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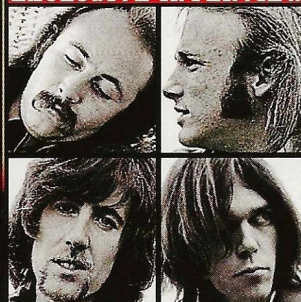
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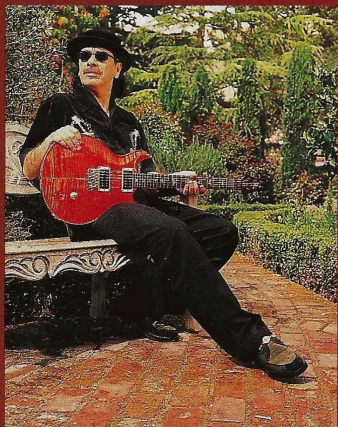
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SUPERSTAR

GUITAR WORLD CELEBRATES THE SUPERNATURAL GUITAR GENIUS OF **CARLOS SANTANA**, FROM HIS 1969 APPEARANCE AT WOODSTOCK TO HIS CURRENT RESURGENCE AS THE STRING-SHAKIN'

HALF A YEAR AGO,

in an interview for *Guitar World*, Carlos Santana told me that he had made his new album, *Supernatural*, under instructions from an angel named Metatron. Santana's mission was to counteract all the cynicism, violence and other negative crap that young people absorb from the media today. His means of accomplishing this was to create an album with a musical message of love, peace, joy and light. In return, Metatron promised to "reconnect Santana to the frequency of radio," as Carlos puts it, making sure that *Supernatural* was heard all around the globe.



GODFATHER OF LATIN ROCK. BY ALAN DI PERNA

There were more than a few raised eyebrows around the *Guitar World* office when I handed in that article. Skeptical eyebrows were raised all over the world as Santana told the same story to other music journalists. "The guy must've had one too many hits of acid back in the Sixties," was the consensus.

But, lo and behold, *Supernatural* is enjoying a long run at No. 1 on the *Billboard* Top 200 album chart at the time of this writing. And the single "Smooth"—Santana's duet with singer Rob Thomas of Matchbox 20—is currently No. 1 on *Billboard*'s Hot 100. This is the first time in Santana's 30-year career that he's had a No. 1 single. The last time he had an album at the top of the charts was way back when his classic discs *Abraças* and *Santana III* went to No. 1, in 1970 and '71, respec-

al's phenomenal success has less to do with the angel Metatron than it does with the pop hit-makers Lauryn Hill, Wyclef Jean, Eric Clapton, Everlast, Dave Matthews and others who contributed to Santana's album. But it is Carlos's coruscating guitar style and all-consuming musical passion that impart coherence and purpose to the album's disparate voices. It's a feat that might only have been attainable by Santana, one of the most eclectic musicians to emerge from rock music. A true world-beat godfather, Santana has embraced blues, rock, jazz, reggae, African and, of course, Latin music at various points in his eventful career. He has performed and recorded with (to name just a few) John McLaughlin, Aretha Franklin, Bob Dylan, Stanley Clarke, Herbie Hancock, McCoy Tyner, Jefferson Airplane, Mory

are chickens running all over the place. My mother got the hell out of there—took us to Tijuana, thinking that that was like America. Once we got to Tijuana, we lived there from '55 to '61, and that's where I got my education as far as, like, street university. People walking around down there didn't want to listen to Fabian or Elvis Presley. They listened to gut-bucket blues, and that really attracted me—like, 'God, this sound is more appealing and arousing than anything on this earth—money, women or anything.'

Santana had started out on violin at age eight, tutored by his father Jose, a professional mariachi violinist and bandleader. But Carlos soon switched to guitar, inspired by bluesmen like B.B., Freddie and Albert King and more obscure figures like Bobby Parker and local

a musician before joining his family up north. When he got to the Bay City in '61, his process of musical self discovery continued:

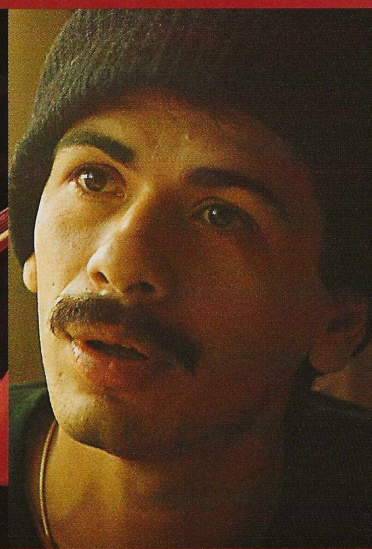
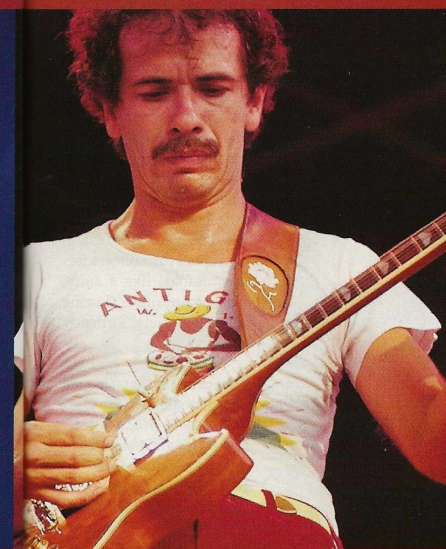
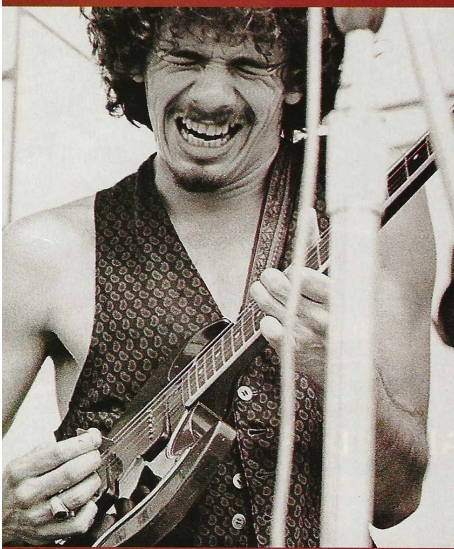
"When I came from Tijuana and moved here, they used to have a lot of battles-of-the-bands. The radio station would go to all the schools. They'd pick one school and have a battle for about three days. Bands would compete. If there was, like, a thousand bands, 500 would sound like the Rolling Stones. The judges would eliminate those bands because they wanted something that was more original. My band said, 'Hey we can get into this.' We did 'Heat Wave' and the blues song 'Steal Away.' And we got into the top three in the city, at the Cow Palace. I remember the biggest bands at that time that came through town were the Turtles and Sam the Sham & the Pharaohs.

"We started out feeling that we could play blues in a way that was like Paul Butterfield, John Mayall, Electric Flag, Jimi Hendrix and Cream," Carlos explains. "But then we started going to Aquatic Park in San Francisco—to the Hippie Hill. There was always like 15 or 20 conga players and one flute player there. They'd drink a little wine, maybe smoke a little pot, play music and watch the people go by. And I said, 'Man this is great.' We combined blues and congas in a way that now the ladies could participate. We noticed that when we played, the women would start dancing differently than they did to the Grateful Dead. They weren't catching butterflies anymore. All of a sudden, they were moving their bodies in a sensual, belly-dancing kind of way, which is very different from catching butterflies."

Santana's fluid double-picking became a hallmark of his guitar style, a fiery vehicle for bursting into a solo like Al Capone, all guns ablaze. Another key element of the classic Santana band sound fell into place in 1967 when Carlos joined forces with Gregg Rolie, who became Santana's lead vocalist, and whose swirling Hammond B-3 organ style provided a perfect foil for Carlos' guitar playing.

Nineteen sixty-seven was also the year when Carlos climbed onstage at the Fillmore West for the first time in his life, joining in a jam with members of the Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane and Butterfield Blues Band. He was spotted by Fillmore owner and rock impresario Bill Graham, who became a lifetime supporter and, eventually, Santana's manager. Graham gave Carlos his recording debut, a

"THERE HAVE BEEN A LOT OF TIMES WHEN PEOPLE HAVE TOLD ME, 'YOU'RE COMMITTING COMMERCIAL SUICIDE.'"



A LOT OF TIMES THEY WERE RIGHT. THAT'S A LOT OF SUICIDES, MAN—BUT I'M STILL HERE."

tively. *Supernatural* may well yield a few more hit singles before its flight is over.

"In my heart, it feels like it hasn't hit the ceiling yet," says Santana. "It feels like it's still going up."

Not that Carlos is smug about all this. He's as surprised as anyone else that *Supernatural* has gotten as huge as it has. "More shocked than surprised," he says, "because I had no idea that [the album's success] would take on this configuration. And I'm very grateful. Our goal was to reach out to junior high, high schools and universities and make new friends. That goal has been met."

Pragmatists might say that *Supernatural*

Kante, Selif Keita, John Lee Hooker, Junior Wells, the Fabulous Thunderbirds and Willie Nelson. Some of Santana's records have enjoyed more commercial success than others, but he's never lost faith or the respect of musicians and devotees of great guitar playing.

"To me, it's all been grace," Carlos told me in 1993. "Tonight I could be hiding in the bushes across the border in Tijuana, trying to get into America."

Carlos Santana was born in 1947 in the small Mexican village of Autlan de Navarro. "I grew up in a little town," he says, "and if I go there today, they still don't have any lights. They don't have any running water and there

hero Javier Batiz, whose band, the T.J.s, Carlos eventually joined, first on bass, then on guitar. By the time he was in his early teens, he was playing the tawdry bars and strip joints of Tijuana. In these smoke-filled dives, the elements of Santana's signature sound and style started to come together.

"I started playing with small picks and a Strat, and it felt really uncomfortable," he recalls. "But something happened to me around '59. I found it was easy for me to switch to Les Pauls and a big pick."

When his family moved up to San Francisco in 1960, Carlos stayed behind in Tijuana for an extra year, earning much-needed money as

And we were like, 'Check it out man, we're number three!' But we blew it. We got too excited and we drank too much 'cause we were too nervous, and we blew that gig. But just the fact that we could reach those heights right out of high school was really something."

Carlos formed the first incarnation of the Santana Blues Band in 1966, naming his group in homage to his heroes, the Paul Butterfield Blues band. The name would eventually be shortened to just plain Santana, and the music would move out of the 12-bar-blues format, impelled by new tribal rhythms arising from the San Francisco hippie scene, which was just getting underway in 1966.

Carlos's guitar style had begun moving out of the blues box by that point as well. "I was weaning myself out of B.B., Albert and Freddie King 'cause I wanted to find my own voice," he recalls. "Being Mexican, there's a cross-pollination of French, Spanish and German music somewhere in my background. But nothing ever hit me harder than T-Bone Walker and Charlie Christian and the few cats in the early Sixties who came out of what they were doing. For the first part of the Sixties, I only did downpicking, like B.B. But later on, when I started buying Charlie Christian records, I started noticing that you had to get up and down to get more notes into a phrase."

guest shot on *The Live Adventures of Mike Bloomfield and Al Kooper*, the concert double album recorded at the Fillmore West as a follow-up to Kooper and Bloomfield's popular *Super Session* album. Graham booked the Santana band into the Fillmore frequently. And when asked to help organize the Woodstock Festival in '69, Graham said he'd only do it if Santana got to play. Coming on the eve of their debut album's release, the Santana band's memorable Woodstock performance kick-started their career. Looking back on the event, Carlos is still somewhat amazed that the band pulled it off. Misinformed as to what time he'd be going on, the guitarist ingested some hallu-

LEFT TO RIGHT: ARCHIVE PHOTOS; PAUL FUSCO; MAGNUM PHOTOS.

cinogens not long before hitting the stage.

"The bands were all trying to make it happen, regardless of the mud and all the other circumstances there," he says of Woodstock. "You gotta understand that in three days the elements go like waves. There were the natural elements, plus all the mescaline and psychedelics people were taking. So you'd see that chemistry happening to the groups. Some of the groups fared very well, and some were wiped out. I think we were both. We fared best on 'Soul Sacrifice.' By that point in the set, I had come back from a very intense journey, you know? As for the rest of the concert, I know I was in a pretty liquid state."

In October 1969, two months after Woodstock, Santana's self-titled debut album was released. It introduced an exciting new approach to the extended rock instrumental. Tracks like "Soul Sacrifice" and "Jingo" had plenty of improvisation, but they were incredibly *tight*—something that instantly set them apart from most of the loose, shambling, free-for-all hippie jams of the day. With so many percussion instruments going at once, the rhythms couldn't afford to be nebulous. And in Santana's case, they never were.

Surprisingly enough, the cohesive band lineup heard on *Santana* was still pretty green. Not long before the recording was made, original drummer "Doc" Livingston had dropped out, to be replaced by the formidable youth Mike Shrieve, who didn't share his predecessor's proclivity for falling off the drum throne drunk. Conga player Marcus Malone, who had played a big role in formulating Santana's rhythmic approach, had also left the fold, in trouble with the law. "I think he killed someone," Carlos recalls. Taking Malone's place was the superb percussion team of Michael Carabello (congas) and Jose "Chepito" Areas (timbales and congas). These new players joined forces with Carlos, Gregg Rolie and veteran Santana band bassist Dave Brown. Many of the songs on *Santana* had been recorded once before for an album called *Freeway Jam*, cut in L.A. with producer David Robinson. That album was never released. (Carlos, who has never

had any great love for Los Angeles, felt the vibe wasn't right.) But thanks to this studio experience and tons of live shows, the band and material were well honed by the time the *Santana* album was recorded.

While it was the album's marathon instrumentals that caught the fancy of musicians and other counter-culture hipsters, the *Santana* album's commercial breakthrough was the vocal number "Evil Ways," a tune by artist

Davis were our first mentors to teach us the discipline of singles. Because we had no clue at the time what a single was. They taught us how to put our vision into the mainstream by doing singles instead of just jams."

With the success of "Evil Ways," the *Santana* album, and the prestige conferred by his band's Woodstock appearance, the kid from Autlan had become a bona fide rock star. But Carlos still had some personal issues to resolve.

"In 1969, I still couldn't really speak English," he says. "I was angry at the world because I couldn't articulate. My Spanish accent was straight from Tijuana."

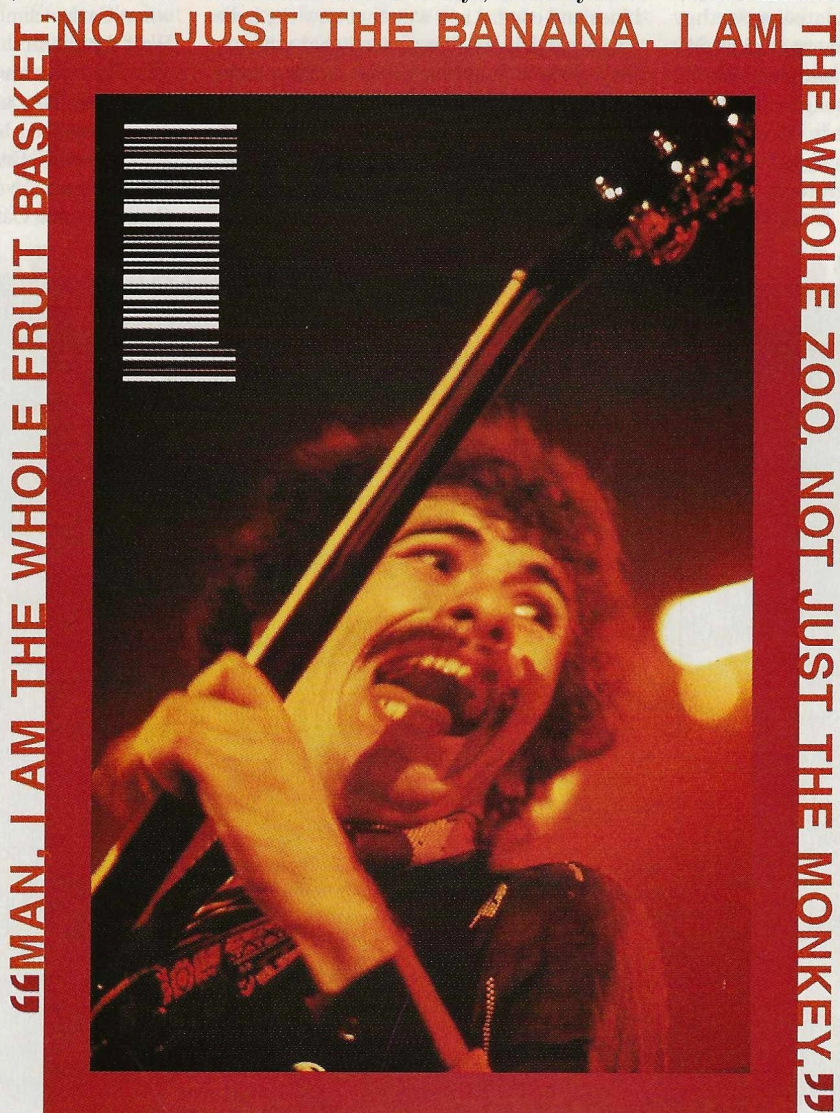
Musically, however, the guitarist was having no trouble expressing himself. The dawn of the Seventies brought the release of *Abraxas*, an album of rare and exotic beauty that many regard as Santana's best ever. Where the band's first album captured the fiery precision of their live set, this sophomore disc found them evolving as recording artists, a band that could make the most of the studio and the rock album format. The first side of *Abraxas*, in its original vinyl release format, unfolds like a suite, each composition flowing organically and effortlessly into the next.

"The thing about *Abraxas* is, at that time, we were listening to [the Beatles'] *Abbey Road* a lot," says Carlos. "*Abbey Road* was one of my favorite concept albums, along with *Sgt. Pepper's* and those Jimi Hendrix albums where every song bleeds into the next one. That's the concept we wanted to have

with *Abraxas*, something where you put the needle in the groove and it's just one breath."

The centerpiece of *Abraxas*' first side was Santana's adaptation of Peter Green's song "Black Magic Woman," which the group skillfully melded with the Gabor Szabo instrumental "Gypsy Queen," creating a substantial radio hit and one of Santana's best-loved tracks.

"Gregg Rolie brought 'Black Magic Woman' into the band," Carlos recalls. "He kept bringing it up at soundchecks. We tried it out, but it never clicked until a soundcheck in Fresno, California. It sounded fantastic, so we played it the same night. We saw the reaction of the people and said, 'Hey, sorry, Peter Green, this is our song now.' [laughs] Of



Willie Bobo that Bill Graham had brought to the group. With its i-IV Dorian vamp (i.e., Em-A, Gm-C, Dm-G; see lesson on page 62) and insistently sensuous *guajira* rhythm, Santana's recording of "Evil Ways" proved to be the blueprint for many of the group's future hit singles.

"I remember Bill Graham brought us into his office," Carlos recalls, "and he said, 'Look, your music is really great, but you need some songs. When you get signed up, that's the first thing they're going to tell you: 'You need three-and-a-half minute singles.' ' And sure enough, when we signed with Columbia, that's what Clive Davis [head of Columbia at the time] said to us. So, Bill Graham and Clive



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SANTANA

course, he gets the royalties. And then adding 'Gypsy Queen' to 'Black Magic Woman' was my idea. It just worked. By the time we went into 'Oye Como Va,' it was like a trilogy."

"Oye Como Va," originally written and performed by celebrated Cuban bandleader Tito Puente, became another signature Santana track. (Another song with the i-IV progression and Afro-Cuban *guajira*-style rhythm.) But Carlos says he had to fight to get the band to record it.

"That's kind of when we started inwardly fighting within the band," he recalls. "I remember I started to pull rank on the band. In the past, it was very democratic. But the band didn't want 'Oye Como Va' or 'Samba Pa Ti' on *Abraxas*. They said, 'It doesn't sound like Santana.' And I said, 'Well, what the hell is Santana? Santana is just a street band. Why do we have to put Santana in a bottle and say what it is or isn't? I think this song "Oye Como Va" is like "Louie Louie" or "Hang on Sloopy." It's a party song. Anytime there's a party, people are gonna play this song, man. So who cares what Santana is or isn't. Don't put a ceiling on it.' And it was the same thing with 'Samba Pa Ti.' They were saying it doesn't sound like Santana. And I said, 'Either those two songs go on the album or you go find another guitar player.' I had to dig my heels in, and it worked. Those two songs were very important to *Abraxas*. So I learned to stand up for my beliefs, and they learned to be more flexible."

But a winter of discontent had set in. David Brown and Michael Carabello left Santana in 1971. The remainder of the original Santana lineup, with the addition of Neal Schon on guitar and Coke Escovedo on percussion, lasted long enough to make *Santana III*, which yielded the Gregg Rolie-penned hit "No One to Depend On." (That magic i-IV thing again.) At the end of 1971, Santana disbanded as a live unit. Rolie and Schon went off to form AOR giants Journey, although Rolie would continue to work with Carlos in the studio.

"I think it's what happens in most bands," Carlos says of the breakup. "If you've played out everything you can play with that particular band, you need to let those people go so you can grow musically and spiritually."

Which is just what Santana did in the early Seventies, moving away from rock and closer to jazz, away from psychedelic drugs and into spirituality. In 1972 he released an album of live material with Electric Flag/Band of Gypsies veteran Buddy Miles on drums and vocals. Later that same year came *Caravanserai*, a studio album that marked a bold move into the avant-garde jazz idiom of Carlos' new musical hero, John Coltrane. From a rock perspective, it's a surprisingly understated album. On many tracks, the rhythms are implied, in the manner of jazz, rather than placed in the foreground, as they were in the Latin rock of Santana's first incarnation.

"With *Abraxas* people discover physical

love in the back seat of a car," says Carlos. "With *Caravanserai*, people discover the inner love that dwells in the center of their hearts."

The record label wasn't exactly in love with *Caravanserai*'s departure from the commercially successful sound of the first three Santana albums. Once again Carlos went to bat for the music he believed in. *Caravanserai* made it into the Top 10, but it would be the last Santana album to do so for many years to come.

"There have been a lot of times when people, from Bill Graham to Clive Davis, have told me, 'You're committing commercial suicide,'" the guitarist laughs. "A lot of times they were right. I can't say they were wrong. That's a lot of suicides, man—but I'm still here."

In 1973, Santana met two people who were to have a profound impact on his life. One was the fusion jazz guitar pioneer John McLaughlin. "I first met John at Slug's, this funky jazz club in New York City," Carlos recalls. "It was actually scary to walk in and hear John McLaughlin playing with [keyboardist] Larry Young and [drummer] Tony Williams. I have yet to see anybody create that kind of total assault on the senses—not the new heavy metal bands or anybody."

That same year Carlos met his wife, Deborah, the woman with whom he has shared his life ever since. Through his wife and John McLaughlin, he was drawn to the spiritual teachings of Indian guru Sri Chinmoy. Carlos became a devotee:

"It was all because my wife and I were disenchanted with the Catholic thing and we were looking for some Eastern spiritual values. Hindu, Muslim or Buddhist—anything that didn't deal with condemning and judging. Catholics were a lot into that. We were more into perceiving and embracing our totality as individuals, which gives you more flexibility in life. 'Cause, man, I am the whole fruit basket, not just the banana. I am the whole zoo, not just the monkey. I am the whole Safeway, not just one roll of toilet paper."

The spiritual name Devadip was conferred on Santana by Sri Chinmoy himself. "It means the eye, the lamp and the light of God," Carlos explains.

Shared spiritual commitment strengthened the already growing musical bond between Devadip Carlos Santana and Mahavishnu John McLaughlin. The two collaborated on the *Love Devotion Surrender* album, another key entry in the Santana catalog and a disc whose cover photo announced the arrival of a new Carlos Santana, his hair cut short, his expression serene, dressed in the all-white garb of a *chela*—a spiritual aspirant. McLaughlin played on Santana's *Welcome* album as well, also in 1973.

"My brother John McLaughlin was very gracious in pulling me out of the 'Louie Louie,' 'Guantanamera' kind of [three-chord] songs and into things like [John Coltrane's] 'A Love Supreme' and 'Naima,'" says Santana, who

continued on page 192

duetted with McLaughlin on a recording of 'Naima' for *Love Devotion Surrender*. "John taught me how to play it. He played the chords and I played the melody."

Through his association with McLaughlin, Santana now found himself a member of the fusion-jazz coterie that was enjoying popularity in the mid Seventies. In 1974, he recorded *Illuminations* with avant-garde harpist/organist Alice Coltrane, widow of John Coltrane and also a Sri Chinmoy devotee. That same year he worked with bass virtuoso Stanley Clarke, Brazilian percussionist Airto Moriera and singer Flora Purim on *Borboletta*, an album that brought Santana one step further along his path of world-beat univer-

salism. Collaboration with jazz musicians is a thread that has woven throughout Santana's career, from 1980's *Swing of Delight*, which featured contributions by Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter and Ron Carter, to Carlos' guest shot on Weather Report's 1986 *This Is This* to his 1988 live tour with Shorter. But for all his love of jazz, Santana has remained essentially a rock guitarist. Rather than sacrifice his identity on the altar of jazz virtuosity, he has found a way to make his own distinctive guitar vocabulary resound eloquently in a variety of jazz and other contexts.

"The most important thing for me," he says, "is to be able to relax with the other players and listen myself into a state where we

can get to a higher understanding of peace, joy and love."

Carlos' jazz explorations have always been supplemented by rigorous touring on the rock and roll circuit. Over the years, he has circumnavigated the globe many times, on his own and on package tours with artists like Bob Dylan, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Jeff Beck and the Grateful Dead. Much like the Grateful Dead, he has built up a loyal live following. Concert revenues and sales of live albums like *Lotus* and *Moonflower* have carried him through at times when sales of studio albums were slow or Santana's music was out of step with prevailing fashions. But he has always managed to score the occasional album rock radio hit, such as 1979's "All I Ever Wanted"—a product of Carlos' long-term collaboration with Scottish vocalist Alex Ligertwood.

"I met Alex through [keyboardist] David Sancious," Carlos recalls. "I was looking for a singer and David said, 'You gotta hear this Scottish guy.' Alex is like Stevie Winwood in a way. He has that kind of angel/male/female voice. It has all those qualities."

The dawn of the Eighties brought another period of renewal for Carlos. This time, ironically enough, it was leaving the Sri Chinmoy circle that brought him to a new plateau of musical and personal elation. "Whenever honey becomes like vinegar, it's time to leave," he says of his break with the guru. "I don't like people trying to control me, as far as telling me that if I don't do things they say I will drown in a sea of darkness. So out of respect for the other disciples and other people who maybe need that kind of thing, I just left. 'Cause I sure don't need anyone trying to control me with fear, with the Bogeyman, telling me I'm gonna go to hell. After a while, a lot of gurus do that. A lot of swamis, gurus, yogis, so-called spiritual masters—they have their own human agenda. And I don't like their dogma biting me."

Sri Chinmoy took back the name Devadip when Carlos left the fold. "But that's okay," the guitarist laughs. "I'm still who I am. I was born with certain qualities that no man can take away, only God." Carlos moved into the more personal kind of spirituality that sustains him to this day, drawing from numerous world religious traditions. "Nowadays, my only guru would be the center of my heart, which is where all divinity dwells," he says. "Now my philosophy is that I don't subscribe to pimps, politicians or the pope."

Released in 1980, Santana's exuberant *Zebop!* album reflects the sense of personal liberation the guitarist was experiencing at that time. Regarded as something of a comeback album for Santana, it was his first studio album to enter the Top 10 since *Caravanserai*. Of recording *Zebop!*, Carlos says, "I had just gotten out of the Sri Chinmoy thing. So it was like, 'School is out, let's play! Let's experiment.' I was just learning how to have fun around *Zebop!*"

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"I Love You Much Too Much," one of *Zebop!*'s best-known tracks was brought to Carlos by Bill Graham. It's a slow instrumental ballad, an idiom that has become another Santana signature, tracing back to *Abraças*' "Samba Pa Ti." By the time "I Love You Much Too Much" was recorded, Carlos' mature guitar tone had come together, based around the Paul Reed Smith guitars he'd been playing since 1979 and the Mesa/Boogie amps he'd been instrumental in developing way back in the dawn of the Seventies. Legend has it that the first time Carlos tried out one of these amps he exclaimed, "Man, this thing boogies!" thus giving the amp its name.

"To be honest, I don't remember that," he says. "I used to take a lot of drugs back then. But I know I did suggest that they put an extra volume control [*i.e.*, *master volume*] on the amp. So I could play in a hotel room at a low volume and not disturb the guy next door but still be able to sustain notes. Next thing you knew, all amplifiers were built like that."

By the second half of the Eighties, Santana was well on his way toward being recognized and respected as a cultural ambassador who could unite the musical styles of many different cultures. In 1986 he was asked to be the musical director for *La Bamba*, the film biography of Fifties rock singer Ritchie Valens. It was a "hip Hispanic" appointment on the part of Hollywood's movie execs, and a project

toward which Carlos still has mixed feelings:

"It was my first and only encounter with Hollywood's moviemaking machine. And it was really frustrating, because of the egos that are involved in making movies like that. It just confirmed why I don't live in Los Angeles and I don't gravitate toward making movies. The Hollywood machine is very insensitive to people's souls. The best part, the redeeming part, of the whole thing was getting to work with Mr. Willie Dixon and Los Lobos. But as for the other part, I just felt like saying, 'Look, just take back this money you're giving me. I'll pay you just to get out of my face.'"

Santana's next brush with the entertainment establishment was somewhat more positive. He was awarded a Grammy for his instrumental "Blues for Salvador." This classic Santana instrumental ballad, the title track for his 1987 studio album, came about by accident, Carlos says:

"We were in the studio. I was just getting some tones together with [keyboard player] Chester Thompson, and we came up with that. [Producer] Jim Gaines was changing tape machines. So all he had available to record on was a two-track—one track for C.T. and one for me. So we captured it on a two-track and I didn't think anything of it. I gave a cassette of it to my wife. She came home from shopping one day and said, 'Man, I had to pull the car over when this came on. You gotta put it out.'"

Nineteen-eighty-nine was a busy year for Carlos. He launched his own record label, Guts and Grace, releasing rare recordings by musical heroes like Jimi Hendrix and Bobby Parker. And he collaborated with blues great John Lee Hooker on the title track for Hooker's album, *The Healer*. For both artists, it proved to be a cross-cultural musical adventure. "I loved putting John Lee in the same setting with a *guijida*," says Santana, who also worked with Hooker on the latter's 1995 *Chill Out* album. "Ultimately, all songs come from Africa. 'Guantanamera,' 'Twist and Shout,' 'Louie Louie,' 'La Bamba'...C, F and G. There'd be none of that without Africa."

Santana went to bat for musical multiculturalism when he was asked to play the second Woodstock festival in 1994. "My first question was, 'Who's playing?'" he recalls. "First they said, 'Well it's Aerosmith, Metallica, Guns N' Roses and Pearl Jam.' And I said, 'Well I'm not going to be there.' 'Cause it sounded like they just wanted a bunch of white people from Seattle. I was expecting something closer to what it was the first time at Woodstock: harmonic convergence—people of all colors coming together in a hopeful spirit. [The Woodstock '94 organizers] called me twice and I declined. The third time they said, 'Okay, we got Rita Marley, Jimmy Cliff, the Neville Brothers and Arrested Development.' I said, 'Okay, cool. It's getting better, you know.'"



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SANTANA

The seeds for Santana's recent commercial ascendancy were sown when he signed with Arista Records. The pact reunited him with Clive Davis, who'd been an important mentor during his early recording career at Columbia. Determined to put Santana on top of the charts once again, Davis devised the idea of teaming Carlos with some of today's top hitmakers.

"Once we'd signed the contract," Carlos recalls, "[Davis] said, 'You know, I was talking to Lauryn Hill on the phone and I found out she really likes your music. I gave her your phone number. I hope you don't mind.' So we talked, and Lauryn invited me to play on her CD."

Carlos played guitar on "To Zion," a song from Hill's highly influential, multi-Platinum album *The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill*. The singer then invited Carlos to perform the song live with her at the 1999 Grammy Awards ceremony. "It was my first time ever at the Grammys," says Carlos. "And because of that, I connected with Eric Clapton, who was in the front row when we played. So the whole thing was like a chain reaction."


Clapton and Hill both joined Santana in the studio for the making of *Supernatural*. Hill also hooked Carlos up with her former partner in the Fugees, Wyclef Jean, who collaborated on another *Supernatural* track, "Maria Maria." Through Davis' efforts, other guest artists fell into place including Everlast, Dave Matthews, Eagle Eye Cherry and Mexican rock sensations Mana. The song "Smooth," Santana's hit duet with Rob Thomas of Matchbook 20, came through Arista's A&R department, who'd received a tape of it from songwriter Itaal Shur.

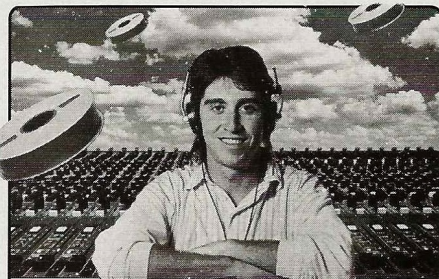
"[Arista] sent it to Rob Thomas and [producer] Matt Serletic. They changed the lyrics and worked on some arrangement ideas. By the time they gave it to me it was pretty much in the form you hear on the record. They sent a rough demo and I put my spirit and presence on it, with my band."

And Carlos says he had a blast making the sultry video for "Smooth":

"We spent two days in Spanish Harlem. It was really beautiful hanging around there and seeing the grandparents, parents and kids—how they all gravitate to Santana like it's something that hasn't gone away."

Life at age 51 is looking good for Carlos Santana. He has the respect of the world music community, a wife and three kids he's crazy about and an album on top of the charts.

"This is what you call having your cake and eating it too," he says. "We're No. 1, but we're invisible. I don't have the tabloids and people like that in my face. There's no, 'We found Carlos with a goat' kind of thing. The tabloids stay away from me. My life is very boring for them. My parents were married 66 years, until my father passed away, just two years ago. And my wife and I have been together for 26 years. So there's nothing for people like VH1's *Behind the Music* to present about my life. And I love it this way." 



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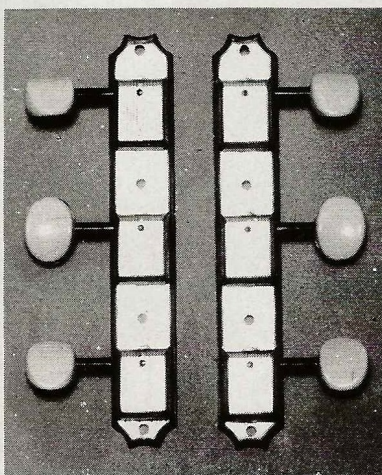


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