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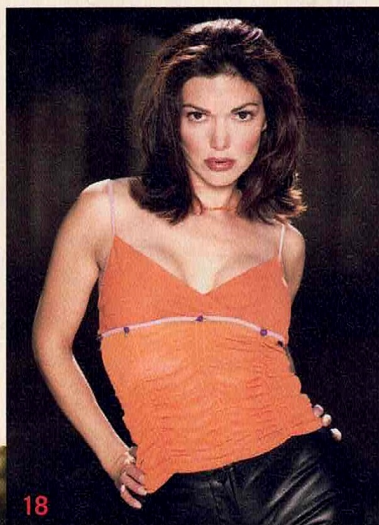
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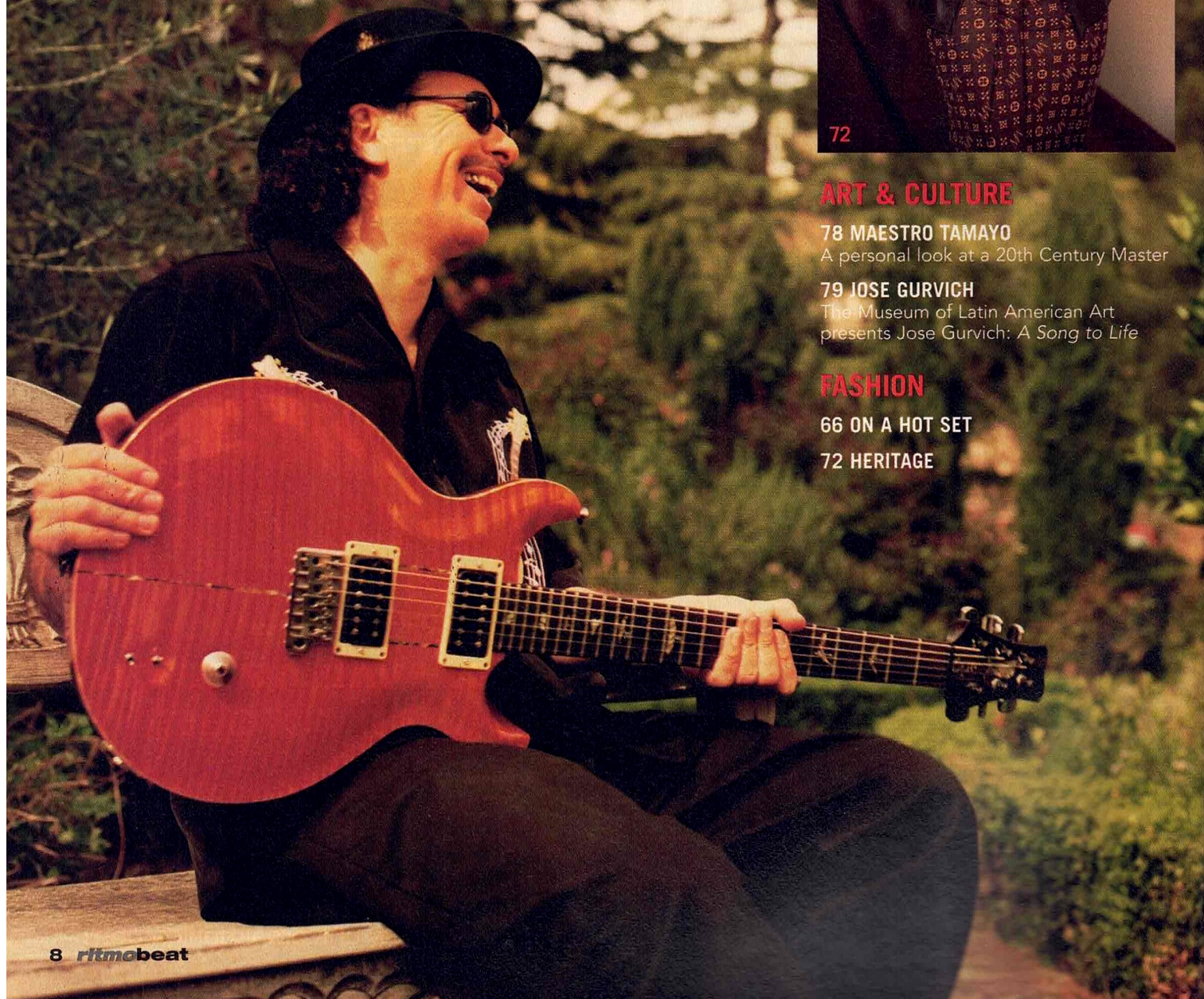
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PHOTO BY JAY BLAKESBERG



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# THE LEGEND OF...

BY YADHIRA CASTILLO



# Carlos Santana

**F**or a guy who first snagged worldwide attention as the "underground Mexican musician" at Woodstock, Carlos Santana has sure come a long way. Since his maverick appearance back in 1969, Carlos, who was reportedly paid \$1,500 for 45 minutes of jamming out at the psychedelic friendly fest, has earned a rep for being one of the most distinctive and respected artists of the times. Santana's musical career spans more than five decades and has outlasted countless musical trends. Aside from that, he has sold millions of albums and has garnered a long list of awards and honors, including a 1998 induction into the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame and a shiny gold star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame the same year. But most recently, he earned the lion's share of praise for his latest album, *Supernatural*, the 36th of his career, which to date has sold an excess of 10 million copies and has been officially certified 'Dectillion Platinum'—Diamond Status—by the Record Industry Association of America (R.I.A.A.).

The record also managed to nab nine Grammys at the 42nd Annual Grammy Awards in February 2000. This past September, *Supernatural* was also nominated for four more of the golden beauties at the first Latin Grammy Awards held at the Staples Center in Los Angeles, California, where Carlos performed a song with Rock en Español sensations, Mana. Carlos was expected to clean up at the show and he did, taking home three Grammys: Best Duo or Group Vocal ("Corazon Espinado," featuring Mana), Best Instrumental Performance ("El Farol") and Record of the Year ("Corazon Espinado" featuring Mana; Fher Olvera and KC Porter, producers; Benny Faccone, engineer/mixer). "It feels like the first kiss," said Carlos candidly backstage after receiving the Grammy victories. "Like when a beau-

tiful woman allows you to touch her tongue with yours."

Yet, Carlos remains as cool as a cucumber and has managed to stay grounded despite all of the rekindled success that he has been blessed with. "The success has given Carlos a lot of visibility and had made him very popular all over the world," said Carlos' younger brother Jorge Santana, who helps to ensure that Carlos' career runs smoothly. "I know for a fact that he is very pleased with the outcome... I don't know of one single person who has said anything negative about his success, it's been a long time coming."

Carlos' love for music began at the tender age of five, when his father Jose introduced him to traditional music. "My dad was an accomplished violinist and guitar player," continued Jorge, who

**"From a very young age Carlos knew exactly what he wanted to do."**

happens to be the founder of the legendary Latin rock group Malo. "I'm sure he is the main reason, along with having a lot of music around our home, that inspired us to seek a life in music." After Carlos' father taught him the basics of music theory and gave him an understanding of the value of a note, Carlos' excitement for music would only continue to flourish. But he quickly discovered the limits of his father's traditional teachings and he wanted to explore his own taste in music. He knew that he wanted to produce the kind of music that was filling the radio waves and making people dance. "From



a very young age Carlos knew exactly what he wanted to do," says Jorge of his older brother's interest in progressive sounds.

The year was 1955, the place was Tijuana and the music was rock 'n' roll. With the drastic change of the Santana family moving from the small quiet town of Autlan, Mexico, where Carlos was born, to the constant energy of the thriving border town of Tijuana, came the renewed hope and opportunity for a new life. At age eight, Carlos traded in the violin for the guitar, studying and emulating the sounds of B.B. King, T-Bone Walker and John Lee Hooker. Later in life, Santana began to be asked to join local bands and started to add his already special touch and feel to renditions of all the great songs of the 1950s. As time passed, he continued to play with different bands along the flashy "Tijuana Strip," not only perfecting his style and sound, but actually bringing home enough money to help out his family financially. The time was ripe and the future looked promising.

In 1960, the Santana family moved to San Francisco, California. Although Carlos remained in Tijuana for another year to make extra money until his family settled in, he soon found himself amid the multicultural atmosphere of San Francisco with all the city's diverse influences and musical styles. It was here that Carlos would find what he had been searching for, as if destiny had brought him to the right place at the right time. For the next five years, he would continue to develop his own unique style of music that would later identify him as one the greatest musicians of the century. In 1966, the music of Carlos exploded on the streets of San Francisco with the debut performance of the Santana Blues Band. The ensuing two years saw the band go from the stage of the venerable Fillmore Auditorium to their historical performance before half a million people at the Woodstock Festival in New York where the band's eclectic Latin-flavored rock was delivered to the masses. Carlos Santana had arrived, and with him an uncompromising spirit and dedication to his music that would affect and mark people's lives forever.

That same year, in 1969, the Santana Blues Band released their first album through Columbia records simply titled *Santana*. The recording, which included the hit song "Evil

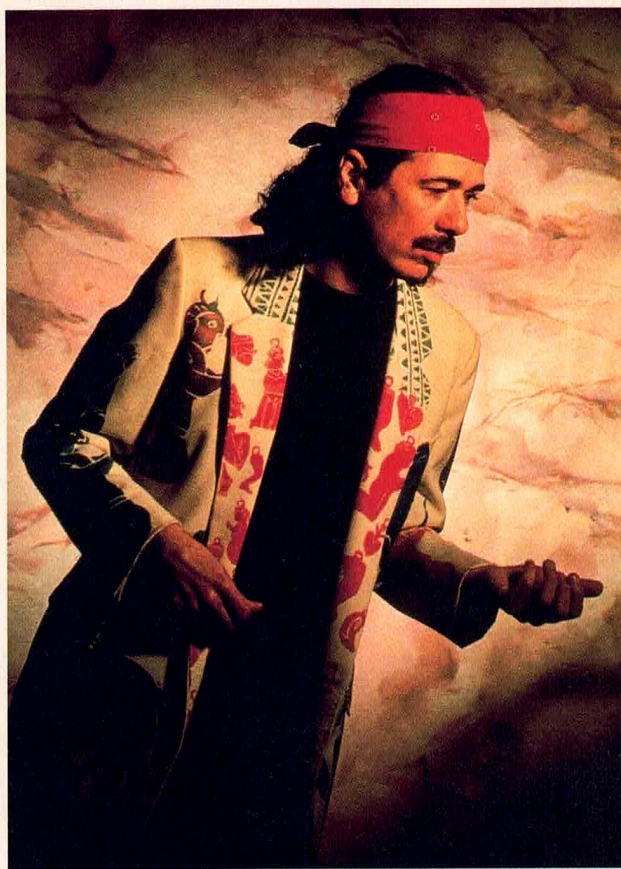
Ways," achieved double-platinum status. Santana has since then released a string of hit albums and songs, and the rest, as they say, is history. "We were so happy and pleased when he just came out with his first album," recalls Jorge, who in 1995 released a record with Carlos titled *Santana Brothers*. "But everything else that Carlos has done since then has only gotten bigger and better."

Not only has Carlos contributed his talents to the music world, he has also contributed his talents to the benefit of numerous charitable causes, among them Blues for Salvador, San Francisco Earthquake Relief, Tijuana Orphans and Rights of Indigenous Peoples, just to name a few. In 1998, Carlos and his wife Deborah launched the Milagro Foundation, a

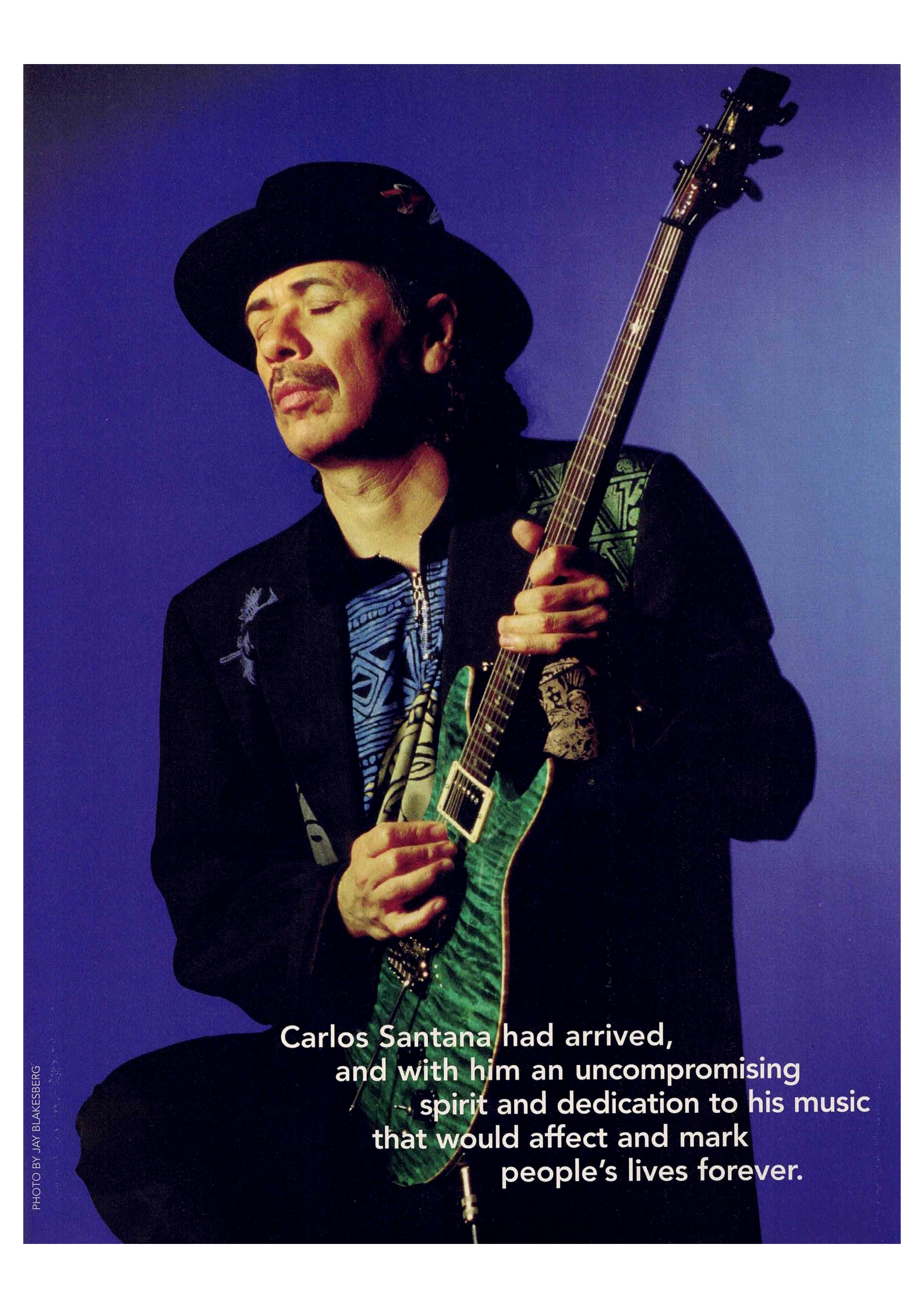
nonprofit organization that assists the most at-risk children acquire the skills needed to succeed in life. His ventures into new territory have also recently included a deal to produce a men's clothing line; gone are the days of poured on jeans, leather vests and snake skin leather boots for Carlos. He can be spotted sporting fashions created by Miami-based manufacturer Dino Di Milano, who has licensed the name "Carlos" for his new line of threads. Carlos also recently signed a licensing agreement with Brown Shoe Company to produce a line of men's and women's footwear under the label "Carlos" that will combine "cutting-edge fashion with multicultural influences." A portion of the proceeds will benefit the Milagro Foundation. "Meeting with Brown Shoe, I realized they could connect with my vision," Carlos said publicly after the deal was signed. "This is the

type of company I want to help me in my work for the Milagro Foundation. We believe that life is a miracle and that children everywhere deserve the opportunity to lead safe, healthy and educationally creative lives."

The life of the legendary guitar God has certainly evolved in many ways throughout the years, but one thing has remained the same: a guitar prowess that to this day remains among the most distinctive ever and was again featured on *Supernatural*. The recording was a long overdue reunion with mentor Clive Davis and the result was one "Smooth" album. *Supernatural* managed to bridge cultural, generational and musical realms, forging multidimensional, multicultural creative partnerships. The recording sessions called for a stellar lineup

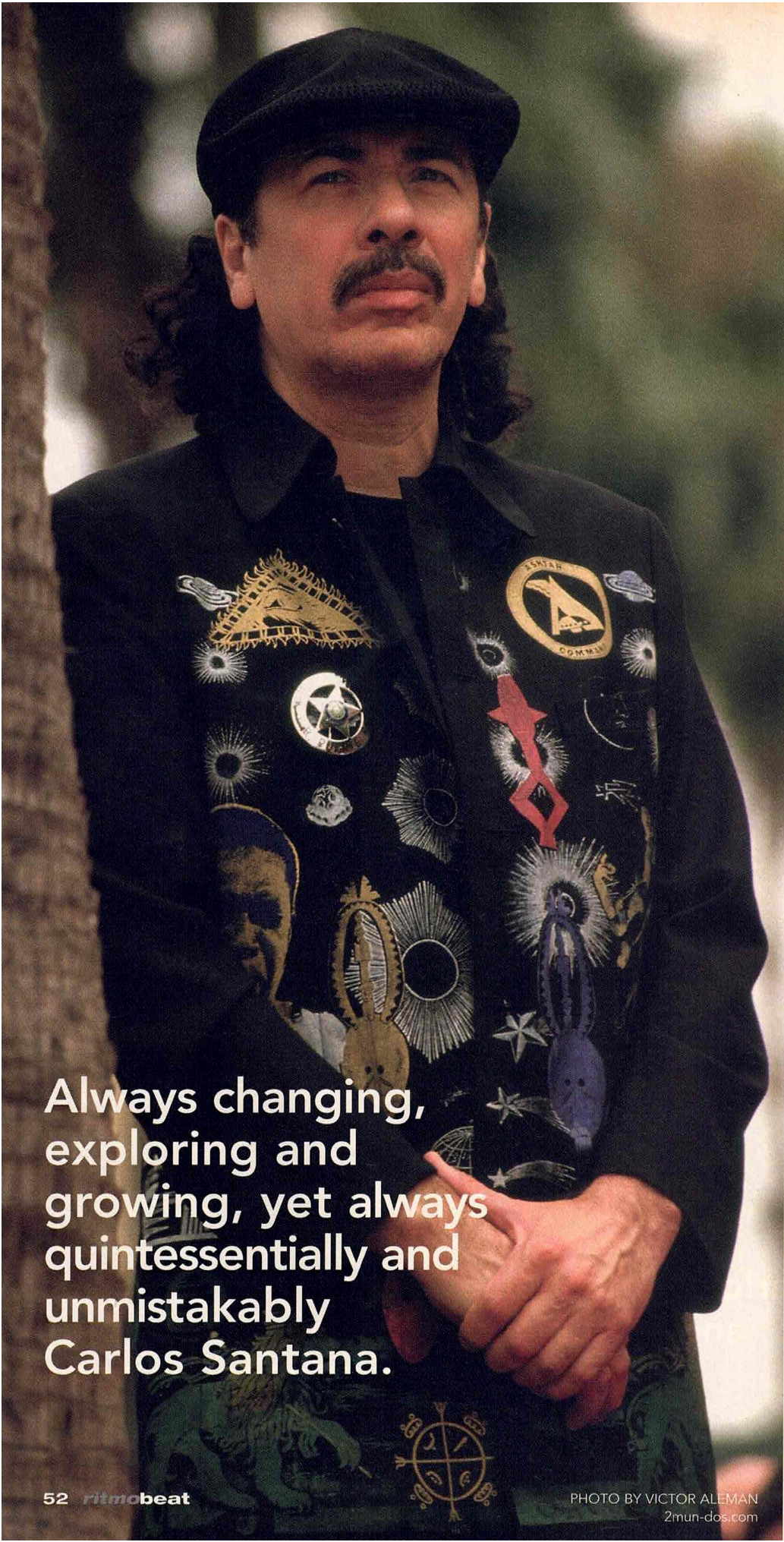




A portrait of Carlos Santana, a man with a mustache and long hair, wearing a black fedora and a black jacket over a blue and white patterned shirt. He is playing a green electric guitar with his eyes closed, looking down at the instrument. The background is a solid blue color.

Carlos Santana had arrived,  
and with him an uncompromising  
spirit and dedication to his music  
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people's lives forever.





Always changing,  
exploring and  
growing, yet always  
quintessentially and  
unmistakably  
Carlos Santana.

of various artists that lent their voices and talents to the recording session, including Eric Clapton, Dave Matthews, Rob Thomas, Lauryn Hill and Mana, just to name a few. "Every musician who participated was on the same wavelength and artistic energy as I was," said Carlos of the recording sessions. "Supernatural is a beautiful example of synchronicity making it was a truly glorious experience."

At the age of 52, Carlos is at the pinnacle of a remarkable recording and performing career. He will be taking a break from the stage and spotlight, except for the brief appearance at the Latin Grammy Awards, until May of next year when he is scheduled to begin recording a new album.

Carlos said that Sting, Prince and Aretha Franklin are already putting in dibs to help out with the Supernatural follow-up. But Carlos also has said that he would like to work with Emilio Estefan and his wife Gloria, Ricky Martin and Marc Anthony. "I would like to do something that would bring more attention to the Latin community," he explained. "Obviously with the Grammys we're okay now, but in the movies and the Oscars, we're still invisible. That's the only reason why once in a while I'd leave my house, to bring a certain evenness to Los Angeles, which is the heart of the industry."

No doubt the world will be heavily anticipating the release of another predictable smash album. There's also no doubt that the world has fully embraced Carlos with a passion and people worldwide have been captivated by his music that is always changing, exploring and growing, yet always quintessentially and unmistakably Carlos Santana. 🌟