



# Rolling Stone

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NEW SMASHING PUMPKINS

ANGIE  
STONE

MANDY  
MOORE

STEELY  
DAN

## The Epic Life of Carlos Santana

# Al Gore

THE  
ROLLING  
STONE  
INTERVIEW





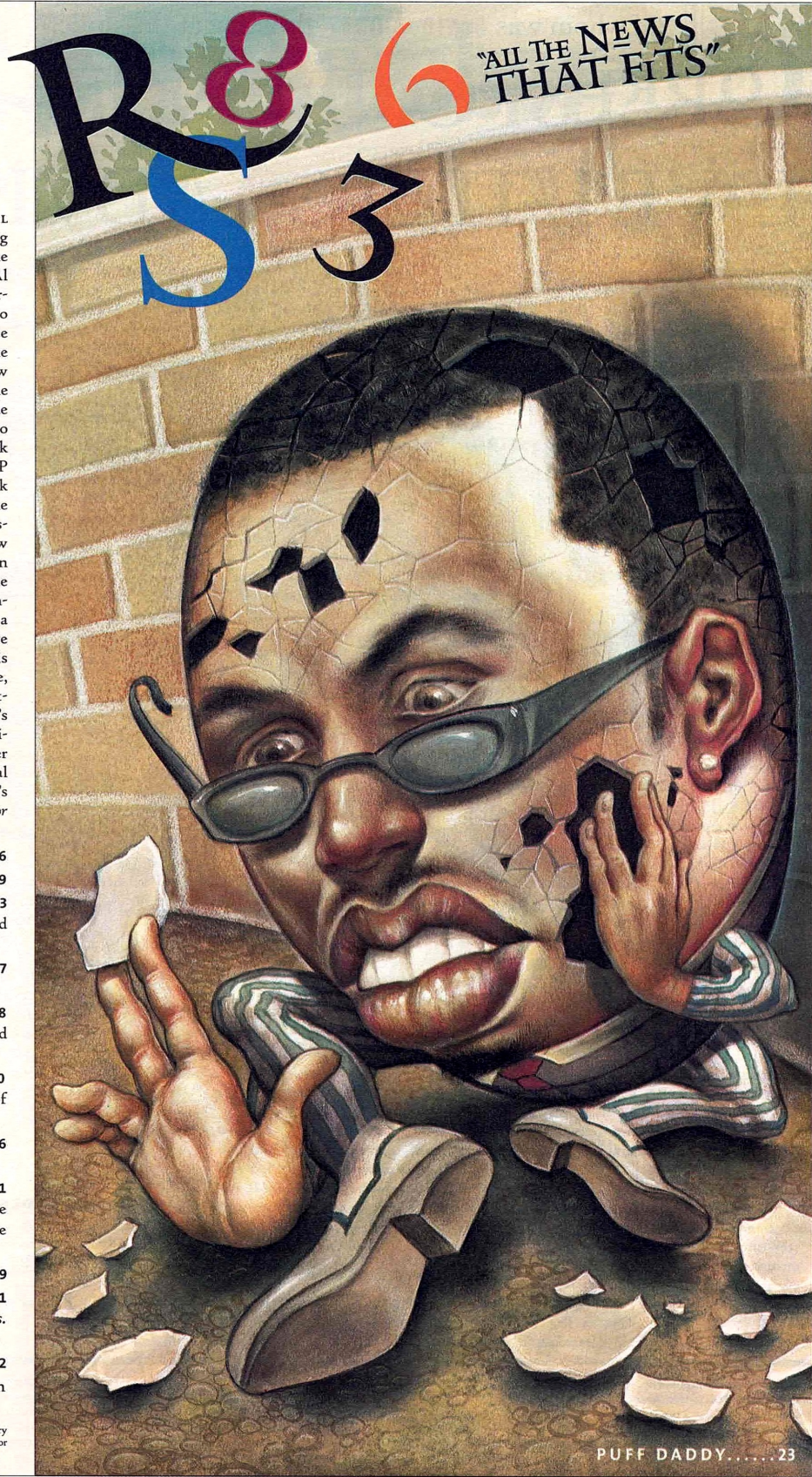
## POSTCARD FROM THE BUBBLE

YOU NEVER QUITE UNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF REAL power until you get right up close to it. And it's got nothing to do with the Constitution or anything like that. It's the motorcade. ¶ We had one short trip with Vice President Al Gore, from the Detroit elementary school where our interview took place to an airport nearby, where Air Force Two waited to whisk the vice president off to the next place where he'd have to shake a lot of hands. Getting into the limousine was a production in itself. There were only a few feet between the school building and the open door of the car, but there was a gentle swarm of official courtesy to guide the way: Secret Service agents intoning code words into walkie-talkies and aides making sure the few steps we took would be as pleasant and efficient as possible. ¶ Being VP means never knowing what it's like to get cut off by that jerk in the beat-up Chevette. The moment we pulled out of the parking lot, we were in some parallel universe of daring logistics, effortlessly locked into a speedy column of tinted-window rolling steel: limos, vans and SUVs in a perfect formation that suggested brute force and concealed weaponry. The route to the airport – a county-road procession of McDonald's, corporate parks and strip-mall karate dojos – flew by, a vague reminder of the everydayness left behind. ¶ Before we said goodbye to the vice president, he let us check out his plane, the Boeing 757 known as Air Force Two. It was nice, luxurious in a utilitarian kind of way, but a hell of a lot better than a pitcher of warm spit, as Franklin D. Roosevelt's Number Two once characterized the office of the vice presidency. If this is second best, imagine the top job. No wonder people put themselves through the ordeal of a presidential campaign: It's not simply the chance to change the world. It's the service.

—WILL DANA, Assistant Managing Editor

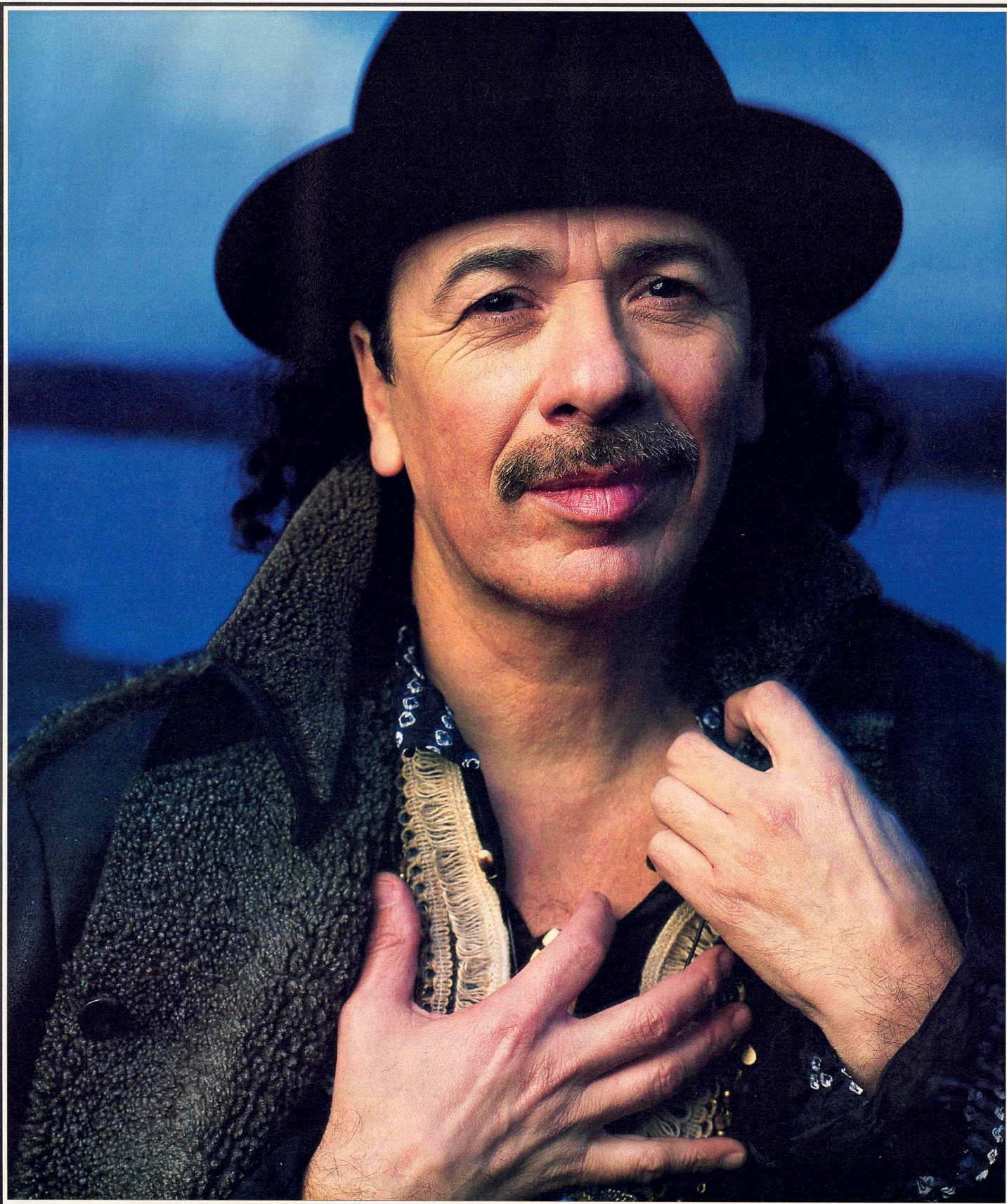
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COVER: Photograph of Carlos Santana by Mark Seliger, Marin County, California, January 15th, 2000. Styling by Maryam Malakpour for Bou Bou Limited. Grooming by Maital Sabban for Artists and Kiehl's. Shirt by Henry Duarte. Trousers by Jean Paul Gaultier.



PUFF DADDY.....23



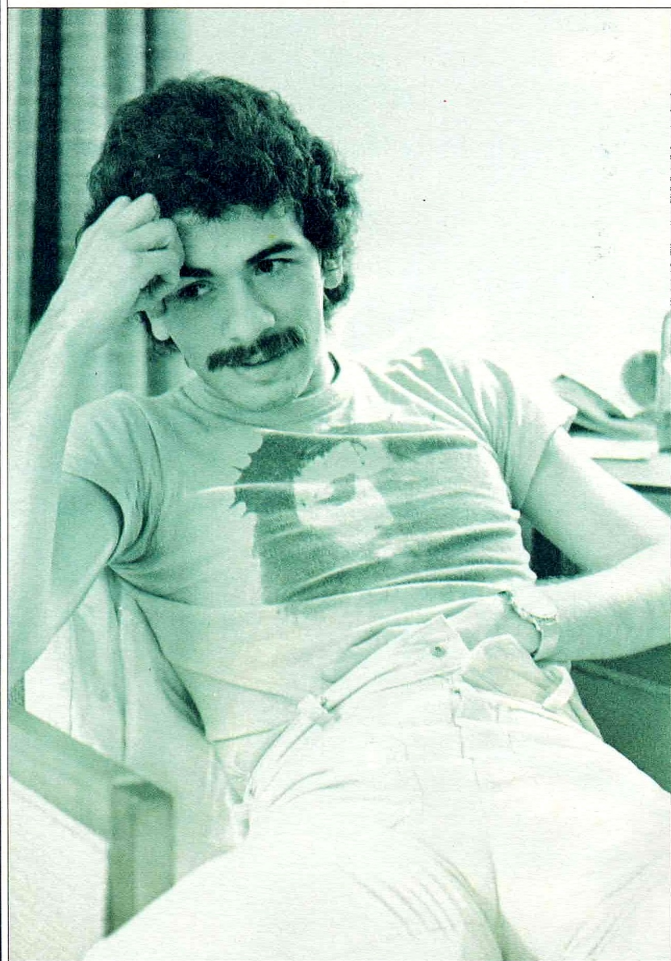
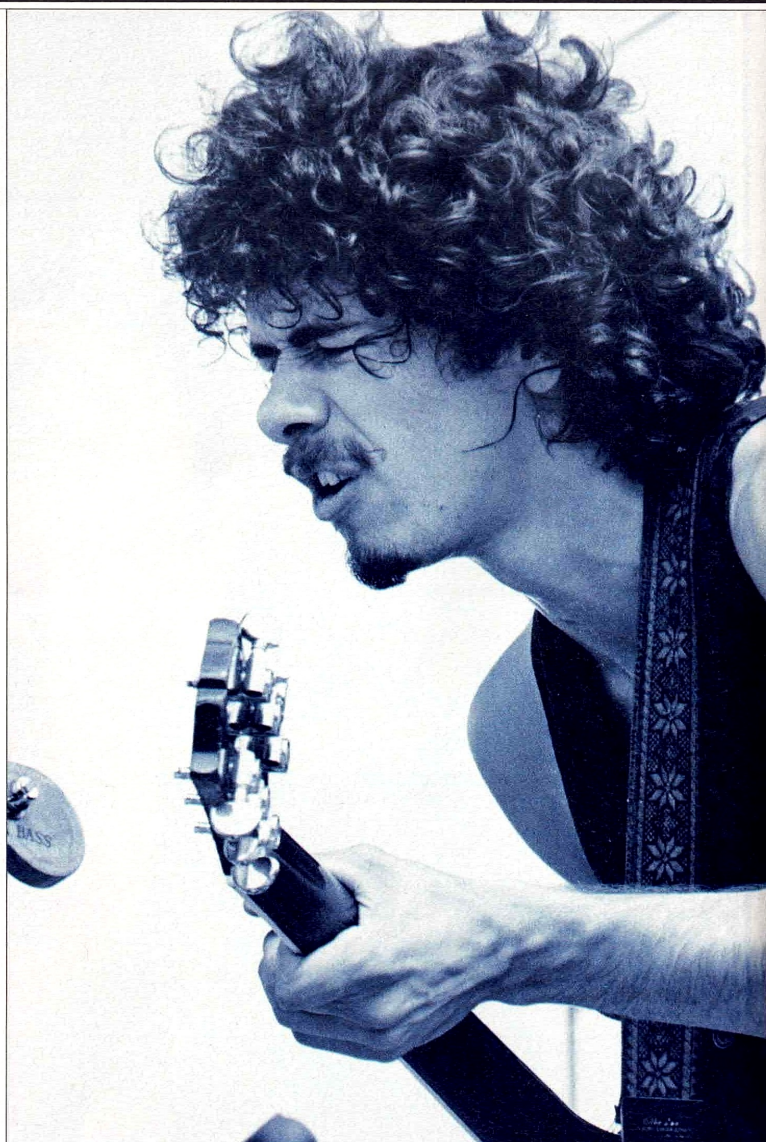


PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK SELIGER

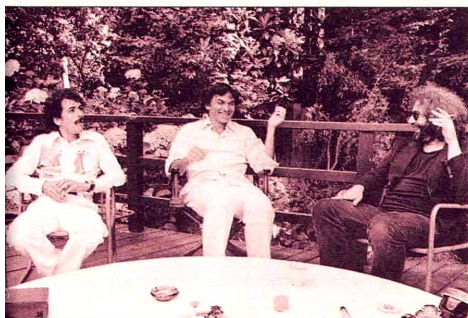




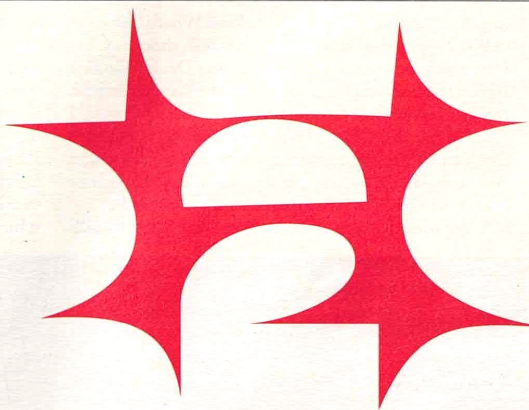
ABOVE: IN 1981 WITH GURU SRI CHINMOY, WHOSE REGIMEN "WAS LIKE A WEST POINT APPROACH TO SPIRITUALITY." RIGHT: "YOU CAN CUSS OR YOU CAN PRAY WITH THE GUITAR," SAYS SANTANA, PERFORMING HERE AT WOODSTOCK IN 1969. BELOW RIGHT: SANTANA (THIRD FROM RIGHT) WITH HIS FATHER'S BAND, 1959. BELOW: SANTANA RELAXING IN 1972.







**AFTER WOODSTOCK IT ALL EXPLODED. TOP: THE SANTANA BLUES BAND, 1968: BOB "DOC" LIVINGSTON, GREGG ROLIE, MARCUS MALONE, SANTANA AND DAVID BROWN (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT). CENTER: ONSTAGE WITH MICK JAGGER AND RON WOOD AT MADISON SQUARE GARDEN, JUNE 1975. BOTTOM: WITH PROMOTER BILL GRAHAM AND JERRY GARCIA IN SAN FRANCISCO IN THE LATE SEVENTIES.**



IS MEDITATION SPOT IS IN FRONT OF the fireplace. On Carlos Santana's property in San Rafael, California, about twenty minutes north of San Francisco, there are two buildings. The house closer to the water is where the family lives: Santana, his wife, Deborah, and their three children. The other house, a little higher up the hill, he calls the church. "Here's where I hang out with Jimi and Miles and whoever, and play and meditate," he explains. The rest of the family likes to be in bed by ten, but

Santana is a night person, so he'll come up here until two or three in the morning. A card with the word *Metatron* spelled out in intricately painted picture letters lies on the floor next to the fireplace. Metatron is an angel. Santana has been in regular contact with him since 1994. Carlos will sit here facing the wall, the candles lit. He has a yellow legal pad at one side, ready for the communications that will come. "It's kind of like a fax machine," he says. The largest candle, whose half-molten remnants are placed centrally, is in a charred tin that bears the logo of its previous, less spiritual use: Mermaid Butter Cookies.

We take the armchairs in the middle of the room. On the table between us sit an empty Seven-Up can, a cigar and some peanuts. He pulls from his pocket a sheet of yellow paper on which he made notes last night, in preparation for this interview. "If you carry joy in your heart, you can heal any moment," he reads. "There is no person that love cannot heal; there is no soul that love cannot save." I can see that there are other things written on the paper, but he chooses not to say them aloud.

We talk of angels and the suchlike. There are few conversations with him that don't lead to a discussion of angels, or of the spiritual radio through which music comes. Santana has been increasingly engaged by angels since the day in 1988 when he picked up a book on the subject at the Milwaukee airport. "It's an enormous peace, the few times I have felt the presence in the room," he says. "I feel lit up. I'm not Carlos anymore, I'm not bound to DNA anymore. It's beyond sex, it's beyond anything that this world could give you a buzz. It makes me feel like Jesus embraced me and I'm bathed in light."

I am, by nature, probably more cynical than most, but all I can tell you is that when he talks about this stuff, it doesn't seem kooky or unhinged or even that spacey. Likewise, in all the time I spend with Carlos Santana, I see no signs that he is unaware of life's mundane realities. Rob Thomas - who sings "Smooth," the Number One hit that has propelled Santana's commercial rebirth - describes the experience of spending time with Santana accurately: "I don't know any other way of saying it, but I always just felt a little bit better after being with Carlos."

Nor does he proselytize. His attitude is: Now, in the wake of the success of his latest album, the 7 million-selling *Supernatural*, the world is interested in hearing him talk, and he is going to talk about the things he finds important. "What are you going to say?" he scoffs. "There's no business like show business?" Not in his case. "I don't care, man, about what anybody thinks about my reality," he says. "My reality is that God speaks to you every day. There's an inner voice, and when you hear it, you get a little tingle in your medulla oblongata at the back of your neck, a little shiver, and at two o'clock in the morning, everything's really quiet and you meditate and you got the candles, you got the incense and you've been chanting, and all of a sudden you hear this voice:

*Write this down. It is just an inner voice, and you trust it. That voice will never take you to the desert.*"

He tells me more about Metatron. "Metatron is the architect of physical life. Because of him, we can French-kiss, we can hug, we can get a hot dog, wiggle our toe." He sees Metatron in his dreams and meditations. He looks a bit like Santa Claus - "white beard, and kind of this jolly fellow." Metatron, who has been mentioned in mystical disciplines through the ages, also appears as the eye inside the triangle.

Santana credits Metatron with alerting him to the recent changes in his life. In the mid-Nineties, he met some people in a spiritual bookstore near his home, and they invited him to their afternoon meditations in Santa Cruz. The last time he was there, Metatron delivered some important messages. "You will be inside the radio frequency," Metatron told him, "for the purpose of connecting the molecules with the light." Carlos Santana understood. He would make a new album and be on the radio again. And he would connect the molecules with the light: He would connect an audience with some of the spiritual information he now had. Metatron offered a further instruction: "Be patient, gracious and grateful," Santana was told, and he resolved to do just that.

When he is here in his church and he is not meditating, often he is playing the guitar. Sometimes he'll scrutinize records by his heroes - people such as John Coltrane, Miles Davis, Bob Marley, Marvin Gaye, Stevie Ray Vaughan. (Today, Miles Davis bootlegs are scattered over the floor.) "There's so much to learn on each person alone," he says. "You really study. How do you get this note to sound like a baby crying in the middle of a nuclear bomb? First you imitate, like a parakeet, then you enter in." Whenever he finds something special onstage, it is not just a happy accident. "The fingers remember," he says. "People say, 'You hit a note last night'..." - and he throws a hand around the room - "It started here."

And now, casually, he picks up a guitar, flicks on the amplifier. "Sometimes words get in the way," he says. "But when you go..." - he plays some beautiful high, fluid notes - "Palestinian, Hebrew or Aborigine or Mexican or Chinese, this speaks really clearly."

He puts down the guitar and shows me round. There is a photo of his wife taken in the Seventies in Philadelphia, holding a guitar the wrong way. (Her father, Saun-



ders King, he notes, was one of the blues-guitar pioneers, played with Billie Holiday and, he says, "was B.B. King's inspiration.") There is a prized picture of John Coltrane looking stern, thoughtful and dignified. Davis and Coltrane bootlegs burned onto CDs. A shelf of books about jazz. Photographs of his parents from around the time Carlos was born. On the second floor, I point, impressed, to the Spider-Man pinball machine. "Yeah, that's from the early Eighties," he says, dismissively. "I didn't have any kids, so I am like a kid myself."

Spider-Man was always his favorite comic as a teenager. He could relate to Peter Parker: "He had teenage problems, teenage doubts and insecurities."

It is at that moment he rushes downstairs, without explanation, leaving me there. He has seen one of his daughters coming up the path with the cable guy.

**S**ANTANA'S BUSINESS AFFAIRS are run from offices in an industrial park a few minutes' drive from his house. Today, as he walks into the reception area (where his last *ROLLING STONE* cover story is framed - from 1976, nearly half his life ago), six or seven staff are waiting for him.

"We're Number One!" they chant. "We're Number One! We're Num-"

He accepts their congratulations, though he also looks a little embarrassed by the attention. Their jubilation marks the return of Santana's *Supernatural* album to Number One on the charts in the wake of the announcement of his eleven Grammy nominations - just one more triumph in a career renaissance that is becoming bigger than the original career.

In the rehearsal room out back, he puts down his SANTANA fanny pack and lights up some incense, an Indian brand he was introduced to in 1972 by Alice Coltrane, John Coltrane's widow. He wears sneakers with no socks and a shirt printed with golden angels of various sizes playing guitars. The brim of his brown hat is folded up at the front. As we settle in, he mentions that he recently started working out twice a week with his wife. It makes him less cranky. "As soon as I saw the CD enter the chart," he explains, "I knew the old energy I had wasn't going to make it."

On this earth, Carlos Santana principally credits two people for what has happened. First, his wife, Deborah. "Spiritually, emotionally, financially, she's a guiding light," he says. In 1994 she restructured his business life: "I'd probably be a hobo if it wasn't for her." Second is Arista Records president Clive Davis, who signed him when other record companies were letting it be known they felt he was simply too old: "I'm not into kissing anybody's behind, it's just, I need to honor these people who stuck their neck out over and over for me."

He had not made a new studio album since *Milagro* in 1992. He had been holding back on recording, trying to get out of his contract. And it was hard. "I felt I had a masterpiece of joy in my belly," he says, explaining that he felt pregnant with a new record, just as he imag-

CHRIS HEATH spent time with Brad Pitt in Barcelona and Los Angeles for the cover story in RS 824.

ines Marvin Gaye felt before making *What's Going On* or Bob Marley did before *Exodus*. His wife thought Clive Davis was the man to help him. It was Davis who first signed the Santana band to Columbia Records in 1968. In his meditations, Santana would think of Davis: "I chanted for Mr. Clive Davis twenty-seven times each day. I'd picture him coming out of a car or a limousine, and a cab passing by, playing my music. So wherever he goes, I want him to be connected with my music."

They met in a Los Angeles hotel. As Santana tells

them to record their first hit, a Willie Bobo salsa song called "Evil Ways." "This will get you airplay," he informed them, and he was right.)

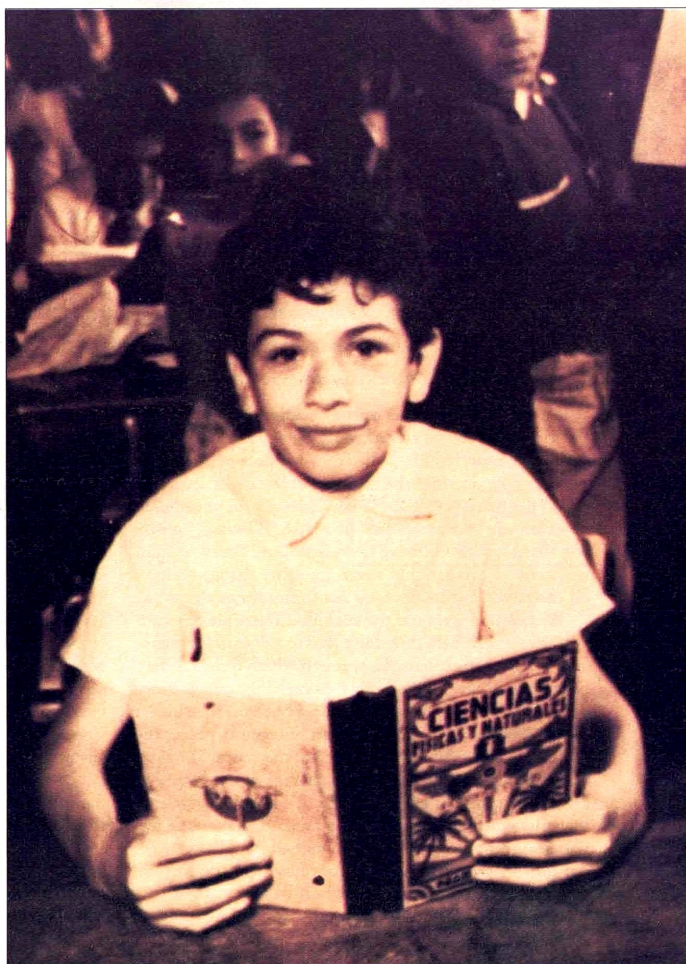
Santana wanted to reclaim a younger audience. "I'm not at all into becoming a twilight-zone jukebox prisoner of the Sixties," he says. Davis got working. "I blueprinted the architectural plan for the album," Davis says. "And that was having half the album be vintage Santana, in the spirit of 'Oye Como Va,' which he wanted for himself, and the other half I proposed was those organic collaborations that would not be a compromise of his integrity but also be calculated to serve him at radio, in the spirit of what he had said. I would look for what turned out to be the list of Lauryn Hill and Wyclef Jean and Everlast and Dave Matthews, etc."

Most of the guest stars came with their own compositions - the one true songwriting collaboration was with Dave Matthews. He and Santana went into the studio together to write and record; "Love of My Life" was one of the results (another song may turn up on the next Dave Matthews album). The song had a peculiar genesis. When his father died, two years ago, Carlos found he couldn't listen to music. "I was numb," he says. And though he hadn't played the radio in years, one day, while picking his son up from school, he turned on the car stereo. The first sound he heard was the melody from Brahms' Piano Concerto No. 3. That was the music, somewhat disguised, he began playing to Matthews. "He gave me some lyrics, a couple of lines," Matthews says, "and I didn't know what to do. I think he wrote it about his father; I wrote it about my lover."

Eric Clapton, a friend from the Seventies, actually sidestepped Santana's invitation - "I was so wrapped up in my own world, trying to put together the treatment center in Antigua" - until he saw Santana performing with Lauryn Hill at last year's Grammys. "I was, 'What am I thinking?' I quickly sent him a message, 'I'm sorry I've been such a dick - is there still room for me?'" Clapton didn't have a song, so they just jammed. "And he put together a song out of it," Clapton says. "We started playing," Santana remembers, "and it was literally two Apaches with some sage at the Grand Canyon calling out the spirits." ("Ah, that's hilarious," says Clapton. "That's Carlos.")

One of the last songs to appear was one of the most crucial: "Smooth." Santana's A&R man at Arista, Pete Ganbarg, sent the backing track to Rob Thomas from Matchbox 20, looking for different lyrics and a different melody. "I had no intention of singing it at all," Thomas says. He thought Santana could use a vocalist like George Michael, but Santana heard Thomas' vocal on the demo and insisted he do it himself.

"When people hear 'Smooth,' it's boogie," Santana says. "It's an invitation to have a good time. Like Little Richard used to say: It's Friday night, I got a little bit of money, I did my homework, and it's OK to rub closely with Sally or Sue; she gave me that look like it's OK. I brushed my teeth, and I got deodorant. I got her going.



**SANTANA, 10, AT SCHOOL IN MEXICO. "THERAPY ALLOWED ME TO MAKE PEACE WITH MY PAST," HE SAYS TODAY. "I DON'T BLAME ANYONE OR ANYTHING ANYMORE."**

it, Davis got really close to his face and said, "What does Carlos Santana want to do?"

"I'd like to reconnect the molecules with the light," Carlos told him. ("And he wasn't fazed," Santana recalls. "He could have said, 'Uh-oh, here's a far-out hippie. . . Whatever.'")

"How do you propose to do that?" Davis asked, and Carlos talked about how Miles Davis played pop tunes in his later years. About how two things about Santana never go out of style - the spiritual and the sensual. About how Clive Davis was the man who could find him songs. (There was nothing new about Santana thriving on this kind of input. Their early manager, the late promoter Bill Graham, persuaded



It's cool. Certain songs – 'Smooth,' 'Oye Como Va,' 'Guantanamera,' 'La Bamba,' the 'Macarena,' 'Louie Louie' – that's what these songs are for."

In his mind, *Supernatural's* guest stars were not random pairings. Rob Thomas remembers what Carlos told him: "That the record was put together just so – through sound, it could change people's molecular structure. And he sat me down and explained to me that that, as a musician, is what we do. You can play one note and change the way people feel. You don't want to try to ever quote Carlos, because it never comes out as eloquent as it does when he said it, and it sounds hokey coming from me, of all people, I guess, but it gave me my new purpose on why I do what I do. It just put perspective on everything."

**W**E GO OUT FOR LUNCH TO A NICE ITALIAN restaurant in a local mall. Santana drives, playing a CD that fuses Miles Davis' music with Gregorian chants and opera. Davis, whom Santana knew fairly well before his death and once, in 1986, played with (the musical highlight of his life, he says), sometimes visits him at night. On Santana's fifty-second birthday, last July, Miles Davis visited for two hours. He was poking fun at a friend, cracking jokes. When Davis appears like this, he doesn't acknowledge that he's dead. "He just seems as cool as ever," Santana says. He never doubts that it's really Miles Davis. "I can smell him," he explains. "Even on the other side there is smell. Like, when babies are born, there's two smells – one is chicken soup, which is the flesh, and the other is lilacs, which is coming from the spiritual garden. The spirit has a lilac smell."

A rationalist would say, I interject, that that's your unconscious communing with your memory of a man you used to know. How do you know it's not?

"Well, I know when I'm hungry," he says. "I know when I'm cold. I know when I'm horny." An answer that, like many of his answers on such topics, is smarter and more subtle than it might at first appear.

At lunch he talks about being invited to play for the pope two years ago. "When I read the letter," he recalls, "the main thing that happened to me was..." He shakes his head. "I'm a visionary guy, so I see visions, and I started seeing Zapata and Geronimo and Che Guevara and Pancho Villa and Miles Davis and all these revolutionary guys saying, 'You're not going to do this, are you?' And I was like, 'Hey, hey, back off, man. I just got this letter – let me finish reading it.'" But he knew they were right. He has also turned down President Clinton. "I've got nothing against Christianity per se," he says. "I just have a problem playing for politicians and the pope."

After lunch, driving to his house, Santana waits and waits at an intersection for a dawdling car to pass.

"This century, thank you," he mutters. He is only human.

**J**OSÉ SANTANA, FATHER OF SEVEN, WAS A mariachi violinist. "My father was a musician," his middle child, Carlos, says. "And my first memory of him was watching him playing music and watching what it did to people – he was the darling of our town. I wanted that – that charisma that he had." They lived in a small, remote Mexican town called Autlán de Navarro. There, the young Carlos liked to make paper boats and watch them sail down the street when it rained.

He remembers riding on the back of his father's bicycle to church and to his father's performances. "All of my sisters and brothers were special," he says. "But for some reason, I know in my heart – I hope I don't come out like I'm slighting my sisters and brothers for it – it's just, I felt I was the apple of his eye. I felt like I could get away with more. I don't know if it's because I was lighter in skin, like my mom, or he knew I was going to be a musician. He was less tolerant with everyone else, but he would give me just a little bit more clutch not to grind the gears, you know. And I needed it." His father was away a lot, playing music, and Carlos would miss him. He would imagine hugging him and remember the way he smelled: a combination of flesh and cologne, and a little bit of sweat. Sometimes he'd pick up his father's belt and smell his distant father on that. ("It is true," he now reflects. "Your dad becomes your first God.") He loved his father's stories. The best ones were about tigers, and when he told those his eyes would bulge and you could feel the tiger's breath, and the suspense would build and build. "He knew how to create tension," Carlos says. "It just reminds me of where I learned to build a guitar solo. Got to tell a story, man."

There are other lessons, too, from the rhythms and tempos of childhood. He realized in the early Seventies that a certain kind of

For a time he played music with his father. They always seemed to end up in the sleaziest parts of town. "No floor, just dirt," he describes. "Tables black from cigarettes because they didn't have no ashtrays. And a cop with his hat backward like rappers do, putting his hand on the prostitutes' privates in front of me, sticking his hand right in her, and she can't do anything because otherwise he'll arrest her. My stomach just got really, really sick, man, at the smell, the whole thing." One night, Carlos said he didn't want to be there and he didn't want to play that music. It was the first time he had talked back to his father. His father told him he was just like his mother and that he should go. He was fourteen.

He heard about a gig on Revolution Street, playing from four in the afternoon until six in the morning, one hour on, then one hour off, while the strippers stripped. Nine dollars a week, which seemed like a lot. "The first week," he recalls, "you walk around with a hard-on the whole time, like a flagpole. After a while it wears off. It's just watching an assembly job. After a while you learn the most sensual thing is innocence." He worked there for two or three years, and gave the money to his mother.

We are driving around San Francisco, between Haight Ashbury and the sea, when I ask Carlos Santana about the Tijuana strip-joint years.

*Had you had much practical experience at that point?*

Yeah. You play spin the bottle and sneak in a couple of kisses here and there, and you smell somebody's hair after they take a shower. If you're asking me, "Was I a virgin?" no, I wasn't a virgin no more by that time.

*How old were you when you weren't?*

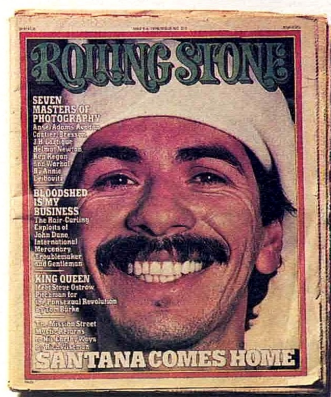
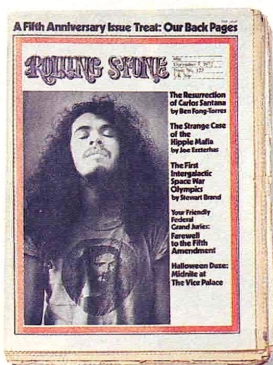
I don't remember. I don't remember because it's a subject I don't want to get into. It's a whole other department store that I don't want to...

*Fair enough. But by the time you were fourteen, you weren't a virgin?*

No, I wasn't a virgin.

*For your friends, that was normal?*

I can't speak for them. For me, I thought it was normal. My mom or my father, they were very naive, and so I was thrown into the streets in a certain way... Let's



**ON THE COVER OF "ROLLING STONE": RS 123 (DECEMBER 7TH, 1972) AND RS 212 (MAY 6TH, 1976). 'I'D TURN ON THE RADIO, AND 'ABRAXAS' WOULD BE ON EVERY STATION JUST ABOUT. AND I FOUND MYSELF MORE AND MORE DEPRESSED.'**

solo came from the sound of his mother scolding him. "Didn't-tell-you-not-to-duh-duh-duh," he counts out. "And I'm-going-to-spank-you! You can cuss or you can pray with the guitar."

Before all of this, as a child Carlos had to find his instrument. He learned violin, but, he says, "I hated the way it smelled, the way it sounded and the way it looked – three strikes." But the guitar and him, it was love.

The Santana family moved to Tijuana when Carlos was seven, because that was where the money was. "It was a shock," he recalls, "to come to a border town." His father sent the boys out selling Chiclets and spearmint gum on the street. They'd shine shoes. Later, Carlos would play Mexican folk songs for fifty cents a song. He knew that just across the border there was another world. He started learning English by watching TV through other people's fences. His first phrase, borrowed from Roy Rogers, was "Stick 'em up."

say my first encounter with sexuality was not a pleasant one or romantic or tender or wonderful. It was more like a shock kind of thing: gross, disgusting shock.

*But that didn't put you off?*

No. Women never turned me off. I mean, the smell of men, it makes me sick. I'm not into men at all. That's one thing I could never be in this lifetime is attracted to male bodies.

*[Puzzled] Um... why do you mention that now? Were they attracted to you?*

Who?

Men.

No. Never.

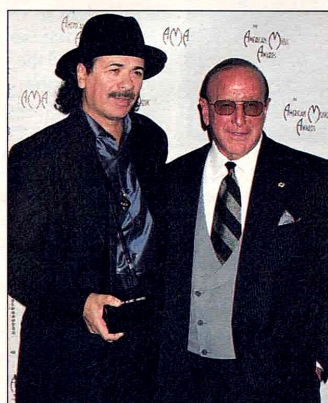
*I just didn't understand why you said that then.*

Just, women have a different kind of alluring smell.

He drives on, up the hill, away from the sea.

**I**N THE EARLY SIXTIES, THE SANTANA FAMILY moved north to San Francisco. The teenage Carlos didn't want to go. He was working in the strip joint, earning money in a grown-up world, and the notion of going to junior high school – of becoming a kid all over again – did not appeal: "I'm hanging around a bunch of older guys and prostitutes, eat when I want, sleep when





TOP: WITH MATCHBOX 20'S ROB THOMAS, MAKING THE "SMOOTH" VIDEO. CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: WITH EVERLAST; WITH LAURYN HILL AT THE 1999 GRAMMY AWARDS; BEING INDUCTED INTO THE ROCK & ROLL HALL OF FAME, 1997; WITH ARISTA PRESIDENT CLIVE DAVIS AT JANUARY'S AMERICAN MUSIC AWARDS; WITH DAVE MATTHEWS.

I want... to hang out with a bunch of little kids talking about bullshit stuff? No way."

The first time he came to America with his family, he sulked and was angry all the time. He wouldn't eat. He was even angrier when he discovered that his mother had used the money he'd saved to pay for the immigration papers and for work on his sister's molars. Even so, he knew there was still \$300 left, and he asked her not to touch that: It was for his guitar. But when he eventually spotted a Stratocaster and asked for the money, she confessed: She'd spent it on rent. They fell out for a long time after that. "Basically from my ignorance," he says.

Eventually, after two weeks of his sulking, she gave him twenty dollars and told him he could go back to Tijuana. He got his old job back and was there another year before his mother and older brother came to get him. "They actually kidnapped me," he says. "My brother grabbed me - my legs were dangling. Put me in a car."

This time he stayed. Went to junior high. Learned English. But he was right in thinking he wouldn't fit in easily. "The stuff they were talking about was silly-ass corny shit," he says. "I'm hanging around a bunch of old guys talking about Ray Charles and the blues, and they're talking about playing hooky and stealing cars and doing some pimple Beach Boy stuff that didn't make any sense to me."

Driving round San Francisco, honoring my request to see the sights of his early years in America, he turns off Mission Street in the Mexican part of town and drives a couple of blocks. "This is the house," he says, pointing. He slows down but never quite stops, as though he wants to make clear that he's happy to show me his past but he has no intention of lingering there.

In that house, seven kids shared two bedrooms. That's where he finally got a guitar, a Gibson Les Paul Junior, and where his brother Tony's friend sat on it and broke it in two.

As we drive away, he tells me about the time when Tony came home from a party and needed to sleep before work the next morning. Carlos, his four sisters, his younger brother and his mother were watching a Dracula movie on TV. There were twenty minutes left when his brother turned the TV off. A scuffle broke out, and in the end Carlos hit his brother hard, hard enough to make his eye swell up. That night the brothers slept, as always, in the same bed, and Carlos lay right on the edge, trying not to breathe, waiting for retaliation.

But his brother did nothing. And when Carlos came home from school the next day, there was a new white Gibson Les Paul - the very guitar Carlos would play at Woodstock - and an amplifier. His brother Tony was sitting there, a steak over his eye. "I broke down, man," Carlos remembers. Tony told him, "You gonna pay for it - I just paid the down payment."

We pass Mission High School. "I couldn't wait to get the hell out of there," he says. "I wasn't much of a school guy." In class, he'd think about playing with B.B. King and daydream of being onstage at the Fillmore. That was all he saw ahead of him. Already he had started heading over to Haight Ashbury with his guitar, where he'd find a harmonica player, put a hat down and get some money. A bit of Donovan. Cannonball Adderley's "Work Song." The Beatles' "And I Love Her." "That romantic thing," he says. "Next thing you know, we'd go and get some wine and pizza. That's what gave me confidence that I could make a living with this."

We drive by San Francisco General Hospital. Again, Santana slows but never stops. He points up to a window. "Right up there," he says. "The top floor."

He spent three months in that room. It was the spring of 1967. He was a nineteen-year-old Mexican guitar player whose group, the Santana Blues Band,



was beginning to get going: As he remembers it, the group had just opened for the Who, playing blues and its souped-up versions of songs like *Mary Poppins*' "Chim Chim Cheree," and had been invited to do the same for Steve Miller and Howlin' Wolf. Then... it all stopped. Perhaps for good. At school, he tested positive for tuberculosis.

In the hospital they treated him with penicillin, and after he developed an allergy, they shot all this streptomycin in his butt. "I couldn't sit for about a month," he recalls. He graduated while he was in the hospital. A tutor would visit him. Aside from that, he says, "there was nothing to do but to pottery and watch TV and just watch people die."

Friends would visit and deliver inappropriate party favors. "To pass the time, they'd bring me a couple of joints and LSD," Carlos says. "And I'm taking LSD like a dummy, watching *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* with Glenn Ford; the next thing I know, I'm inside the bed with my sheets over my head, going, 'Oh, shit, why did I do this, man?'" But in a way this trip was also his salvation. It made him realize that this was no place for a young man with plans. "Everybody there was dying of tuberculosis and cancer," he says. "I said, 'Man, this is like hell. I've got to get out of here.'" He called a friend and asked him to bring some clothes. They stopped the elevator between floors so that he could change, and he fled. Everyone was looking for him, a potential tuberculosis carrier on the loose: the police, the board of health, his mother. But they didn't find him. He hid out at a friend's house; he felt fine, he was free, and he had music to play.

**U**P THE TOP OF A RICKETY WOODEN ladder, Carlos Santana and I crawl into his church attic. This is where he keeps the T-shirts he wore onstage until recently: almost all brightly colored and almost all with a picture of at least one of his heroes on them. He has a couple of artists whom he keeps busy with commissions like this (they also do his album artwork). He picks out one T-shirt as an example. "I'll be, 'I want Jimi Hendrix with angels and flying saucers,'" he says.

Before we climb down, he shows me other prints he's commissioned. He'd like to open a version of the Gap or Banana Republic called River of Colors. His own clothes are becoming a little quieter, though; for the Grammys, he's considering black. "I'm kind of weaning myself out of the colors and dressing more straight now," he says. "I'm fifty-two - for ten years I wore mostly these colors, and people used to say, 'Oh, Santana always wears dead people on him.'" He shrugs. "They're not dead. They're more alive than most people you see on MTV today, you know."

**A**FTER HE LEFT HOME, CARLOS BARELY SAW his parents for two years, though they came to see him opening for Steppenwolf and the Staple Singers at the Fillmore. His mother told him that she felt so bad for the hippies, because they were so poor, they were sharing cigarettes. He didn't explain.

He insists that he never wanted Santana in the band's name; he was the guitarist, and his was simply the name that sounded best. Later - when they began

incorporating Latin rhythms and chants before the release of their first album - they dropped the "Blues Band." That first album, *Santana*, was an immediate hit, but it was after their appearance low on the bill at Woodstock, and particularly the inclusion of "Soul Sacrifice" in the film and on the soundtrack, that it really exploded. Onstage, he was on psychedelics he'd taken in the mistaken belief that the band wouldn't be on for hours. "When I see it on TV, it's like another guy playing," he says. "He was trying to get in there, dealing with the electric snake. Instead of a guitar neck, it was playing with an electric snake."

He took a lot of psychedelics in those days: LSD,

just about," he says. "And I found myself more and more depressed, and I'd find myself crying. The band was deteriorating, and my friends who I grew up with were total strangers to me. We started sounding like crap. It became all those things that happen to most bands. It was basically too much too soon: excess, big egos, myself included."

One of your band members said back then that your head "got about as big as Humpty Dumpty." Was that fair?

Yeah. Mine and everybody else's. You're going from a Mission District kid with nothing to having everything - you're Number One, buy your mom a house. Too much drugs, everything to excess. You start feeling really lonely. And for me, it was the beginning of my journey.

What made it come to some kind of crisis for you?

Drugs. Certain people in the band were into heroin and cocaine, and I used to have cold sweats, nightmares, and I would wake up screaming: The place would be packed, 60,000 people, and the band is in no condition to play because so-and-so are fucked up; Bill Graham is screaming at me, "You're nothing, you're unprofessional, you're a piece of shit." That was my recurring nightmare.

It never actually happened?

No. But it was happening every other night in my dreams.

By 1973, he had decided that the band with his name was also his band, and he took over. Though he has worked with some original members since that time (none currently), there has been bad feeling over the years about his coup, and the parallel implication that it was him all along. "I don't want to short-change the original guys in the band," he says. "For a long time I felt, in their minds, that I was riding on a wave that they started. But it's been thirty years, so hopefully this time they will be appeased that I still want to honor their contribution to the band and how we grew up together."

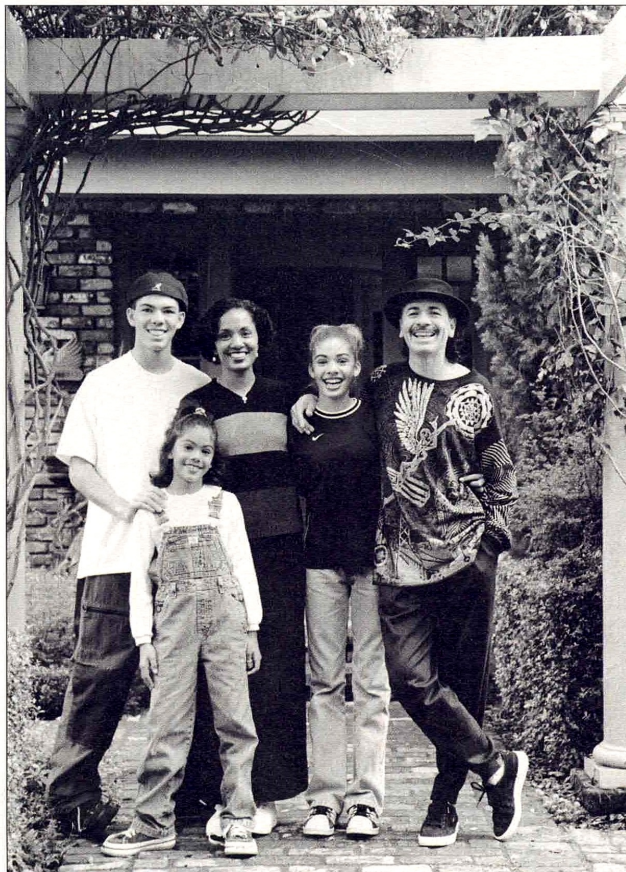
By 1973 he had changed in other ways, too.

**A**S WE LEAVE THE CHURCH, I NOTICE a guitar strap neatly laid out in a cabinet. On it, spelled out in large letters, is the word *Devadip*. That was the name Carlos Santana took from 1972 to 1981, when he was a disciple of an Eastern guru called Sri Chinmoy.

He had met Deborah in early 1972, at a Tower of Power concert at the San Rafael Civic Center. The friend he was with noticed the way Carlos looked at Deborah across the room. "I feel sorry for your ass," the friend told him. "It's all over for you, man. That's the one."

She was twenty-two. From her side of the room, she just noticed "this skinny guy standing there with long hair and his guitar"; she had to ask who he was. But she felt the connection too. He knew for sure the first time she came to his house. "She smelled like something I wanted to wake up next to the rest of my life," he says. "This is a person who is very soft outside, very feminine, very sweet, but inside tougher than steel. It's crazy, man, because the same thing I used to run away from home, because my mom's strong character, that's the first thing that I found. I need a woman who's got that General Patton four-star conviction."

"Carlos is a person who comes from [Cont. on 86]



**THE SANTANA FAMILY AT HOME IN SAN RAFAEL, NOVEMBER 1997: SALVADOR, ANGELICA, DEBORAH, STELLA AND CARLOS (FROM LEFT)**

mescaline, peyote, ayahuasca. He considered these sacred sacraments at the time: "I felt it would make it more real and honest. It's a spiritual thing, you know. Maybe my wife won't be too fond of me sharing these stories because of our children; I don't recommend it to anybody and everybody, yet for me I feel it did wonders. It made me aware of splendor and rapture."

Ultimately he decided he'd seen enough. The last time he did anything like that was when he took some mushrooms on a tour day off at Niagara Falls in 1987. He says he can imagine doing it again when his children are grown up. Take something, go down to the beach. "Just to see if it has that innocence feeling," he says.

In the early days, he didn't enjoy success. "I would turn on the radio and Abraxas would be on every sta-



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[Cont. from 48] his heart all the time, so when I met him he was tremendously soft," she recalls. "He's gotten a lot more assertive over the years."

By the time Santana met her, he was already looking for some spiritual guidance. He had been fasting and praying, and, inspired by the example of John Coltrane, he had started to read about Eastern mysticism and philosophy. Then, when he met guitarist John McLaughlin, McLaughlin had a photo of Sri Chinmoy, and the guru seemed to have an enormous peace about him. The thing that really got Carlos was one of Chinmoy's statements: "When the power of love replaces the love of power." That made plenty of sense to him.

Chinmoy gave him the name Devadip, which means "the eye, the lamp of the light of God." Deborah, who had joined with him, became Urmila. They signed up to a stern regimen. "Cut your hair, no drugs, total vegetarian," he summarizes. "It was like a West Point approach to spirituality. Five o'clock in the morning meditating, every day." Long-distance running was an enthusiasm of Chinmoy's, and Deborah ran marathons. She also ran a devotional vegetarian restaurant in San Francisco. "We used to do ridiculous things," she says. "There was always this competition in how much we could do to prove our devotion - who could sleep the least and still function, because you were working so hard, how many miles could you run. I once ran a forty-seven-mile race. It wasn't enough just to run a marathon."

Carlos avoided most of the roadwork: "I was, 'This shit is not for me - I don't care how enlightening it is.' " Instead, he would play Chinmoy's songs at meditations and performances that, to his increasing frustration, were often announced as though they were Santana performances.

The few interviews Carlos gave in those years are crammed with reverence toward Chinmoy. "Guru has graduated from the many Harvards of consciousness and sits at the seat of God. I'm still in kindergarten," said Carlos. Likewise: "Without a guru I serve only my own vanity, but with him I can be of service to you and everybody. I am the strings, but he is the musician."

Eventually, says Carlos, "everything about him turned into vinegar - what used to be honey turned into vinegar." One turning point was when he heard Chinmoy pontificate meanly about Billie Jean King because she'd talked of a lesbian relationship. "And a part of me was, 'What the fuck is all this - this guy's supposed to be spiritual after all these years; mind your own spiritual business and leave her alone.'" Carlos emphasizes that he took much that was good from these years with Chinmoy - "It was a

good learning experience about spirituality" - but the end was awkward.

"He was pretty vindictive for a while," Santana says. "He told all my friends not to call me ever again, because I was to drown in the dark sea of ignorance for leaving him."

It was not too long afterward that he and Deborah had their first child. "I look upon the time when we left as such a sweet time as a couple," Deborah says. "I remember ordering my first chicken sandwich in Spain. It was so delicious." Now, she took the spiritual lead, going to a church in Santa Cruz. "I became a born-again Christian to appease her, so to speak," Santana says. She did not subsequently follow him in the way of the angels, but she doesn't doubt his faith: "It blesses him. He's had some wonderful spiritual experiences that he's shared with me that I know are real."

"She has her own feet on the ground," he says. "I'm the space cadet, you know. She gets uncomfortable sometimes. She doesn't want people to think I've lost it, I'm out of my gourd."

His wife has laid down some firm family rules. Since their third child, Angelica, was born ten years ago, she has insisted that time working is followed by sacrosanct time off, in which he takes a full role in family life. "When he comes home," Deborah says, "and I have trained him for a few years, I'm, 'I don't want to hear about Carlos Santana.' I want him to hear about the children, I want him to take over some of the responsibility. I'll warn him: 'Remember, when you come home, you are a father. There is recycling to be done, you're going to be driving the car pool.' Because that's my reality."

IN THE SANTANA BOARDROOM, CARLOS looks at some new Jimi Hendrix live CDs sent to him by Hendrix's family and studies a letter from Bryant Gumbel, inviting him to a charity golf tournament. He has a contretemps of sorts with some of his staff when he complains that he has no time off before his imminent promotional trip to Europe. He has told me, "This is a new dimension for me. I've been pretty much low-key, invisible. This is new territory for me, so I'm taking deep breaths." Now he asks those around him for his schedule to be cleared. "It's a little too much," he tells them. "I'm flattered, but I need to see my mother."

He has come into the office to film a public-service announcement encouraging people to become teachers. Afterward he chats with the makeup artist, telling her why he had to move away from the Mission District after he became successful: "People were knocking on my door at three in the morning - 'Won't you do a benefit for me?' And it just became really hard to exist." But that first year out of town was tough. "You're used to hearing people stealing tires," he

explains, "and all you hear is crickets."

This is the day of our drive around San Francisco: the house in the Mission District, the school, the hospital. We never get to the site of the recently demolished Tic Tocs, a restaurant where he worked from 1963 to 1967. "The Grateful Dead pulled over in limousines to get some hamburgers," he says. "And I'm in my apron, washing dishes and busing tables, and I said, 'I'm going to do that.' Something in me just said, 'If they can do this, I can do this.'" There and then, he walked out of the job for good.

In Haight Ashbury he shops unsuccessfully for a new hat, and we eat at a Cuban restaurant. Then we drive back to San Rafael, back to the rehearsal room for more incense and conversation.

"A lot of the credit goes to the women," he says. "I don't mind giving the credit to my mom and my wife and Lauryn Hill and my sisters and my daughters, because women are really supremely important for musicians. We all learn from how they walk, how they talk. It's not politically correct today, but in the old days, in the Sixties, if somebody was an incredible musician, you'd say, 'He's a bitch,' and if he was an incredible musician but he has a lot of class and style, then you'd say, 'Oh, he's a lady.'"

He moves on to the link between angels and devils. One of his more recent realizations has been that you need both: "The energy of devils and angels is the same energy; it's how you use it. It's fuel. There is a saying: If you scare all your devils away, the angels will go away with them. You know, the halo and the horns are the same thing. I mean, it's OK to be spiritually horny - that's what creative genius is really about. Geniuses don't have time to think how it's going to be received. Real bona fide geniuses of this century - Miles Davis, Picasso - they don't have time to think whether people like it or not, is it morally right, will God like it? If you think, it's like poking a hole in an egg before it hatches."

Have you sometimes thought too much in your career?

Yeah, it goes in and out. That has been my whole journey - to learn to get a lobotomy.

So is "Supernatural" an album made on the lobotomy principle?

Yes. My instructions before I started this CD were: Be patient, gracious and grateful. My instructions from Metatron. There's an invisible radio that Jimi Hendrix and Coltrane tuned in to, and when you go there you start channeling this other music.

He tells me that one of his motivations has been the river of colors you see during the Olympic closing ceremonies, something that first hit him in 1976. "I thought, 'If we can make music to make people feel like that most of the time, then, as Miles Davis would say, "Then you're a motherfucker." You're great.'"

So, if I'm summarizing you accurately,

what you need to be is a bitch motherfucker lady with a lobotomy?

Yeah. In the physical sense, yeah. Don't think so much before you play. Just let it flow. . . . That's the best kind of music, when you go beyond gravity and time and thinking. Not many mortals do it. I am just trying to get there. Every night I'm trying to get there, man.

AROUND THE SAME TIME AS HIS spiritual awakening and his takeover of the band, the music Carlos Santana wanted to make changed. Albums like 1972's *Caravanserai* were largely instrumental and ditched the good-time Latin rock for more intense, jazz-infused explorations. Sales dwindled. "You know, I'm fifty-two years old, I've gone through all the valleys," he now says. "*Caravanserai*, John McLaughlin, Alice Coltrane . . . I made a lot of so-called career suicides." The way he says this, you know that the records and collaborations he mentions are ones of which he is proud. But there were other moves that weren't so successful on any level. In the Eighties, like many artists of his generation, he made some uninspired records that tried to engage with the production values of the time. It was a difficult period. "In the middle of the Eighties, I was very much thinking like a victim," he says. "I was angry, bitter, disillusioned." His enthusiasm was also sapped by the deaths of Miles Davis, Bill Graham and Stevie Ray Vaughan. "For a while I felt lost in a creative way," he says.

By the mid-Nineties, he had other problems. "My wife said, 'I'm really worried and concerned, because you only have anger and more anger,'" he explains. "'I think you need to see a therapist to see what's going on with you, if you want to stay married with me.'"

"Carlos has had a very interesting life, and he's always had a secret life. . . . Well, he did until '95," says Deborah. "And it was, 'You go take care of all of your issues once and for all, or you're on your own.'" She remembers that "he was pretty upset - he didn't want me to leave."

The first time I ask him about this therapy, he tells me that the therapist asked him why he felt the world woke up every morning just to fuck with him. And when he thought about how absurd and self-obsessed that was, a weight lifted off him. "This album is the fruit of it," he says. "I have more of a balance now with the divine and the human, and I can dance with all of it now. That's probably why *Supernatural* is so powerful, because now it's not in conflict."

I would not have mentioned his therapy again, except that it comes up tangentially when we are discussing his time in Tijuana. I had asked him about something he once said: that in Tijuana he learned how to play guitar so that women's nipples would go hard.

"That's a real thing," he says. "I used to play the violin in church, [Cont. on 88]



## SANTANA

[Cont. from 87] and playing the music a certain way, people just fold their hands and go wherever they go; when you work in a strip joint, you play music in a certain way, and it's like watching a black panther when it's in heat. I used to be really uncomfortable with the sensual thing, because I wanted to be always on the side of the angels. I'm trying now, very graciously, to balance and validate angels and devils with the same reverence, because they both work for God, I happen to believe. It's OK for your nipples to be hard and for you to be foaming at the mouth and you're really aroused and, OK, what do you do with this energy? Do you defile a woman or make her feel heavenly with it? I'm not afraid anymore of those perimeters."

*When did you stop being afraid?*

'95. In '95 I understood more, because of therapy that I had, on what happened to me in my childhood with the sensual thing. It allowed me to put things in a place where I made peace with my past. And I don't blame anyone or anything, or life or devils or child molestation. . . . I don't blame anything for what happened to me anymore. I don't have that anger, that bitterness, for what happened to me. I'm able to just say, "Look, to live in the moment now and not to be carrying a cadaver with all the stink and everything is definitely more . . . glorious."

*Had you ever done therapy before 1995?*

No.

*Was it a surprise to you?*

It was a surprise to me what I heard myself saying, and how that person . . . if there was cancer, she took about eighty percent of it out. Ten percent I'm working with still. And I have no doubt that the reason *Supernatural* is what it is is it's a manifestation of what had happened to me. If I hadn't seen her, I don't think I would have been able to be in a position to make an album like this.

*What did she think was blocking you, or troubling you?*

Guilt. Shame. Judgment. Fear.

*And where did she think those things were coming from?*

There was a combination of Catholic upbringing and child molestation.

Neither of us says anything for a moment. I'm not quite sure if he is saying what I think he is saying. Afterward, listening back, I realize how much his frustration at nearly, but not quite, saying something has been prowling through our conversations. "And those are two really powerful, cancerous things," he adds.

Even now, I could just move on and it might float away, unspecified. But, of course, I'll ask.

*What do you mean by child molestation?*

I was molested. At a very young age. I was seduced by toys, and I was seduced

by being brought to America with all kinds of gifts and stuff. And, being a child, I blocked that other part, because there was the other goodies of somebody taking you to Sears and Roebuck.

Carlos Santana takes a breath. "Because I'm so deep off into it, I can't turn back what I'm saying, but nobody even knows about this stuff. It's never come out."

He tells me about it. For about two years, from 1957 to 1959, when he was between ten and twelve years old, Carlos Santana was brought over the border "almost every other day" by this American guy from Burlington, Vermont, who dressed like a cowboy. He'd buy Carlos presents - food, clothes, toys - and abuse him. It ended only when Carlos fell in love with a girl. The man got jealous when he caught Carlos looking at her through a window, and he slapped him. "And I woke up," Carlos remembers. "I looked at him for the first time for who he was: a very sick person." The last time he saw that man, a couple of years later, he was with another young guy.

"You want to get angry with yourself for not knowing better," he says. "The mind has a very insidious way of making you feel guilty: You're the guilty party, shame on you, you're the one who brought this on yourself."

For years he put what had happened out of his head. "All the times I was angry with the original band or with my wife, till '95, it was all of that," he says. "I have learned to convert all this energy now into something productive and creative. At the time, I'm sure I made hell for the original guys in the band, and the first ladies I was with, because I didn't have a way to express it and crystallize it and heal it. It's just fuel now. You use it to do something creative with."

At this point, Carlos Santana seems as surprised as I am - I by the fact of what he has just shared, he by the fact that he has shared it. He begins to ask questions, and it is hard to judge how rhetorical they are. "What's the point of me going here with this?" he asks. "Do I want a sense of closure? A sense of redemption?" I interject occasionally, but mostly he just talks. "A part of me says," he continues, "there's a lot of people out there who have this kind of pain and anguish, and if you show your face and say, 'I am healed. I can be healed.' Whether you are a woman or man who has been raped or molested, you don't have to ruin the rest of your life and ruin your family's life by blaming yourself, feeling dirty, ashamed. Burn all those things, man. Put all those things in a letter, burn it, take the ashes, plant some roses and put the ashes on it, and watch it grow. And let it go. . . . If it can happen to me, and God has blessed me a hundred times, I hope that he will bless you a thousand times. It has given me a chance to grow roses without the thorns."

*How would you describe the change in yourself? More calm? More confident?*

*More whole?*

Everything that you just said. But now I am comfortable in my own skin. When I first met Dave Matthews, I was so attracted to him, even though I'm not gay, because he is so comfortable in his own skin. I was never comfortable in my own skin. I was always crawling out of my skin. Now I am more content with Carlos, and I am more proud of Santana. . . . *Supernatural* is putting me in a situation where I'm a voice now: "What are you saying, Carlos? What are you saying, besides being a groovy pop star?" I never see myself in these terms anyway. I'm saying that I am a multidimensional spirit, and I am not what happened to me.

That night, after our conversation, he stays up late, scared and worried, a sinking feeling in the pit of his stomach. "I haven't felt like this since high school, when you have to meet the bully," he will tell me. The next morning, though it is supposed to be his day off, he sends a message saying he needs to talk. He wants reassurance about how I will write about what he has told me; I wonder whether he is really asking me whether I think he should have shared it at all.

"I am not looking for pity, and I am not looking for sensationalism. I'm looking for: My triumph is your triumph," he says. "I feel God wants me to pay him back. He has given me so much, and to pay back is to heal."

We are talking in the archive room at the Santana offices, where I am spending the day doing research. He finds a photograph he wants me to see. It is a photograph of a young boy in a Tijuana school, smiling sweetly at the camera, holding open his science textbook. "This is the guy I want to honor," he says. "Because this is all before that happened. This is that guy. That is Carlos before all that went down."

*What do you think when you look at that?*

Sometimes it makes me sad, because I want to go back to feeling all the purity and innocence. So somebody throws black ink at you? You're still pure. There's a part of you that can never be a corrupt.

We speak again the next week, in London. "I'd no idea I'd start telling this," he reiterates. "I can only pray that me coming out with this, people who have gone the road that I have taken, it will be invitation for them to heal and be whole. It's the healing process so that other people - molesters and victims - can read it and go, 'Damn, I don't have to be this anymore.' On a spiritual term, connecting the molecules with the light. On a physical meat-and-potatoes reality, rescuing people from the valley of false perception. My job is done - I don't need to win one award, because my victory is won."

"FOR ME," SAYS CARLOS SANTANA insistently, "if there is a theme to this, it is a masterpiece of joy. Carlos created through all of these journeys and trials and tribulation, guilt-shame-pain-hor-

ror-whatever, he created a masterpiece of joy." That is how he sees his story.

"Metatron wants something from me, and I know exactly what it is," he says. "When you're soldering, you need this silver thing." He means the solder itself, which melts and joins one object to another. "That's what I am," he says. "The people who listen to the music are connected to a higher form of themselves. That's why I get a lot of joy from this CD, because it's a personal invitation from me to people: Remember your divinity."

It's tempting to step back a little more. To speculate on the possible links between traumatic childhood experiences and a lifetime searching for spiritual fulfillment, a passion for healing the world's evil ways. To wonder if the angels really hover, and what it would mean for all of this if you simply couldn't believe they did. But this is Carlos Santana's story - his own strange masterpiece of joy - and I believe he presents it his way without cheating, connivance or duplicity. There are times to speak, and there are times to listen.

On the afternoon when Metatron announced to Carlos Santana much of what would subsequently happen to him, there was another message. He was looking at the light of a candle, and the candle got really big. He was meditating with a group of people, and the group went into this beautiful hall with many rooms where an old Asian man came up to Carlos Santana. He had a question.

"What is it that you're looking for with so much intensity?" the old Asian man asked him.

It was a good question.

"I'm looking for the perfect melody," Carlos told him.

Everything went quiet.

"Child," the old man said, "don't you know that you are that already?"

As he tells me this, Carlos Santana smiles at me, solidly patient, firmly gracious and determinedly grateful. "And I know it sounds really crazy to a lot of people, but it's OK, because I'm not afraid of what people think. . . . My reality is my reality. I'm not going to deny it. I'm not going to deny it all. I stand in front of people. Behold my reality." ○

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