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# 20th CENTURY GUITAR

## CARLOS SANTANA

Silvertone Espanada  
Stromberg Ultra Deluxe  
1965 Fender P-Bass

A Study in Provenance:  
1964 Gibson ES-335

Reviewed:  
EH Stereo Polyphase  
Stereo Pulsar  
The Clone Theory

New Column:  
The GIGOLOGIST

Epiphone Purchases the  
James A. Fisch Collection

MAY 2007

\$3.95 US \$5.75 CAN



Saul  
Zionana





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# Carlos SANTANA

Shades of Time

The music of Carlos Santana introduced America to the Latin rock beat. The first Santana album from 1969 remains a turning point in American music history—ushering in the world beat groove of the Woodstock nation. No matter what music Carlos plays there's always been a spiritual side and—combined with the best in Latin music and rock—there's always been something about the signature Santana guitar sound that seems to move the universe. The late 2005 CD release of *All That I Am* pairs the legendary Santana guitar sound with some memorable vocal cameos from Steven Tyler, Michelle Branch and Los Lonely Boys. *All That I Am* reconfirms that Carlos Santana is truly a century spanning phenomenon. Those who long for the instrumental jazz essence of the Santana sound will also want to check out a 2007 Image Entertainment DVD and CD release called *Carlos Santana & Wayne Shorter "Live At The 1988 Montreux Jazz Festival."* Recorded and filmed at the Montreux festival on July 14, 1988, the DVD and CD features Carlos and Wayne Shorter summoning up sounds like musical telepathy and is essential viewing for fans of two of the best bands on Columbia during the '60s and '70s—Santana and Weather Report. With the vintage *Montreux '88* on Image and the new *Hymns* DVD from Eagle hitting the store shelves in March 2007, Santana fans can also look forward to the planned Summer 2008 release of an all new instrumental album from Carlos Santana. Carlos spoke with TCG on February 27, 2007.

By Robert Silverstein

**TCG:** I've always loved your music. Back when I was 15, I was one of the millions that bought the '69 *Santana* album.

**CS:** Oh, thank you so much man.

**TCG:** Can you let the readers in on what your current activities are for the first half of 2007? I heard you were compiling songs for a new album.

**CS:** Yes, first of all, I'm not going to tour till 2008, in the spring. So, in the meantime I'm completing a lot of pies that are in the oven. One is a double CD, a body of work that I'd done that I felt people didn't listen to. Somehow I get the feeling that a lot of people only listen to *Abraxas* and *Supernatural* and maybe a few others. But this CD is going to be called *Multi-Dimensional Warrior*. And the message in each one of the songs is about how to invite people for people to be conscious and aware of their own light, that essence that creates miracles. And to me it's important...like Bob Marley or John Coltrane or John Lennon...it's important for me, beyond the music, to invite people to awaken to that inner power that we all have. Somehow we think that only Jesus can do it or Allah can do it or Krishna can do it but we don't seem to validate the fact that God created us in his image so therefore we have divinity and supernatural powers if you will in our DNA as well.

**TCG:** So it's a double CD?

**CS:** One is just pure instrumental, compilation of instrumental songs and another one is a compilation of songs that I did from a CD called *Milagro* and *Spirits Dancing In The Flesh*. A compilation of seven CDs, I just took certain songs. It's like creating a letter from a bunch of other CDs that I'd done, to the listener.

**TCG:** Is the instrumental CD new material?

**CS:** It's almost eighty percent. That one will come out later. There's a lot of music that will be coming out. We just completed something that's going to come out, we did it in '88 with Mr. Wayne Shorter. That's a DVD. And there's another DVD that's going to come out called *Hymns*. We recorded a live concert with John McLaughlin, Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Ravi Coltrane, many African musicians and also my son Salvador and of course my band. So there's a lot of music that's going to come out this year. But the instrumental one, with just totally new music, it won't come out till maybe next summer, not this summer, but next summer.

**TCG:** I know you love pop music and instrumental jazzy rock stuff. I want to tell you that track off *All That I Am* called "Trinity" with Robert Randolph and...

**CS:** Kirk Hammett from Metallica.

**TCG:** You co-wrote that with some interesting people including Michael Brook and...

**CS:** And Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. You know,

what it is, is that we recorded three tracks in like two hours and we settled for that one. There's other things that will come out. The main thing that I can say about all of this man, is that I'm very grateful to God and to people, to life, that I can create music—from Metallica to Placido Domingo. A lot of musicians, for some reason—and its okay, I'm not putting them down—but a lot of musicians say, 'I don't do windows, I only play jazz,' or 'I don't do this, I only do that.' I don't think like that. I learned from Miles Davis and John Lee Hooker that as long as its from the heart, you can play "My Favorite Things," which is like from a movie, *The Sound Of Music* or you can do like "Time After Time" or "Someday My Prince Will Come" which comes from *Sleeping Beauty* or *Snow White*. So I learned a lot from Miles not to be narrow minded or closed minded or close your heart. I love everything from African musicians to Metallica to the blues, all the blues players. So for me, its a different path to just be able to, kind of like be a waiter, and you serve everyone. To me its kind of like that with music. I'm very grateful to be a multidimensional musician.

**TCG:** Being a Jewish kid from Brooklyn, Santana's music was my first exposure to Latin music and World music. I always felt your music was so liberating.

**CS:** Well thank you man. I did learn a lot from Bill Graham and Michael Bloomfield about the Yiddish sentiment, which is still the blues. I love the melodies that I learned from Michael Bloomfield when he started venturing away from the blues, like *East West* and with Paul Butterfield Blues Band. So I understand very clearly that there's Hebrewness in my DNA. I was born in Mexico but that's just where I landed. I actually have components of every person in my DNA. Like you, I am a fragment that comes from the stars, literally from the universe. I just don't come from my mom and dad. You know what I mean? We are all multidimensional creatures and once you start perceiving yourself like that, then you're able to express more totality, then just saying, 'I'm only Hebrew. I only play Hebrew music or I'm only Mexican, I only play Mariachi music or I'm only Puerto Rican, I only play Salsa.' You are what you is, you are what you perceive. If that's what you wanna be, go ahead. There's no judgment, there's no negative or positive, that's just the way it is. I don't see myself like that. I don't have a ceiling, nor do I want to have a ceiling over my existence. I love Coltrane, I love Bob Marley, I love Marvin Gaye. I like Stevie Ray or Jimi Hendrix. So its easier for me to coexist in this planet more in a harmonious way.

**TCG:** Your music always empowered me to open my mind and I think that's still true with your new stuff. It's great that you can work with the younger players and also go back to the more symphonic fusion stuff and then do a track with Michelle Branch or Steven Tyler. It's a miraculous thing in music these days.

**CS:** Well, you are a miracle. Steven Tyler and Michelle Branch...everybody has their own supreme beauty. It's kind of like learning to see something beyond what you see in the mirror. You mom sees you a certain way and your teachers see a certain way and your friends see you a certain way and your lover sees you a certain way. But those are just fragments. But who are you really when you look in the mirror? Who are you to yourself? And for me, the music—that's what I learned from The Beatles and Marvin Gaye and Bob Dylan—is that music is more than just a song and dance man. I know that Bob Dylan used to talk about, 'I'm just a song and dance man.' But he's kidding. His music, whether he likes it or not, it has a profound message to all people. I think it would be very ignorant for Palestine not to like Bob Dylan only because he's Hebrew. You've got to look at the big picture. I think, when the Berlin wall came down, I think a day will come when Cuba will be different and Jerusalem will be different. I do see the end of brutality in this planet. I see three things: compassion, mercy and forgiveness. Those are the three things that I think that all people, everyone should learn like you learn the language of English or accounting or astrology or law. They're all languages but the language that we should invest more in I believe is compassion, mercy and forgiveness because I think that those are the ones who will take us as humans into a place where we can create heaven here. We don't have to die to go get it. That's it.

**TCG:** What a great combination between you and Paul Reed Smith... I know you've spoken about this before but what got you interested in PRS guitars and are there any new developments with PRS?

**CS:** Yes, what got me in to Paul Reed was Paul, this very shiny bright stuff in his eyes. He's got a lot of enthusiasm and a lot go get 'em guy brilliance in him and he will not be deterred. His guitars, when they arrive in my house—we have a contract so he sends me three or four guitars a year to try out then I keep the ones that I keep—they always arrive in tune. But I've been playing also with Strats, the Stratocaster, because of my love for a certain thing. And so we're working together to have the Paul Reed look but maybe a little bit more of a Strat sound. And that's something that we're still pursuing. I play exclusively Boogie amplifiers since the beginning. Paul Reed Smith...and I also play Alexander Dumble since about six, seven years now. A combination of Paul Reed, Alexander Dumble amplifiers and definitely the Boogie. I cannot deal without the Boogie. For some reason, that's the voice that I gravitate to right now. It's easier for to just close my eyes and don't have to think about messing with knobs and messing with this, messing with that. Just close your eyes and let it flow.

**TCG:** Can you say something about your classical guitar. The Alvarez A-Yairi.



**CS:** Right, there's a beauty in nylon strings which is it gives you that romantic...Manitas de Plata and Paco de Lucia and that Bola Sete kind of setting. So I'm very grateful man...you don't have to be Segovia to get a sound. Everything's an extension, electric guitar or acoustic nylon strings. They're just like brushes and pencils. It's like what are you trying to say that's important through it. What's your story morning glory? (laughter)

**TCG:** I heard the original Santana reformed in San Francisco last month for a show. That must have been an amazing experience.

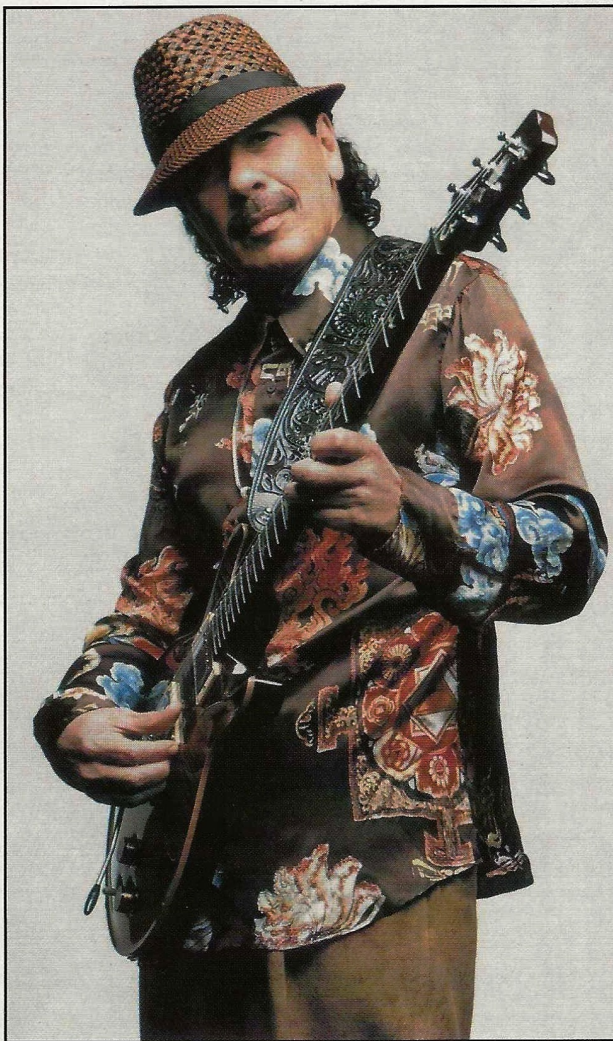
**CS:** Yes, it was. It's always very gratifying and exhilarating to play with Gregg Rolie and the original musicians. It was a lot of fun. I think we did two or three songs. The chemistry is still there. When you get The Beatles together or you get Cream together or The Police together, there's something about the chemistry of certain musicians, it's intact. It's always there.

**TCG:** 37 years after *Abraxas*, can you remember the inspiration behind combining "Black Magic Woman" with "Gypsy Queen", a powerhouse song still amazes.

**CS:** It's an extension of people that I love. I love Peter Green and Gabor Szabo. I love Tito Puente...excuse me...I've been really blessed that I get to learn from people that I love—from John Lee Hooker to Miles—yet when I play Otis Rush or John McLaughlin it doesn't sound like them. It still sounds like me, even though we know that the song "Gypsy Queen" comes from Gabor Szabo and "Black Magic Woman" is from Peter Green. They collect the royalties, as they say. However people identify immediately with my sound, or our sound. The Santana band sound. And to me it's something that I would just say to all people who are reading this magazine, take the time to go inside a room, turn off everything, go inside and get your own fingerprints. Get your own uniqueness and individuality together. It's good to check out Stevie Ray and Jimi Hendrix and Jeff Beck but don't forget the best part, you! (laughter) 'Cause they're all cheering for you. Go get you. Work on you. Like a snake sheds skin, get rid of Stevie, as much as you love him. Get rid of George Benson or Pat Martino as much as you love 'em. Go get you. 'Cause Pat Martino, George Benson and Stevie, they're cheering for you to go get yourself. Go get your own vision, your own sound, that's it man.

**TCG:** I always loved Fleetwood Mac's version of "Black Magic Woman" too but when you did it, the song took off to the stratosphere.

**CS:** They're complete on their own.



Fleetwood Mac are complete in their own thing. There will always be room for Peter Green, which is like an accumulation of the best of the best of B.B. King and Elmore James. But still, B.B. King is B.B. King and Peter Green is Peter Green and I'm me. And that's the beauty of it. And you are you!

**TCG:** The 2007 DVD and double CD on Image featuring you with Wayne Shorter, *Montreux '88* is great. Compared to the pop sound of *All That I Am*, the music you made with Wayne is incredible. I call it Santana meets Weather Report.

**CS:** (laughter) Yeah, well it's kind of like that. We toured together in '72. Thank you for saying that. That's one of my favorite bands. That and Miles and Coltrane. I feel very grateful to God. That was one of the highlights of my life, to do a tour with Mr. Wayne Shorter. He's the genius of geniuses and the most sweetest person you ever want to be around. And so, I learned a lot from him and I continue to learn a lot from him. He's truly an angel and a saint on earth. Like Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama. Wayne Shorter is a whole other kind of light from another galaxy. And he's the kind of person—like if Jimi was here, Hendrix, and Marvin Gaye and

Coltrane—when anybody listens to Wayne your eyes change. It's like beholding something divine in front of you. And I'm sure he sees the same thing in you and in me. Because we all have it. But boy, he's something else. Another CD is going to come out as I said very soon, called *Hymns*, with Wayne Shorter, Chick Corea, John McLaughlin, Herbie Hancock, Ravi Coltrane and my son and many African musicians. There's music that will come out later on with, of course Buddy Guy. I feel really, really grateful. Eagle Eye Cherry. I want to continue just to—like a maitre D'—just to serve people and if anybody invites me from Metallica to Placido Domingo...that what I want to do. I just want to be able to play music and compliment life.

**TCG:** Can you say something about the 2004 *Blues At Montreux* DVD?

**CS:** I just feel like it's all part of the same continuation of the joy of coexisting and sharing. At this point I feel very, very secure and confident that I am welcome onstage with Buddy Guy, B.B. King or Otis Rush...the blues musicians and also the African musicians, Brazilian musicians, the jazz musicians. That to me is one of the greatest things that any musician, any person can have. When the door is open to every room in the house! Including the basement! (laughter) So it's all in the continuation, man. I get a tremendous joy and a tremendous satisfaction—I'm the opposite of I don't get no satisfaction. I get a lot of satisfaction from being in the presence of everyone from, the gentleman from Living Colour, everyone. Vernon Reid, Derek Trucks, Ben Harper, Anastasio. We're all one. And it feels really, really good man. There's no competition. This is not soccer where someone has to lose or someone has to win. We are musicians and hopefully someday you and I can also play together.

**TCG:** Would you ever consider doing a Santana video influences Vol. 2? 'Cause I really enjoyed the video you did honoring Wes, Bola Sete and Gabor. Who would be on your wish list for a Vol. 2?

**CS:** Sure. Ali Akbar Khan, Manitas de Plata, a supremely Flamenco musician, some African musicians, Tinariwen. Just like that! Okay man, you take care.

**TCG:** Thank you very much.

**CS:** My pleasure.

*Thanks to Carlos Santana @ [www.santana.com](http://www.santana.com) - Image Entertainment @ [www.image-entertainment.com](http://www.image-entertainment.com) and Legacy Recordings @ [www.legacyrecordings.com](http://www.legacyrecordings.com)*