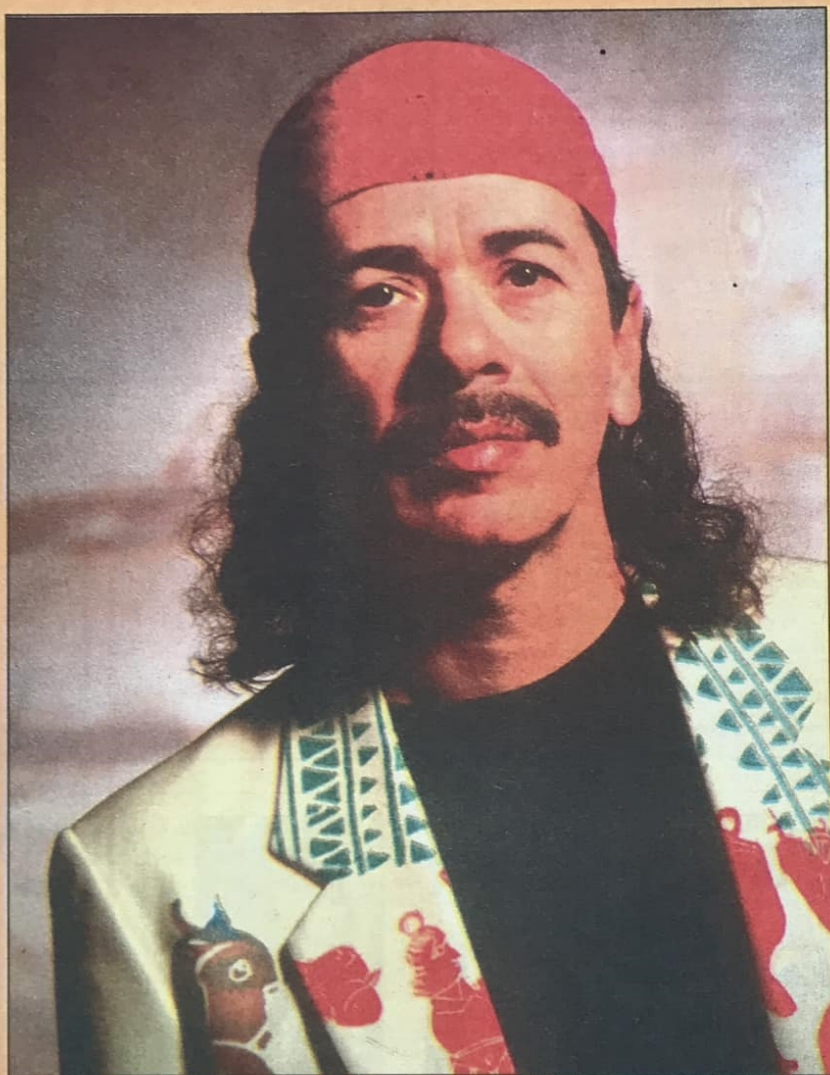


Tucson Citizen

AUG. 13-20

CALENDAR



Channeling the spirit

Still proud to wear the badge of '60s idealism, Carlos Santana brings his 'mini-Woodstock' experience back to the Old Pueblo on Aug. 19/**Page 5**

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Only the kids
will get a
kick out of it

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● What is it about a Carlos Santana concert that has made his annual performances here so popular? The family, Woodstock-flavored atmosphere? The mysticism of his Latin-based rock guitar? Whatever the reason, thousands of faithful fans are expected again this year to hear him

STIRRING SOULS

By CHUCK GRAHAM
Citizen Pop Music Critic

Carlos Santana feels as if he's standing on the edge of a new beginning. He has released "Milagro," his first album with Polydor, his new record company, and will have his own label, Guts & Grace, under that company's aegis.

For the first time in his 23-year recording career, Santana can control the presentation of his own music and develop the careers of young musicians he likes.

"These are the young players from the street," said Santana, on the telephone from his San Francisco studio. "Those are the ones I want to sign. That's where the new ideas are."

"You won't hear anything worthwhile coming from the white middle class. Not from Billy Joel or Bruce Springsteen or people like that. The music worth hearing is in the street."

This might seem like a cynical statement, coming from a millionaire whose career includes sales of more than 30 million albums — many of them purchased by white middle-class Americans.

But Santana has a reputation for being a purist. He talks about channeling the music straight from God, as if he weren't a musician at all but simply a human conduit for a celestial experience.

"I'm channeling the spirit, too, just like Martin Luther King did. Bringing people together."

Many Tucsonans would agree. Santana holds the unofficial county record for the largest audience at a rock concert. His annual performances at the Pima County Fairgrounds usually draw around 15,000 people. No other current act comes close.

The Santana faithful will no doubt turn out by the thousands Aug. 19 when he swings through for a concert at the Pima County Fairgrounds.

Santana's concerts here have been dubbed "mini-Woodstocks" because of the family atmosphere that prevails.

People of all colors and races, some with kids in tow, come together in a mutual cause, sharing the mysticism of Santana's Latin-based rock guitar. They



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listen together and, in the process, learn to trust each a little more.

"The earth is one womb. It has no borders. No flags. We are all in this together. It is music that keeps humanity glued together, because music always begins with harmony."

Well, sure, but there do seem to be a lot of problems in the world. A lot of problems right here in the good old U.S. of A.

Are rock concerts really helping that much?

"Yes, absolutely, I feel like there is progress."

Nelson Mandela is out of prison. The Berlin Wall has come down.

"It is a matter of what you see. With one eye you see the good. With one eye you see the bad. That is the nature of life."

"I say we should not be killed by the beast within us, but saved by the beauty within us. For example, middle-class whites always perceived of the Black Panthers as a threat. But it was the Panthers who started food programs in the poor neighborhoods and today, the Black Panthers have been destroyed but those food programs are still going strong."

Preview

● **Who:** Carlos Santana in concert. Phish will open the show.

● **When:** Aug. 19. Gates open at 4 p.m., show starts at 6 p.m.

● **Where:** Pima County Fairgrounds, 11300 S. Houghton Road.

● **How much:** Tickets are \$11 in advance, \$16 the day of the show. They're available at Dillard's outlets. For information, call 624-1013.

Santana is one member of the Boomer Generation (born 45 years ago in Autlan de Navarro, Mexico; raised in San Francisco) proud to wear the badge of 1960s idealism.

In his never-ending search for tools that will help him implement this idealism he has also investigated Eastern religions. But now Santana says there are no intermediaries between himself and God.

"I talk directly to God, as everyone should,"

Santana said, surprised anyone would ask.

The music is always the messenger, however.

Santana's blend of blues, jazz and rock spread over a bubbling Latin beat has been stirring souls since the self-titled debut album "Santana" in 1969, followed by "Abraxas" the next year.

But it was Santana's performance of "Soul Sacrifice" at The Woodstock of 1969 — where he was booked to promote the "Santana" album because nobody knew his name — that made his reputation instantly.

So for almost 25 years now Carlos Santana has continued to electrify the Woodstock Nation, and subsequent generations as well.

Only the Grateful Dead, another San Francisco band, has kept the psychedelic secret alive through three generations.

While the Deadheads never get to see their favorite band in Tucson, Santana has become an Old Pueblo standby the last few years.

There's no reason to believe his concert won't be as glowing as the others. Santana might be almost old enough to qualify for rock 'n' roll's senior circuit, but nobody wants him to hurry.