

Full Song! The Allman Brothers' "Elizabeth Reed"

Guitar Player

SANTANA

Making Rainbow
Music with
Eric Clapton,
Dave Matthews,
Lauryn Hill,
Everlast, and
the Dust Brothers

Jim Hall &
Pat Metheny
Latin Playboys
Alex de Grassi

AUGUST 1999

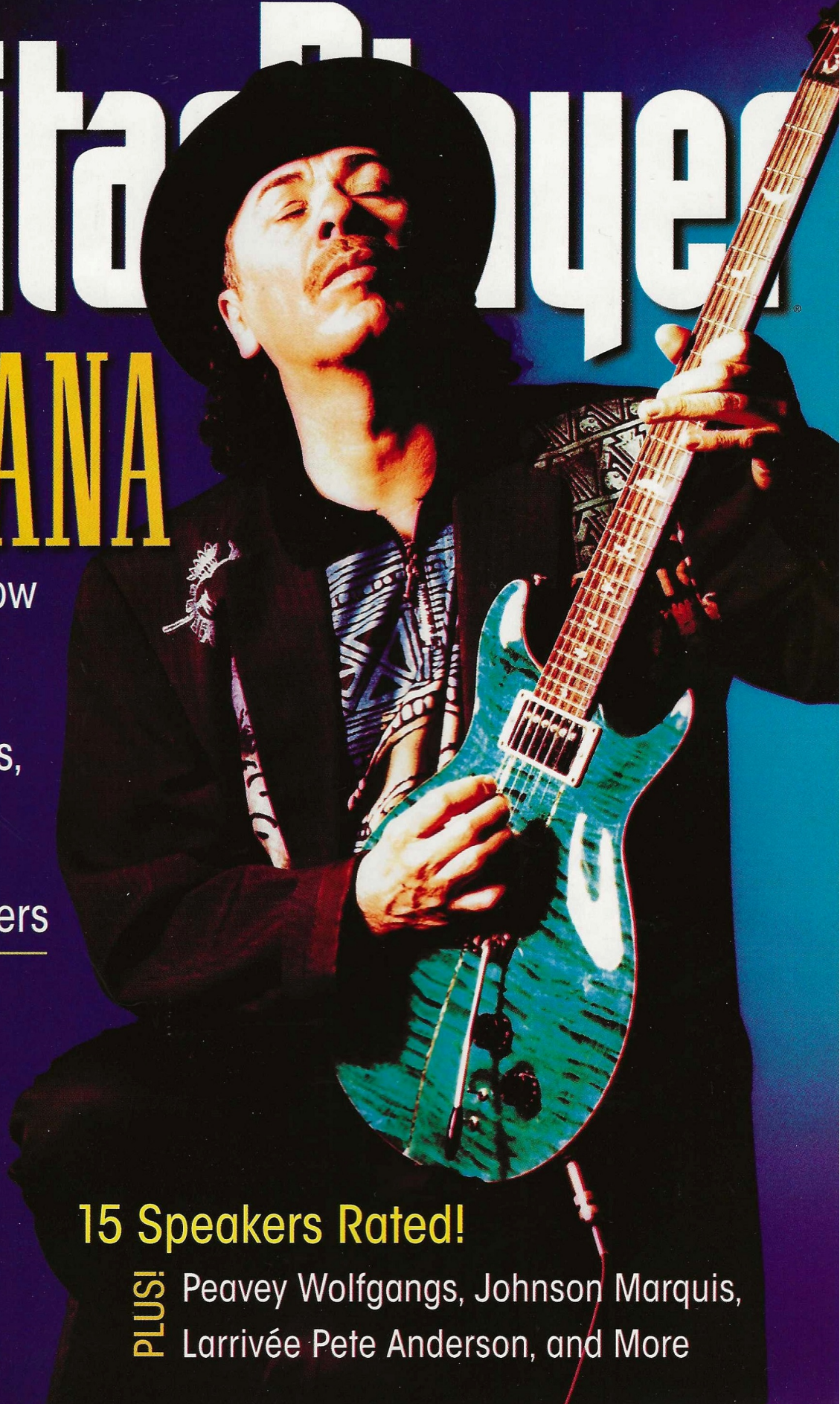
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Guitar Player

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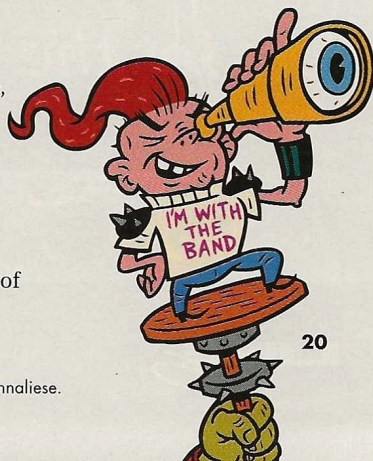
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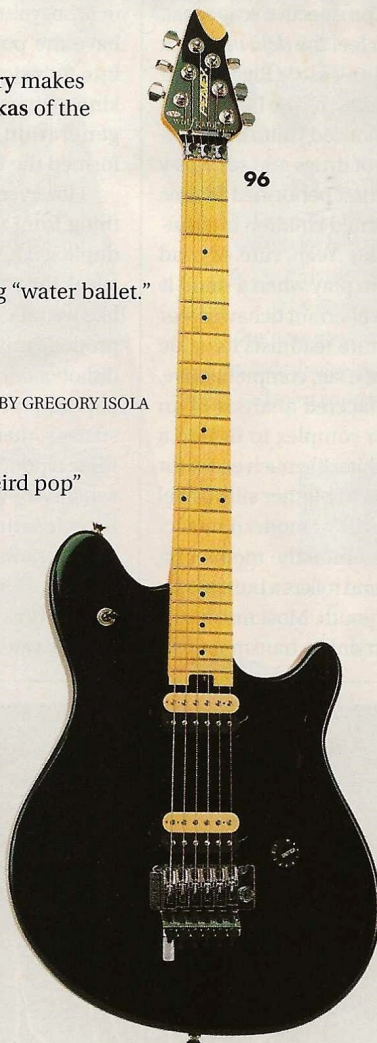
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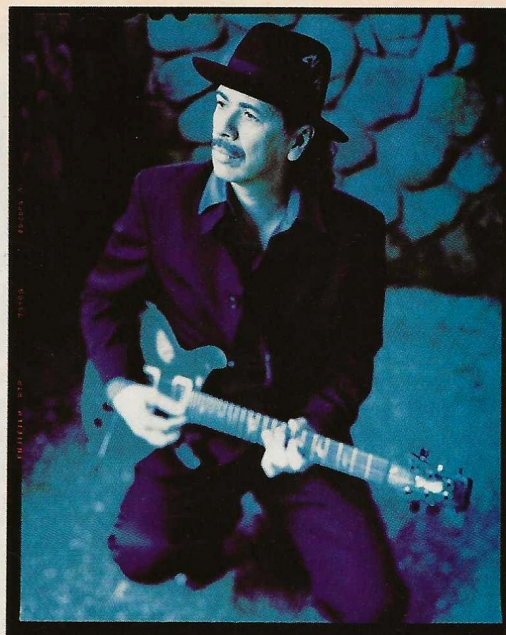
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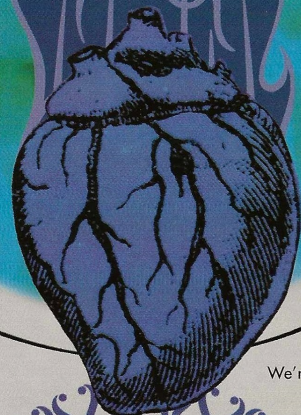
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QUEST FOR FIRE



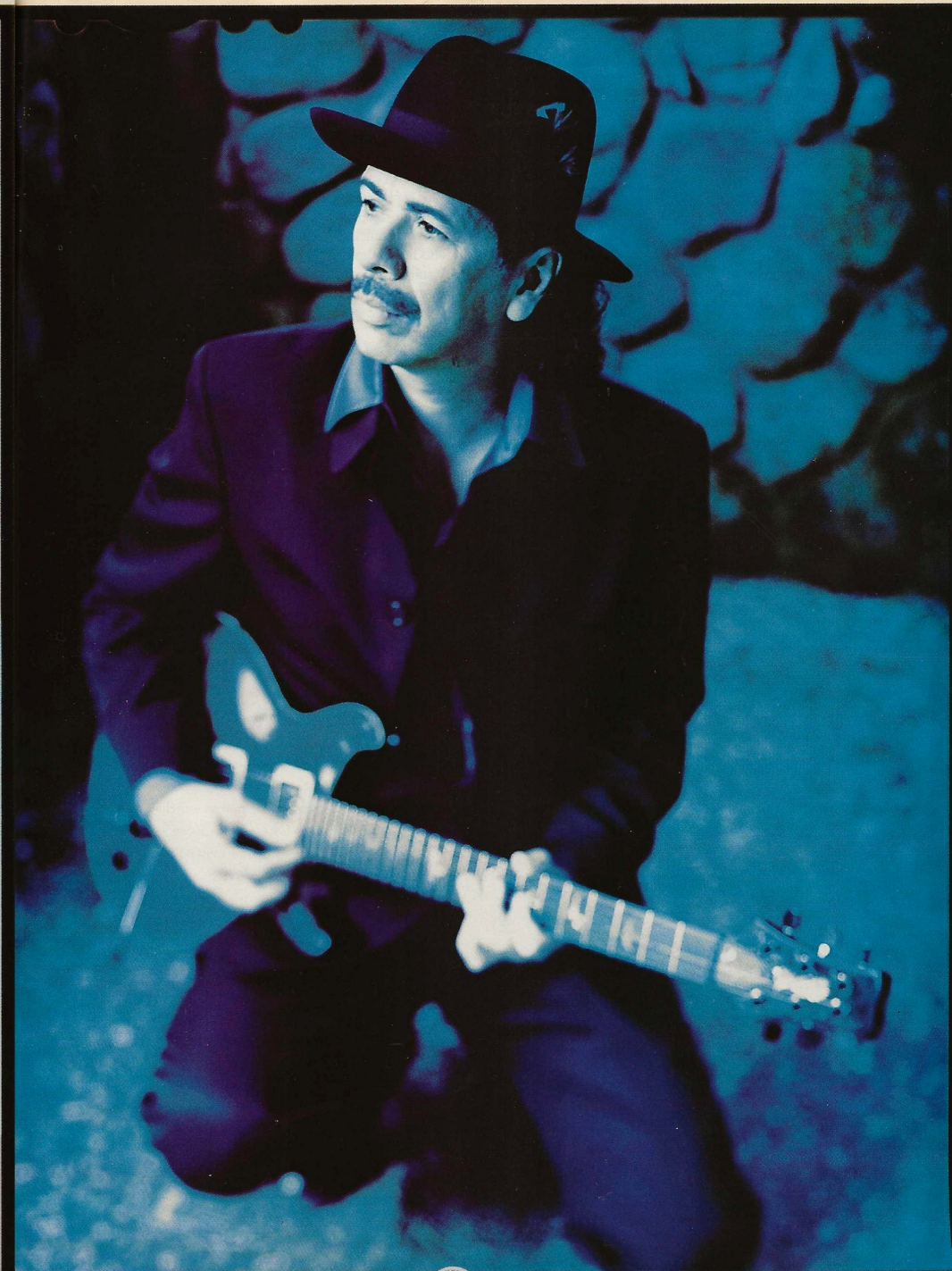
"I had only one concern when making my new record," says Carlos Santana. "Would Jimi Hendrix like it if he were here? Would there be enough guitar? It's important for me to appease Jimi and Wes

Montgomery because I play for them, too." ■

CARLOS SANTANA ON SPIRIT GUIDES, RAINBOW MUSIC & PASSIONATE GUITAR

BY ANDY ELLIS

We're sitting in Santana's large rehearsal hall in San Rafael, California. Surrounded by bright wall hangings depicting his musical heroes—John Coltrane, Miles Davis, Jimi Hendrix, Charlie Parker, and Bob Marley—Santana is describing the genesis of his latest





album, *Supernatural*. Featuring collaborations with an intriguing assortment of musicians including Lauryn Hill, Wyclef Jean, Dave Matthews, Everlast, Rob Thomas of Matchbox 20, Eagle Eye Cherry, Ozomatli, and the Dust Brothers, this release is Santana's debut on Arista Records.

"We're still finishing some tracks," Santana explains, as he cues up "Love of My Life," a song he co-wrote with Dave Matthews. "In fact, right after this interview I'm going into the studio to

put some guitar on 'The Call,' which I wrote with Eric Clapton. It's time to put that one to bed."

As the punchy intro to "Love of My Life" emerges from the boom box, Santana's head bobs with the music. "You know what? There is enough guitar in there!"

Santana holds passionate views on a variety of subjects, and whether discussing songwriting, tone, and soloing—or such hot-button topics as spirit guides, self-validation, synchronicity, senility, and suicide—he presents his thoughts calmly, without a hint of rock-star posturing. Santana's speech is as distinctive as his playing, and he weaves his colorful tales of music and mysticism with unguarded sincerity.

Even if you don't share all of his beliefs, his ideas will get you thinking about the guitar and its role in our lives. Santana has survived more than three decades in the fickle music business without losing an iota of his enthusiasm for the

6-string and its great players. We can all learn from that.

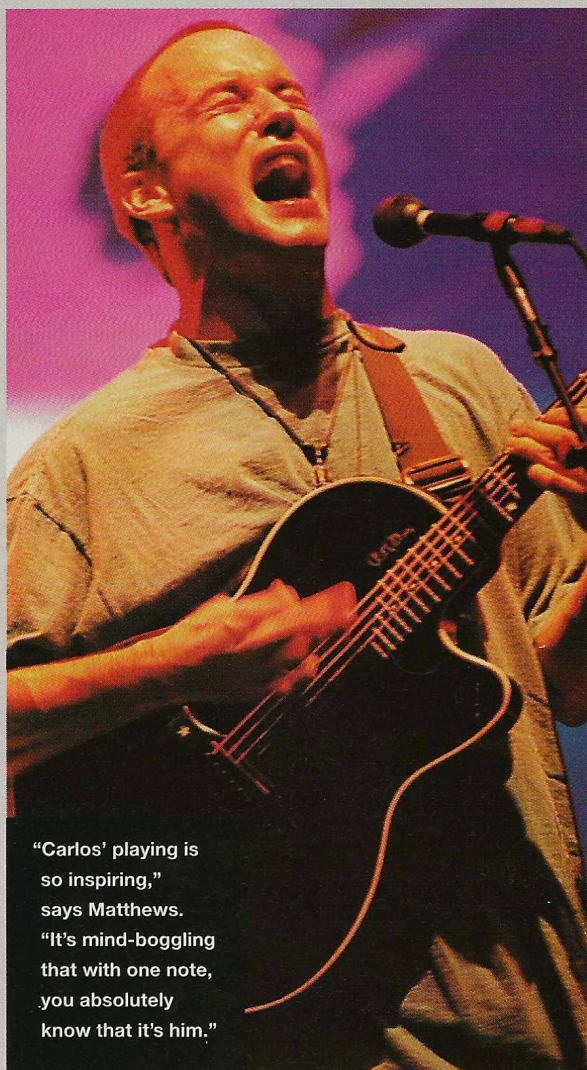
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Your new record is a remarkably collaborative effort. How did this come about?

Through meditations and dreams, I received these instructions: "We want you to hook up with people at junior high schools, high schools, and universities. We're going to get you back into radio airplay." I said, "okay," because a lot of young people are not happy unless they are miserable. You can tell by what's happening at the schools. The vibrations of this music and the resonance in the lyrics will present these people with new options. I don't want them to feel like me or think like me—we're all individuals, and we're all unique. But with our music, we're presenting a new octave—a new menu. This menu

Continued on page 82

DAVE MATTHEWS ON SONGWRITING WITH SANTANA



"Carlos' playing is so inspiring," says Matthews. "It's mind-boggling that with one note, you absolutely know that it's him."

"WE" saw each other when we were both playing a festival in Germany," recalls Dave Matthews. "When Carlos was playing his set, he invited us to come up and play 'Exodus' by Bob Marley, and afterwards we talked about doing something together. We didn't really have a plan for what to do, just that we'd set aside five days to do it. Carlos had some music he'd been listening to that was inspirational to him, but when we got to the studio, we were just standing there with nothing but potential. As soon as we walked into the room, however, it was just joy. He threw his ideas out, and we came up with 'Love of My Life.'"

"It's an incredibly simple song, which was an inspiration. He had the idea of reusing this Brahms melody, cutting it in half, repeating one part of it, and using the second half as a bridge. I'm always searching to make my life more complicated, but very often, lessons, inspirations, and moments of clarity come out of the simplest things. I think the most poignant moments in music are the most simple. Beauty doesn't always have to be complex.

"It's funny to think of the Brahms melody as it was originally. It's so different from what Carlos played—just changing the rhythm hid its origin. I love it because I can hear it so clearly, whereas if I were to play it for my mother and ask, 'Do you recognize the melody?' she probably wouldn't. He took that melody and turned it into a different piece of music. Just seeing how he put a song together opened my eyes to a different technique of writing. When I'm writing with the band—or by myself—I sort of wait for an idea and then put pieces together. But with Carlos, it's almost like he just sits down and builds something.

"Hanging out with Carlos was really enlightening. Even though he's such a heavyweight, he's an incredibly kind man. It was very pleasant to meet someone who spoke with so much knowledge and experience. I enjoy his analogies, his mixture of the mind and the heart, his beautiful parallels. Recording with him was like being away on a retreat as opposed to going into work."

—KYLÉ SWENSON

GUTS & GRACE

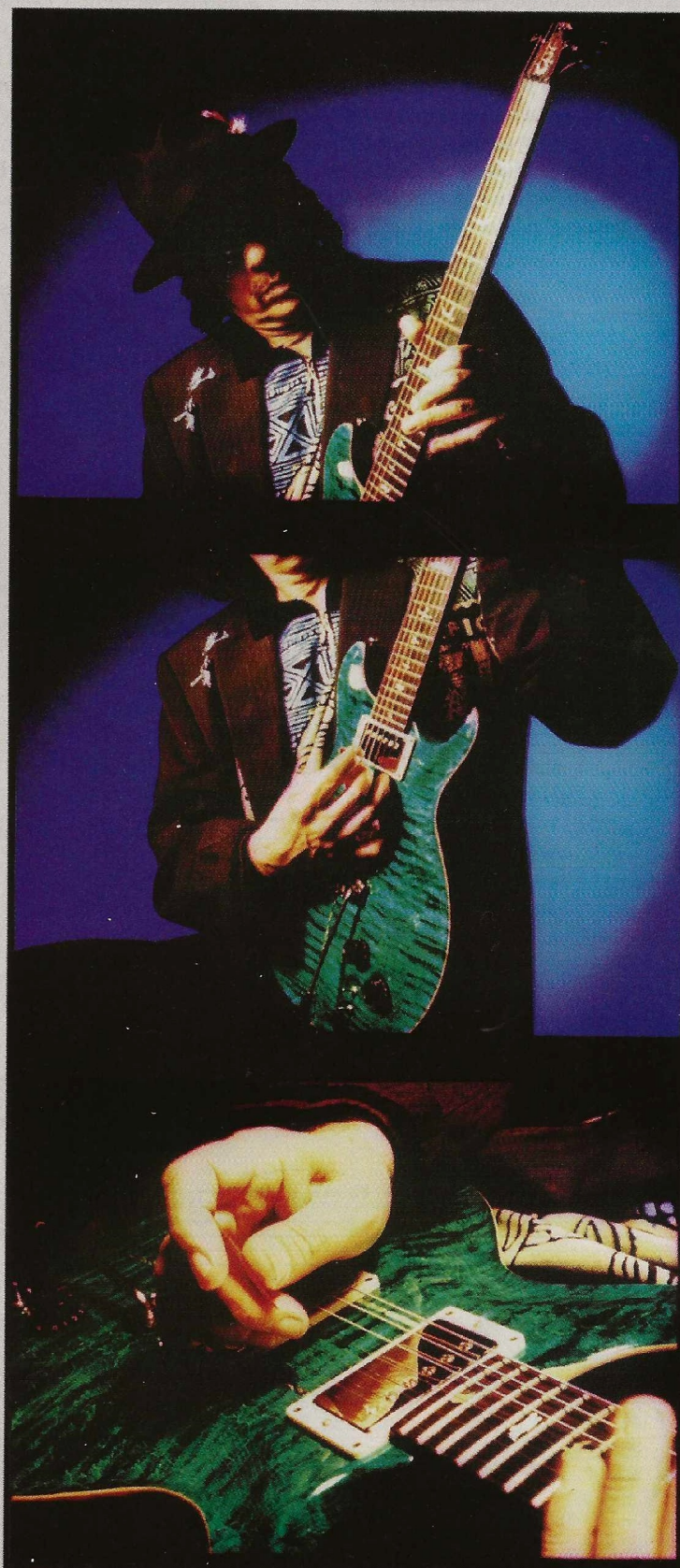
EXPLORE THE TOUGH SENSUALITY OF SANTANA'S LINES

IT'S

fun to deconstruct a great guitarist's characteristic phrases. Discovering something as simple as a new fingering or note sequence can alter your perspective of the fretboard and open the door to fresh sounds. Santana puts it best: "We all come from T-Bone Walker, Django Reinhardt, and Charlie Christian, and it shows in our music, man. It's like what [jazz composer] Gil Evans said, 'Take what you need, but *honor* it.' The kings—Otis Rush, Buddy Guy, Wes Montgomery—we honor all of them. But remember to always make it yours."

Santana's fiery fretwork on "Evil Ways," "Samba Pa Ti," "Black Magic Woman," "Oye Como Va," "Jingo," and "Everybody's Everything" (all found on *Santana—Greatest Hits*), is full of inspiring ideas. Distilled from these early classics, the lines in this lesson are ready for you to honor and make your own. ▶ ▶ ▶

BY ANDY ELLIS



GUTS & GRACE

SYNCOPIATION & SLURS

Ex. 1 is clearly inspired by Peter Green. Emphasize the syncopation (on the *and* of beat two), and accent the anticipated *E* going into bar 2. Pick close to the bridge, using a fairly clean tone and a generous dose of reverb. The bend, release, and pull-off (bar 1, beat four) add a vocal quality to the sixteenth notes and keep them from sounding choppy. Santana played this over *Em*, but the lick also works nicely

Ex. 1

♩ = 76-84 *Em*

Ex. 2

♩ = 76-84 *Em*

Ex. 4

♩ = 100-112 *Dm*

Ex. 5a

♩ = 80-108 *Gm(IVm)*

against the IV7 of an *E* blues—*A7* or *A9*.

The first two beats in Ex. 2 contain one of Santana's favorite moves: a matching pair of triplets played across the top two strings. The whole-step bend and release keeps each triplet smooth. Notice how Examples 1 and 2 end with the identical melodic figure. However, it occurs a beat earlier in Ex. 2. Such rhythmic displacement lets you get maximum mileage from any motif.

FILLING THE CRACKS

Ex. 3 borrows several ideas from the previous two examples. Like Ex. 1, this lick starts on beat

two. In a band, the bass and drums typically nail the first beat of a given measure, so to avoid competing with the low frequencies of the kick drum and bass, it makes sense to start a melodic phrase *after* this big downbeat. Santana is a master at working the rhythmic "cracks," and will often launch a lick on a weak beat or on the *and* of a strong beat.

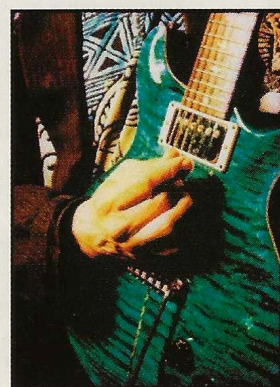
As in Ex. 2, Santana rolls triplets—each containing a bend and release—across the top strings. This time, there are three bends—two half-step stretches, followed by a whole-step squeeze. The concluding half-step slide takes us from a *Dm* chord tone (*F*) to an *Am* chord tone (*E*). Slick.

In Ex. 4, Santana uses hammers and pulls to make a busy line sing instead of chatter. That opening whole-step bend—yeah, way up there at the 18th fret—is a signature Santana exclamation. For an authentic "yow," quickly slide down the string immediately after stretching into high *C*. This sounds great with some reverb. Lean into each hammered *F*—this will help you feel the syncopation.

Ex. 5a reveals Santana's jazzy side. Played

Ex. 3

♩ = 100-112 *Dm(IIm)* *Am(Vm)*



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over *Gm*—the IVm in a *D* minor blues—it emphasizes the 9 (*A*). This lick lies nicely on the fretboard and sounds just as cool an octave lower (Ex. 5b). In either case, keep beat one crisp by accenting the first *A* and snapping the hammer and pull.

DORIAN MOVES

Next time you're playing a *G* minor blues, slip Ex. 6 into the mix. As in the previous example, accent the first note and snap the slurs. Practice the position shift (beat two) slowly until the fingering makes sense.

In his many minor vamps, Santana often so-

los using the Dorian mode—one of several minor modes. Over a minor chord, you can play a Dorian line with the same root. In this example, the harmony is *Gm*, so we're in search of *G* Dorian.

Some background: The Dorian formula is 1, 2, ♭3, 4, 5, 6, ♭7. Compared to a parallel major scale, Dorian has a lowered 3 and 7. Step by step, let's work out *G* Dorian.

- Start with a *G* major scale: *G, A, B, C, D, E, and F#* (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7).
- Lowering the 3 and 7 yields *B♭* (♭3) and *F* (♭7).
- Thus *G* Dorian contains *G, A, B♭, C, D, E,*

and *F* (1, 2, ♭3, 4, 5, 6, ♭7).

Ex. 6 emphasizes *E* and *B♭*—the 6 and ♭3. What's so special about these two notes? *All* minor modes and scales have a ♭3—it's the one note that makes them "minor." However, most minor modes and scales contain the ♭6—in this case, *E♭*—rather than the 6. By highlighting the ♭3 and 6, as in this lick, Santana accentuates the Dorian flavor.

Ex. 7, another of Santana's *G* Dorian phrases, combines the slurs from Examples 5a and 6. This two-bar figure will turn heads when you play it with conviction and a fat, squawking tone. Hit those accents in beats one, two, and three. Kenny Burrell pioneered lines like this in his blues jams with organist Jimmy Smith. Check out the soul-jazz classic *Blues Bash* (which Verve recently re-issued on CD) to hear Burrell and Smith in action.

Ex. 8 features a descending *G* Dorian line on the first string. This "play along the string" technique is key to Santana's sound. In bar one, fret all the notes using your 1st finger and accent the downbeats. To play bar 2's third and fourth beats smoothly, drop a partial barre across the second and third string, simultaneously fretting *E* and *C* with your 1st finger.

Ex. 6

Gm(Im)
♩ = 80-108



Ex. 7

Gm(Im)
♩ = 80-108

Ex. 8

♩ = 96-132

Gm(Im) *C*(IV) *Gm* *C* *Gm*

Ex. 9

Cmaj7(Imaj7) *Fmaj7*(IVmaj7)

♩ = 116-144



OFFSET MAGIC

Santana is crafty. Unlike many rockers who stumble when soloing over major-7th chords, he knows how to make blues licks fly in jazzy settings. The secret is to offset the lick in relation to the harmony. Take Ex. 9, for instance. Melodically, this is pure Cream-era Clapton—a lick right out of "Crossroads." In that context, this would be considered an *A* blues phrase. But Santana uses it to connect *Cmaj7* to *Fmaj7*, and it sounds fabulous. (Be sure to hear this line against the harmony—record the changes or have someone play them. It's worth the effort,

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♩ = 116-144



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floor in the places where my guitar sustains. When I'm onstage, there are marks for this song, marks for that song. . . .

Do you mark the studio floor, too?

Oh yes. At first I told René that I didn't want to play a Strat, because to make it sustain, I'd have to play so loud that I didn't know if I could have babies! So he goes, "You don't have to play that loud. Try this Tube Screamer." So we plug it in and—*bam*—it sustains right through a Twin or a Marshall. You can still talk, but you're sustaining furiously. I said, "Oh, I shouldn't have been so bullheaded. I'm so stubborn." And he says, "You didn't know. Stevie used pedals to sustain." I went, "No kidding? I thought he was just loud."

It has been a real education working with René. In fact, the entire process of making this album is new to me. Even though I've been recording since '67, all of a sudden I'm thrown into a whole new way of doing things. I really like it—it's fresh and very challenging.

Any advice for fellow guitarists?

GUTS & GRACE

Continued from page 80

With its speech-like phrasing, Ex. 13 is quintessential Santana. "There's cursing and praying, and all that language is part of music," he says. "A lot of my best solos remind me of when my mom used to scold me, 'Dit-doo-dup-dat-doo-doo-bah!'" Feel the rhythmic contrast between the straight eighth-notes and the following syncopations.

"Attitude is as important as notes," asserts Santana. "You learn not to be intimidated. You learn to respect and find your place—to complement. That's how I was able to survive working with John McLaughlin, because it ain't easy being with a musician like that. [Laughs.] When we were on the road, I thought, 'Man, what am I going to do? I should just shine his shoes.' Then I found that after he finished playing, people would go, 'Okay, we love what he says, but what do *you* have to say?' I may not play as many notes, or know as much as he does, but three notes—if you put them in the right place at the right time—are just as important. So when you think, 'I should hang up my guitar and be a dishwasher,' listen to your other side: 'No, you too have something they need.'" ■

The last thing I want to say is that whether you play blues, bluegrass, or jazz—whatever—realize that when you get older, you either get senile or become gracious. There's no in-between.

You become senile when you think the world short-changed you, or everybody wakes up to screw you. You become gracious when you realize that you have something the world needs, and people are happy to see you when you come into the room. Your wrinkles either show that you're nasty, cranky, and senile, or that you're always smiling.

That's why I hang around with Wayne Shorter, John Lee Hooker, Herbie Hancock—people who have passion. I've never seen them bored. I'm like a kid—I'm 51 years old, but I still

feel like 17. I got the recent *Guitar Player* at my house yesterday, and I sat down and read it. It's the only magazine I read from beginning to end, nonstop. Most magazines are very biased into one octave. Your magazine covers women and men, the gifted and the beginners, brilliant and crazy garage bands—all of it—and I relate to that. Whether you've got a green mohawk or a suit and a tie, it's still the same: Are you saying something valid? Are you contributing, bringing new flowers that we haven't seen in the garden?

I'm looking at the new guitars and new amplifiers like a painter discovering new brushes or mediums. That fascination with instruments and sound and texture hasn't gone yet. It's really *fun*. ■

DAVID WILLIAMS

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