater, bell-bottoms, socks and cream-soda-colored sandals—one found that many of the pictures told a story. For openers, there was Barbra Streisand smiling backstage at a stadium concert in Tempe, Arizona. Graham, who had been called in at the last minute to promote the day-long show (which was being staged for the movie remake of *A Star Is Born*), had brought Santana along. The band, in turn, had thrilled the 45,000 in attendance by playing a relentlessly energetic, hip-grinding set.

Next, Carlos paused over a photo of four shyly giggling Japanese girls, one offering a tentative peace sign: Santana

recently ended a Far East tour with a one-month swing through Japan, where their three-record, Japanese-recorded live album, *Lotus*, has sold about 30,000 copies—at up to \$24 per. There was also an older photo of a French cathedral, which recalled Santana and Earth, Wind & Fire's 42-date knockout tour of Europe last fall.

Santana's international appeal doesn't stop in Japan and Western Europe. (*Borboletta*, the group's last studio album, was Number One for 14 weeks in Italy.) It also topped the charts in Yugoslavia . . . Australia . . . New Zealand . . . and sold consistently well throughout South America.

went nuts over *Amigos*—it's terrifically commercial," one executive gushed), not to mention his unflagging worldwide popularity, that they recently re-signed him to a five-year, seven-album contract with the highest guarantees they've ever given an artist, according to Santana attorney Brian Rohan. The contract calls for "more than \$400,000" per album plus an ascending scale of guarantees and the "highest" royalty rates. Said Rohan, proudly: "It's an enormous contract."

Santana sat down to check over some notes he'd written to friends; the notes would accompany copies of *Amigos*. The letter addressed to "dearest brother"

whether it be Mexican folk music or rock & roll, if you're sincere, what you are projecting has life and joy. If it's not sincere, it's weak, wherever it's coming from. I was very sincere about *Amigos*; I think it is one of the most challenging things I've done in a long time, as far as reaching the people again. With the last three albums, as far as being commercial, we weren't that successful, but that's not what we wanted. I was looking to fulfill a vision, that vision being to remind everybody that we have a promise to reveal, manifest and fulfill God. But with spiritual music I couldn't do it all the way because the people who are already into some kind of religious path are there. So why not play music for the people who aren't . . . but who are almost on the verge of turning the leaf. I'm still not looking at *Billboard*. But I do care about people. Touring with Earth, Wind & Fire made me realize that a lot of people are still waiting for the band Santana, not for any other reason than to receive what Santana, at one time, was offering them—a different type of music.

"When I was in England during the tour, Eric [Clapton] took me to a discotheque, and they played 'Jingo.' People were dancing and it gave them so much joy. I'm looking at everybody, and I'm seeing this guy who doesn't even care how she moves or who she is, he just wants somebody to dance with. I said, obviously this cat doesn't have the capacity to create in the way that musicians create, so maybe this is the way for him to express himself. I said, man, you have to get into this kind of music, you have to make an effort to go beyond what you think is right or wrong to please the people. After that, it's up to God what they do with that energy you give them, whether they write a poem, make love to their lover or have an intense meditation."

Actually, Santana made his first move toward a more commercial direction several months before the European tour, when he asked Bill Graham to manage the group. Graham had been intimately involved with Santana at the very start, in the days when deals were closed with a handshake. He had hired Santana for their first gigs at Fillmore, had talked their way onto the Woodstock stage while they were still unknown and had gotten them their first national TV spot, booking them on the *Ed Sullivan Show*. But personal conflicts with the band's manager, Stan Marcum, got in the way and Graham was forced from the picture in 1972. He became reinvolved peripherally the next year, though, when Marcum was dismissed and then Graham associate Barry Imhoff became their manager. When Imhoff parted company with Santana and Graham in mid-'75, Carlos asked Ray Etzler, the band's road manager/confidant to manage them. Etzler declined, directing them instead to Graham, who he felt had more "weight." (Etzler remains Santana's right-hand man.) So Carlos found himself again tapping Graham's "dynamism"—after first taking note of his "mellowing" disposition. Graham, who lives down the hill from Carlos in peaceful Mill Valley, had, in Etzler's words, "come to have confidence in his own abilities; he didn't feel he had to prove himself anymore." Or, as Carlos put it: "He doesn't seem to have to scream as much to get things done."

Graham's musical tastes—"Latin music is my life"—dictated the particular direc-



"He feels everything. His entire being is music."

An interesting feat, considering that *Borboletta* barely edged into the U.S. Top 20 and, unlike *Santana*, *Abraxis*, *Santana III*, *Caravanserai* and *Welcome*, failed to win gold status.

But if *Borboletta* was a down in Santana's career, *Amigos*, the band's new album, will surely be an up. Carlos has eased his music from the spiritually propelled, jazz-influenced flights of *Caravanserai*, *Welcome* and *Borboletta* toward the earthier rhythms of the Latin Mission Street district he'd lived in as a youth, the rhythms that comprise such Santana standards as "Oye Como Va," "Black Magic Woman" and "Evil Ways." Columbia Records is so happy with Santana's redirection ("Everybody really

Stevie Wonder read, in part: "It [*Amigos*] was a very intense, joyful creation of the band as we tried to tune our energies to humanity's cry."

The note to Earth, Wind & Fire was less cosmic: "We hope . . . it makes you dance!"

## SANTANA USES A LOT

of energy when he talks. Sitting in a room adjoining Graham's warehouse, his left leg folded beneath him, he explained his musical redirection while his right hand acted out his words.

"Whatever type of music you play,



tion he hoped to steer Santana. They had their first substantial meeting in Studio A of Studio Instrument Rentals after the band returned from Europe. Graham brought his old Tito Puente albums and they talked among the shipping crates for several hours about the band's future. Sitting in his office in front of a sign that read, "People who think they know it all are especially annoying to those of us who do," Graham recalled what he said that day: "I told them, 'You are a street band. Your success in the early days was never because you were just commercial. You had an ethnic, sweaty, street-tar quality that everybody liked. You got on the stage and you kicked ass, and people just loosened themselves. And you did something. . . . You continue to do it, but in a more restrained way. You became refined. I don't like this refinement; you can make beautiful statements with your shirt off. But you cannot do what too many artists do and go far from the maddening crowd.'"

Carlos Santana heard exactly what he wanted and needed to hear. He even agreed to consider Graham's suggestion of an outside producer, David Rubinson (Pointer Sisters, Herbie Hancock and Malo—with Santana's brother Jorge), so they could have the benefit of an extra ear—even though Carlos remembered unpleasant experiences with Rubinson.

Rubinson, a former associate of Graham's in their short-lived Fillmore Corporation, had also worked with Santana in the earliest days. As a Columbia staff producer he recorded their first studio tracks in 1968. They were never released; Rubinson felt that some of the arrangements could be improved and that the still green band needed time to overcome various "technical inefficiencies—the out-of-tuneness, dropping of time, the screwing up of charts." So the next thing Rubinson knew, Santana was in the studio recording their first album without him, with only the help of CBS engineer Brent Dangerfield.

"I don't think I was as sensitive to the insecurities of a new band going to record their first album as I could have been," recalled Rubinson, sitting in his tiny, deskless office on Market Street. "But I've changed. I've grown more tolerant of myself and other people."

Santana saw this when he and Rubinson had a feel-out meeting. "I realized then," said Carlos, "that David Rubinson made an about-face a long time ago. I made an about-face, Bill's making an about-face. I think they're listening more to the dictates of the soul, rather than the mind."

The three-way bond was completed, and the work began. Santana said the first thing Rubinson urged him to do was to open his ears to the AM-FM world outside of McLaughlin, George Benson, Pharoah Sanders, Cecil Taylor, John Coltrane and Archie Shepp. "David told me, 'Devadip, I don't think you listen to the radio enough—if it's garbage to you, why are so many people buying it?' So I start to turn on the radio, go 'ehhhhh,' change the channel. But, hey, I hear this song, 'I'm Not in Love,' three times now. I don't care for the lyrics but the melody is pretty haunting. After a while, there's no room for criticism anymore, just room for absorbing. It's like seeing flowers. I might not like the color but I like the way it smells. That's what matters—is the perfume, the sincerity there?"

The Tubes are one group Santana has grown to like. "They were my favorite group for a while. I appreciate their imagination. They have a full sound, that American dynamism—they don't sound wishy-washy. I don't relate to the mascara and the stage thing, but I do relate to closing my eyes and listening to the music." The bass playing of Earth, Wind & Fire's Verdine White, meantime, has captivated him. "I think he's going to be the best player in the world in no time at all. Everything he has and what he is, he's offering to you." Santana also has kind words for Peter Frampton and his "simple conception of melodies, like what

started out as a typical one-two minor Latin tune. But all there was was the *coro*—the chorus, the hook. There wasn't a definitive bass line... it didn't go anywhere. So Carlos came up with a really good idea for a first bass line. Then I wrote the melody for the verses and we worked until we came up with a good structure."

Accessible structures abound on *Amigos*. "Dance Sister Dance" wasn't even the choice for the first internationally released single—that distinction fell to "Europa (Earth's Cry Heaven's Smile)" which begins with a legato solo by Carlos, recalling his classic "Samba Pa Ti," and

tracks and they wanted a certain sound from the guitar—and they didn't care who it was. And I think I came about as close as any guitar player would have come. I take pride in that because I'd like to feel I'm as open as possible. If somebody wants to hear a George Benson type of solo, a Wes Montgomery type or a Buck Owens type, I'm going to do my best to please them. To be confined as just a blues or Latin player—to hear people say, 'You sound just like Carlos Santana'—is a drag."

## DIPTI NIVAS IS A POPULAR

San Francisco health-food restaurant, immaculately clean and bright, with plants placed about and the aroma of veggieburgers spicing the air. But there are different touches: the several portraits of Sri Chinmoy, the plaque announcing that the restaurant is dedicated to his mission.

Dipti Nivas is owned by Carlos Santana and his radiantly beautiful wife, Urmila. Actually, Urmila was the inspiration behind the restaurant's opening in September of 1973. After becoming a disciple with Carlos in the fall of 1972 and marrying him the following April, she decided she needed her own "form of fulfillment." Chinmoy suggested the restaurant, which could be run as a "divine enterprise, dedicated to serving humanity with love and purity."

In the beginning, Urmila managed the restaurant. Today that job is handled by her sister, Ratna, though Urmila helps serve food when she's in town.

It seemed like a good place to talk about their life together.

"When we first got married, we were both very much into ourselves. In the course of the relationship, we've learned how to blossom and love the divine in each other—but not to hang on and say, 'Well, you're mine,' which is very possessive and very human. It's a much more expansive life . . . but our understanding of what people are about has become much more serious. It's not that we don't have the childlike exuberance anymore, but with his position and name and the things that brings, we realize we have to work very hard to maintain our spiritual values."

What has happened, she said, is that they have become "best friends. We play music together sometimes. I play keyboards. But I can only play what's written and he doesn't write, so he tells me what to play and then I play it. He feels everything. His entire being is music." She has already performed with him at a half-dozen spiritual concerts in small halls around the country and in Puerto Rico, and may record an album with him (Santana's Columbia contract allows him to record three albums on which he is free to experiment with less-structured musical forms, as he did on *Love Devotion Surrender*, *Illuminations*—with Alice Coltrane—and *Carlos Santana and Buddy Miles! Live!*).

Later, Carlos talked about Urmila. "I really love my wife—now more than ever I want to spend time with her. In the old days, by the time I went to TowerRecords, got all the new releases and taped them, it was time to go on the road again—anything else was boring to me." [Cont. on 74]



"I really love my wife . . . I see her as a part of me."

Donovan used to have. You hear it and you wanna keep hearing it."

After two weeks of November rehearsals, during which Santana introduced Rubinson to material that Carlos, keyboards player Tom Coster (also a disciple of Sri Chinmoy), drummer Ndugu Leon Chanler and congas player Armando Peraza had composed during the Europe tour, they hit the studio. Rubinson's work on the seductive, Latinish and eminently commercial "Dance Sister Dance (Baila Mi Hermana)" revealed his orientation. "I knew we needed a hit single, and the biggest hits have been . . . 'Oye Como Va,' 'Black Magic Woman,' 'Evil Ways'—laid-back songs, kind of Latin, very melodic. 'Dance Sister Dance'

ends in a blaze of high-end picking. Another distinctly Latin cut is Armando Peraza's feverish "Gitano," which is introduced by a flamenco guitar passage by Santana.

There are ample doses of moog-driven disco funk, too, on "Tell Me Are You Tired," "Let Me" and the album's closer, "Let It Shine." Some jazzy organ playing pops up on the album's other cut, "Take Me with You." But even on these numbers, Peraza's excellent conga playing and the tunes' chord changes give the music a Latinish flavor.

"When I listen to the album I feel I gave my best to each track," Carlos said. "Tom and Ndugu wrote a lot of the



WHILE IS FUN  
 MALE IS FREE  
 MALE IS EASY  
 MALE IS YOU 'N' ME  
 MALE IS BLUE  
 MALE IS RED  
 MALE IS DENIM  
 MALE IS FRED  
 MALE IS TOM  
 MALE IS DICK  
 MALE IS MARY  
 MALE IS SLICK  
 MALE IS GIRLS  
 MALE IS GUYS  
 MALE IS JEANS  
 MALE IS HIGHS  
 MALE IS HODDY  
 MALE IS TODDY  
 MALE IS CLOTHES  
 THAT LOVE YOUR BODY!

**Male**  
 The Best Looking, Best Fitting Jeans,  
 Slacks, Shirts, Skirts & Jackets You Can Find!

Parker is basically a nouveau-country singer/songwriter. He has a husky, whiskey-drenched voice—like a more rugged version of Michael Murphey's. Unfortunately, it is either one-dimensional or Parker simply chooses not to exploit its potential. When it's matched to the right song ("I Can't Stand Country Music," for example), it sounds just fine. There're a couple other songs—"Good News/Bad News" and "By the Time You Read This Letter"—that could easily be picked up by some mainstream country vocalist.

But nearly every song on this album is self-pitying. Even something that starts out as wryly as "Little Brother John" turns into a sob story. Since Parker's voice already leans toward the morose, the LP takes on an overwhelmingly funeral tone that all but begs the listener to tune out. Though the various guitarists and steel players get a few chances to strut their stuff, the studio band is largely a mechanical one.

Parker would benefit greatly from a savvy, iron-handed Nashville producer to get him writing more and put that voice to better use.



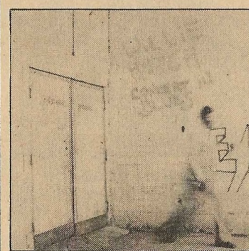
**Put It in Your Ear**  
 Paul Butterfield  
 Bearsville BR 6960

by Kit Rachlis

Even in a career predicated on constant experimentation, Paul Butterfield breaks a number of precedents with *Put It in Your Ear*, his first album since the breakup of his superlative Better Days band. Under the aegis of producer Henry Glover, who contributed the arrangements and four of the songs, the album represents Butterfield's deepest foray into modern R&B and pop. Never before has he used strings or relied so heavily on backup vocals. Moreover, for the first time in his career, Butterfield is working not with a band of his own but solely with sessionmen.

What could have been a daring album, however, is undermined by atrocious material and flaccid arrangements. The songs range from slickly rendered R&B sendups (the body of the album) to a desultory disco instrumental ("The Flame") and an embarrassing torch ballad ("Watch 'em Tell

a Lie") replete with a Barry White intro. Only "Here I Go Again" by Bobby Charles, an excellent songwriter whom Butterfield has served well in the past, and "Day to Day," an old-style blues tune, escape damage. *Put It in Your Ear* is an experiment that should never have been allowed out of the lab.



**Concert in Blues**  
 Willie Hutch  
 Motown MG-854S1

by Joe McEwen

Three years ago, Willie Hutch emerged, on the heels of *Shaft* and *Superfly*, with a refreshingly straightforward blaxploitation soundtrack, *The Mack*. But each of his five followups has made the limits of Hutch's skills as a guitarist, singer and writer more obvious. At best, Willie is a second-rate Bobby Womack, although he has at least managed to carve out a unique, if minor, niche.

Hutch has been influenced not only by Womack but by Womack's chief influence, Sam Cooke. His vocal range, while narrow, begs comparison with Cooke's raspy lower register, while his phrasing has obviously been shaped by Cooke's mannered approach. And his manager is Cooke's former mentor, J. W. Alexander.

Like Womack, Hutch feels constrained to sing a wide range of material to give an impression of versatility. Here, he tackles such diverse standards as "Shake, Rattle and Roll," "Stormy Monday," "Stormy Weather" and "I Wish You Love." Most of these are simply unnecessary, although "Stormy Monday" is transformed into a fresh and palatable performance.

The best stuff here is original material, particularly brother Frank's "Party Down" and Willie's own "Come On Let's Do the Thang," both derived from his loose, flowing *Mack* style. "Party Down," which borrows a bass line from Joe Simon's "Get Down, Get Down (Get on the Floor)" and sports a particularly cooking rhythm section, serves him best. It's precisely such spirited moments that make Willie Hutch a marginally intriguing figure.

## SANTANA COMES HOME

[Cont. from 29] A testament to his one-mindedness is a Pong table, a gift from Graham and Barry Imhoff, that Carlos has hardly ever used; Chinese checkers, meantime, is one of his few nonmusical escapes.

But Carlos said he planned to take tennis lessons when he returns from his tour so he can join his wife on the court. "I want to have fun with her and grow with her. I see her as a part of me. Whatever she likes, I'm beginning to like."

At this point in his life, Santana is also feeling closer than ever to Sri Chinmoy. That realization was prompted by the recent news that Mahavishnu John McLaughlin had left the "path," dropping "Mahavishnu," smoking cigarettes, drinking beer and talking about changes in his lifestyle.

"I haven't talked to him since all this started to happen," Santana said. "I don't think he feels any animosity toward guru, it's just that he's following some intuition. I admire him for leaving the path because it takes a lot of strength. I don't have the strength. Since he left, I feel more sure why I'm breathing. And that goes back to Sri Chinmoy. I feel guru much more than ever before. Without his guidance I am doomed."

A week after that first talk, Santana, in a deep purple dress shirt and black wool cap pulled over his ears and forehead, stood in Studio A of Studio Instrument Rentals, plucking random notes on his Gibson L6-S. In about an hour he and his band would begin the first of three days of rehearsals for a three-week concert tour of Canada and the Midwest in April. It would be the first of two short tours (the second will wind through the South and East in May), to be followed by a July stadium tour with the Rolling Stones and another fall tour of Europe.

Carlos was the first one in the room, no surprise since he'd gotten up at 6:15, the ideal time of the day for him to meditate. When he noticed his visitor, he grinned broadly: he was in New York visiting Sri Chinmoy last weekend, and he'd seen John



McLaughlin premiere his Indian-inspired band, Shakti, at the Bottom Line. He had news.

"I didn't feel that gap," he said, sitting on a bench in the adjoining poolroom. "The only gap was that we hadn't seen each other or talked. But when I saw him he was still so sweet. He was just like Mahavishnu, you know. He has a different path, but he held my hand, very warm and sincere. It made me realize that I am really happy for him because he's searching. And the music that he's doing . . . it's hard to say it's new because it was played before Christ. Yet it sounds new because he's combining the West and the East. All his playing is acoustic, not loud, but it's very, very intense. It's the most intense music that I've felt since John Coltrane was alive."

Santana also spent ten hours conversing and meditating with Chinmoy ("I feel like a light that's just been refueled"). Had Chinmoy heard *Amigos*?

"No. He told me before I did the album, 'I'm with you 100% no matter what you do.' If you have a seed, you know that it is going to blossom—whether it be a rose or lily."

The rehearsals were being held to work in two new members—bass player Byron Miller, a Detroit musician who'd been playing with Roy Ayers Ubiquity, a space-jazz group; and congo/timbales player Francisco Aquabella. Miller replaced original bass player Dave Brown (Carlos: "He was limiting the band by limiting himself, not giving 100% to the instrument") while Aquabella was added (Ndugo Leon Chancler had been playing both drums and timbales). "The band demands more of a fire," Santana had said earlier in explaining the addition of the 40ish Aquabella, regarded along with the 52-year-old Peraza as one of the foremost Cubano conga/timbales players in the country. "I like to hear a timbales player doing a solo and still having drums holding time and conga players holding time. In the past, when somebody takes a solo in there, the band reaches a peak and it doesn't go any higher."

"I saw Francisco and Armando get together for the first time when Eddie Palmieri was at Cesar's [San Francisco's Latin music landmark], and I'm not exaggerating, the temperature got five degrees hotter in San Francisco. Francisco and Armando, they're like the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. Having these two, I feel very proud of going on the road."

Carlos also praised lead singer Greg Walker, the next newest member of the band after Aquabella and Brown. The personable Walker, who had been singing with an L.A. soul group called A Taste of Honey, joined the group last year after the Euro-

pean tour. He replaced Leon Patillo, who Santana felt didn't have enough range. "Greg I'm very proud of, he's a phenomenon in himself. I think he's the best singer we ever had." And Walker plans to make himself useful: "I don't think Santana has taken advantage of vocals as well as they could have—yet. I'm willin'; they just have to ask!"

That Santana had two new faces and one fairly new face was nothing unusual—the band has long had a high turnover rate. Drummer Chancler offered his explanation for the frequent personnel changes: "Carlos hears different things at different points of his life. But he's the same musician he was two, five, seven years ago. He manages to stay aboveground by changing the environment around him. This way he can play the same, but his group sound will change." (Not only did Chancler's appraisal of Santana's playing conflict with Santana's own, but also with Tom Coster's, who said, "Devadip now has infinitely more speed, control over his instrument, and his ideas are on the level of good musicians like Mahavishnu.")

Speaking of the group's current sound, Chancler, who joined the group in 1974 after stints with Miles Davis and Freddie Hubbard, said he wasn't knocked out by *Amigos*: "It has a solid direction and a good foundation, but I still feel something's missing. A lot of artists who come out with very gutsy albums don't have a lot of time to make a very clean album. When you have a budget where you can spend all the time you want in a studio, naturally things start sounding cleaner. The album's a little clean."

Noting the somewhat critical ring to his comments, I asked if he was happy with the group. He said he was, though the addition of Aquabella had "surprised" him and he considered it a "step backwards mentally—it's all of a sudden like being in deep water after being in shallow." But he added he does feel there is a gap between Carlos and himself, based on "social philosophies. There is a certain amount of separatism that doesn't exist as much onstage as it happens offstage. I come from an all-black ghetto, so naturally that's a vital part of my existence—and that's opposite to this universal, everybody-is-one Sri Chinmoy thing."

"I feel that everything has its place as long as a musician plays. If you want to have chicks, fine . . . sometimes I might be out all night and hang out with friends. I don't feel it has an overt bearing on what I sound like the next day. And there's a feeling that if you indulge in too much sex the night before you play, you will sound tired. But I have found that to be a big farce."

Actually, it seemed logical to assume that some of the personnel changes could have been hastened by the clash in lifestyles. As Chancler hinted, Santana has long insisted that members keep "clear heads" when they're playing, with implied sanctions against all-night partying before a gig; one remembered original conga player Mike Carabello's parting salvo in 1972: "He [Carlos] had this thing about . . . how I ran my life." But Carlos said, "I don't impose my philosophies on their lives and they don't impose theirs on mine," adding that the only distance he feels with the nondisciples in the band today "is what their minds or my mind makes out of it. Inwardly, we share the same oneness the sun has with the light." Chancler himself allowed that Carlos is "a little more open today . . . receptive to new ideas. And the rapport is as good as it's ever been."

With nothing more potent than bottles of Perrier water within sight, the band warmed up with "Gitana." After moving through a brief bottleneck at the beginning, in which Aquabella experimented with a second conga part (Carlos: "I miss the timbales"), the band worked into a spirited groove, as Peraza's playing drew delighted smiles from Santana.

The band plowed through a part of its set, Carlos leading the way with clean, precise guitar work. The going was slow in spots as Aquabella's timbales parts had to be worked out. But it was clear, from the grins—even Peraza's stern face was creased occasionally—that the new combination was working. But while Byron Miller was clearly holding his own and contributing more adventurous bass lines than his predecessor, Aquabella was clearly the star addition. From "Incident at Neshabur" through "Black Magic Woman," "Oye Como Va," "Let It Shine" and "Dance Sister Dance," his relentless playing was a magnet for Santana's eyes. After a while, there were two shows—the gleeful Aquabella flailing at the timbales with do-it-one-better combinations and Carlos erupting in spasms of joy, staring open-mouthed, slapping his thighs and even spinning around at the sight and sounds.

When the first break came, Santana, still shaking his head, walked over to the grinning Aquabella. This was the type of playing that had his fans dancing once and this was the type of playing that would have them dancing again—with him. "I started laughing like crazy when you played!" he exclaimed to Francisco. "Your playing was like telling stories—it filled me with joy!"



## A Legend Coming Soon

Legend  
MCA RECORDS