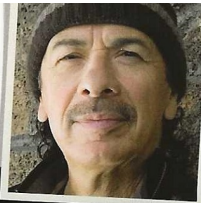


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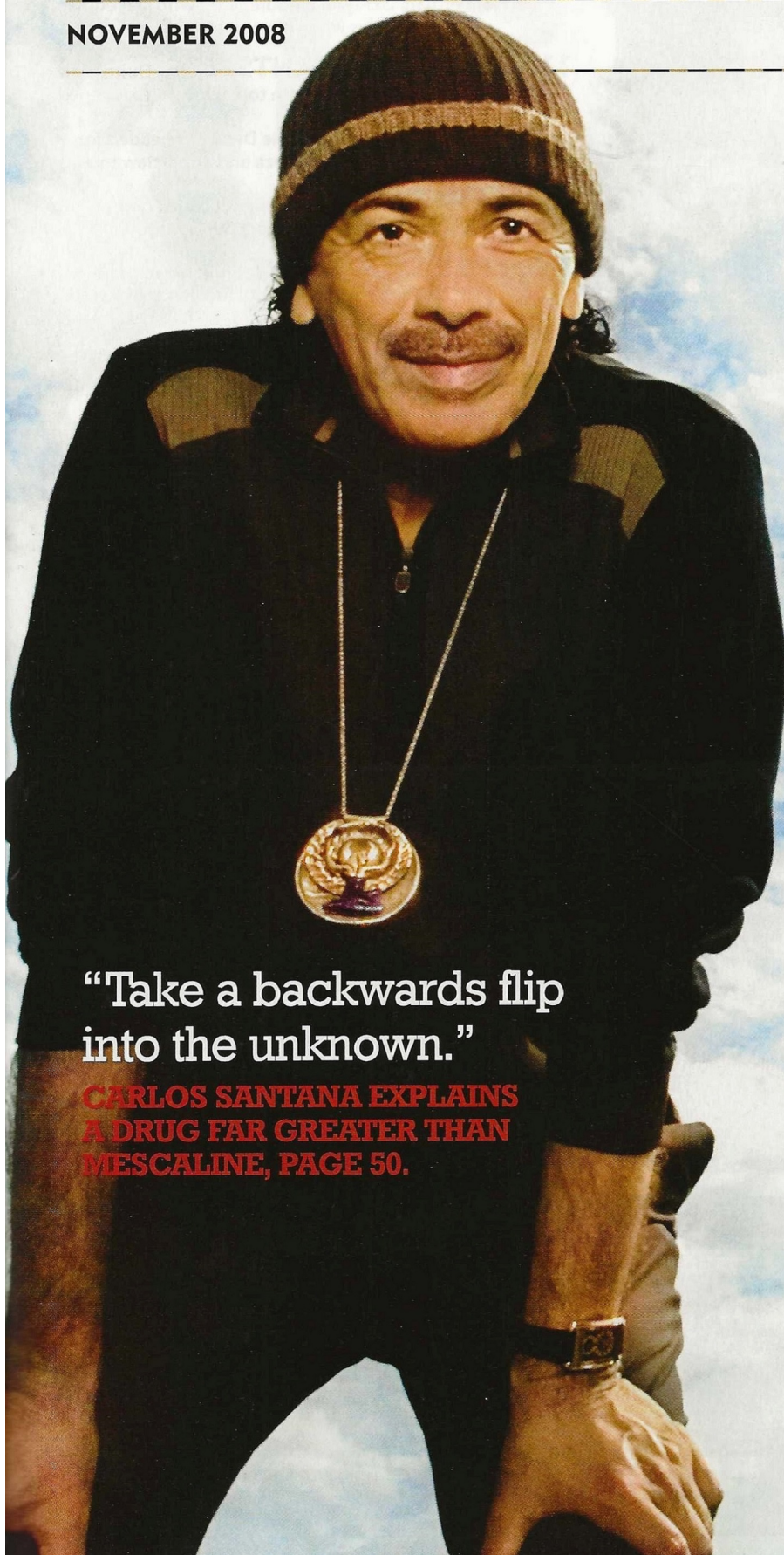


# MOJO

LONDON • MEMPHIS • AUTLÁN

NOVEMBER 2008

Issue 180



**"Take a backwards flip  
into the unknown."**

**CARLOS SANTANA EXPLAINS  
A DRUG FAR GREATER THAN  
MESCALINE, PAGE 50.**

## FEATURES

**44 CARLOS SANTANA** The multi-dimensional spirit of electric Latin guitar came from Tijuana nothingness to transform American rock. Twice. Then the archangels came calling. Phil Sutcliffe tunes into the cosmic 'wah!'

**52 JAKOB DYLAN** Emerging from the multi-million selling shadows of The Wallflowers, the youngest son of Bob and Sara is finally playing under his given name. "If anybody is waiting for the verdict," he whispers to Bob Mehr, "I'm not as good as him."

**58 PETER GREEN** He was the greatest guitarist of the '60s UK blues boom, the founder of Fleetwood Mac, who gave away his millions and refused to play. "A voice took over my mind centre," he tells Phil Sutcliffe.

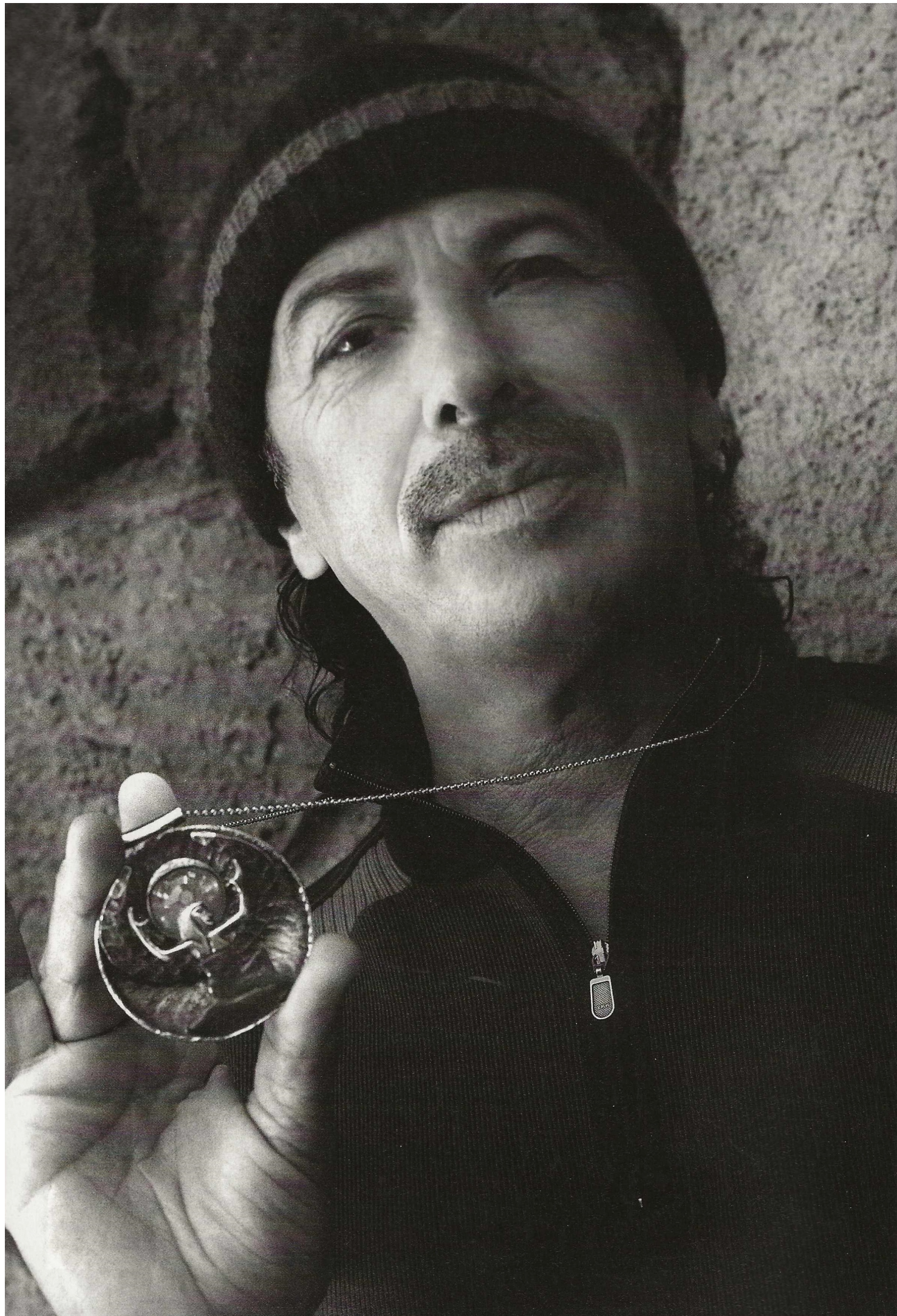
**66 SEASICK STEVE** His hobo days are behind him and he's settled down in Norfolk(!) But has the ramblin' man from Oakland, California still got the blues? Manish Agarwal put him to the test.

**72 BRIAN WILSON** He's just composed a new song cycle about Los Angeles. He loves making music and he loves his new group but, he tells Sylvie Simmons, "I miss The Beach Boys."

## 78 COVER STORY

**THE CLASH** The making of *Combat Rock* was a time of conflict, chaos, creation and class. As that sowed the seeds of downfall for punk's greatest hope. Mat Snow speaks to the survivors and quizzes the witnesses to find out... Who killed The Clash?







## THE MOJO INTERVIEW

He forsook the “wah!” of **Latin rock** for **Vedic gurus** and **jazz fusion**, before a career **rebirth** foretold by the **archangel Metatron**. “My **spiritual quest** is more important than **radio airplay**,” says **Carlos Santana**.

Interview by **PHIL SUTCLIFFE** • Portrait by **PIPER FERGUSON**

I’VE BEEN DOING THIS SINCE ’57, BUT I FEEL I’M crossing a bridge right now,” says Carlos Santana, before a question’s been asked. “Everything that I learned I gotta put aside.” Cordially, he offers MOJO a seat facing him across a boardroom table at his office/warehouse HQ, across the Golden Gate from San Francisco on an industrial estate in San Rafael. A pre-interview tour has revealed that among the workaday building’s more exotic impedimenta is a display of Santana brand women’s shoes, an ornate, super-high-heeled and successful line, which, like every concert ticket, contributes to his Milagro children’s charity.

He speaks intensely with a residual lilt of Mexican, often clenching his eyes shut to consider answers which balance two extremes: philosophical metaphor and stories of the endlessly unsettled life he’s led – musically, religiously and now maritally. His 34-year marriage ended in divorce in last year.

Born in 1947, he grew up mostly poor in a small Mexican town, Autlán de Navarro. His father, Jose, led a mariachi band and inspired him to learn violin, which he detested, and guitar, which he didn’t. Both Carlos and Jose are now celebrated by a statue in the town square. Amid his parents’ marital uproar, the family moved to rumbustious border town Tijuana where Carlos played to a cantina crowd of prostitutes. When the Santanas moved north to San Francisco, Carlos immersed himself in the tumultuous pre-hippy music scene, making friends with

people, black, Hispanic and white, who shared his gut instinct that a new genre needed inventing: Latin-rock. He got lucky too. When he begged tickets for Eric Clapton from a Fillmore West employee, his beneficiary turned out to be Bill Graham, legendary promoter and, subsequently, Carlos’s manager for more than 20 years. When Woodstock happened, before Santana’s first album came out, Graham wangled the band a showcase spot.

That led to the strange career he conducted over the next four decades: four years and four albums of superstardom with landmark tracks like *Evil Ways*, *Black Magic Woman* and *Samba Pa Ti*; 26 years and more than 20 albums of sales declining relentlessly to death-rattle level, despite enduring popularity live; the rebirth years, 1999 to now, when he placed himself in genius record man Clive Davis’s hands and guest-festooned *Supernatural* sold 25 million worldwide.

Now, rather surprisingly, while his new retrospective, *Multi*

*Dimensional Warrior* – double-CD, one instrumental, one vocal – touches on great times ancient and modern, it dwells on those “lost” middle years. Although he selected the tracks himself, he’s diffident about plugging the CD, and doesn’t bring it up until asked.

### What are your boyhood memories from Autlán?

A little town. Even now, they don’t have traffic lights. There wasn’t a movie theatre so they would put a screen up in the middle of the street. It was a big fantasy to see those movie stars on the screen – Fred Astaire, Mickey Mouse, Gregory Peck in *Moby Dick*. And in our house, we had the ➤

### We’re not WORTHY

“The guitar is his voice!”  
**Buddy Guy** on Santana.



“Carlos is my brother. He is one sharp cat, the guitar is his voice and, man, has he got a beautiful tone. No effects and shit, just pure. He respects the blues the way it *needs* to be respected, but boy can he groove too. He can be loose, fast, slow or just plain boogie, but his spirit always shines though. I hear him every day.”



◀ whole gamut of love. My parents were married almost 60 years, but they were vinegar and oil, fire and water.

### As a mariachi band leader, was your father like a local pop star?

Oh yeah, I could see how he was *adored*. Even as a child I always noticed the eyes of women looking at him.

### You once said, "My father had the power to validate people's existence." That's almost god-like.

It's a god-like quality we musicians have... One evening at sundown when everything was golden he takes me into the yard, he picks up his violin and he says "Look!" He goes (*mimes playing violin, hums a tune*). This bird comes out of nowhere and lands in a tree and goes (*whistles the same tune*). Dad says, "Otra vez!" ["One more time"]; (*Santana mimes violin and hums a different tune, then whistles it back as the bird*). Watching that bird... dad connected me with what I wanted to be. I wanted to be adored like him and I wanted to communicate.

### Eventually you recorded with him, a mariachi song called Vereda Tropical on 1983's *Havana Moon*.

My dad used to serenade my mom [Josefina] with it after a fight. Four o'clock in the morning, blocks away you'd hear him singing. My mom would get up, open the curtain a little and say "It's him." Then I knew it was gonna be all right.

### But it had stopped being all right by the time you moved to Tijuana?

Yeah. When my father went to play in Tijuana and didn't come back for a year my mom conned a cab driver, Barranquilla, a friend of my father's, into driving us up there. Four sisters, two brothers, a baby and a little dog. It took a whole week. You gotta sleep outside and you don't know if scorpions or snakes or tarantulas

gonna get you and it got scary because I didn't know if we might die in the desert and I didn't know whether my mom and dad would get back together...

### What happened when you got there?

Mom knocked and this lady, a prostitute I think, opened the door. She yells, "What do you want?" Mom says, "I've come looking for my husband, Jose." "Ain't no Jose here!" She slams the door. Mom knocks again. Soon my dad puts his head through the door and I saw everything in one look – anger and joy and fear. He put us in the funkiest place. I played my guitar or my violin in the streets to help with the rent. All that puts a hole in your stomach. I can trace back... I know how to *feel*, man. I know how to convert all my emotions... into one note.

### When you were 12, you went to Catholic school, then at night played in a cantina-cum-brothel called The Convoy. How did you deal with those extremes?

I worked side by side with prostitutes and we went together to church on Sundays. They had their children with them dressed in pristine white. So I embraced it as one: this is what they do, not who they are. I learned to play Ave Maria in church and woo the old ladies with my violin – use that bow legato, like Peter Green plays guitar. And I learned how to play for prostitutes to strip to: (*sings*) Doo-da-de-do-da, doo-da-de-doo-da-ssht – there goes the brassiere (*chuckles*).

### Presumably at that age your faith was orthodox Catholic?

No. My body would not accept the Adam and Eve story or that Jesus is the only thing for everybody. We all are children of Light and we evolved and evolution is a natural state of grace. I remember my mom saying, "You haven't been to confession for a while." I said "I've never been to confession." She grabbed my hand and made

me walk to the church. I felt, uh... a tornado of emotion inside me. Then it was my turn. The priest opened the window. I said, "I ain't doin' this shit!" I ran out. "Why should I tell this schmuck my stuff?" There was something in me that did not want to confess to another human.

### After therapy in the '90s, you said publicly that you'd suffered repeated sexual abuse by an American tourist in Tijuana in 1957-9. Do you want to say anything about that?

I never did anything... in my back or anything like that (*points behind him*). It was a person giving me a blow job, if you want to be specific. What people need to know is in July last year I was able to sit in front of [the paedophile] with the Light behind him – which is God – and say, "I see you and I recognise you as a child of God who made a mistake and instead of dragging you like a decomposing cadaver next to me, I release you, I forgive you. And I'm free from the sensation or the guilt." Because it felt good; that's why molested children feel guilty and then get angry – which is why I've been so angry and so inconsistent my whole life with my children, with my wife, everyone close.

### You moved to San Francisco in 1962 after your father found work. Did living in a foreign country come easy to you?

For a child of Tijuana it was a lot to take. At first there was wonderment to look at Safeway and see rows and rows of food and fruit. Like, "It's the land of abundance here." But also you have insecurity, the ego saying, "These people think they're better than me – I'm in the ghetto" [the mainly Hispanic Mission district]. Especially when I'm looking at a guitar in the window of this Apex House Of Music, thinking, "My God, how does that guitar smell, how does it feel, how does it sound?" and all of a sudden I hear, "Hey, you fuckin' little chilli-bean Pancho Villa Mexican motherfucker!" I turn around and see two sailors looking at me with so much hate. Yeah, you come to America and you're bombarded

## A life in PICTURES

### One Carlos: Santana's Latin lessons

**1** Hair apparent: Santana '69 (from left) Carlos, Marcus Malone, Gregg Rolie, David Brown, (front) Bob Livingston.

**2** Devotional rescue: with John McLaughlin in 1980.

**3** Bill please: at the Bay Area Music Awards with Mr Graham, 1981.

**4** All white on the night: Carlos as Devadip, with Sri Chinmoy in 1981.

**5** Runaround now: in 2000 with Clive Davis and his big haul of Grammys for the 1999 album *Supernatural*.

**6** Crazy in love: with Beyoncé in San Diego, California, 2003.

**7** In excelsis: Carlos reaches for the sweet note in Jungle Strut as Santana play the Soul To Soul concert in Accra, Ghana, 1971.

2



4



3





with all the highs and lows. They embrace you, but they can also be very Ku Klux Klanish.

**You said once that, as a teenager, your accent and limited English made you “angry at the world because I could not articulate”.**

I didn't speak fluent English, but I hardly spoke fluent Spanish – and also I didn't know yet how to crystallise my existence so that no matter what language I speak *you* understand it. I mean, like Miles Davis saying with seven notes 777 things. Like John Lee Hooker singing three notes, “Mmm, mmm, mmm” (*Hookerish growls, then laughter*). So I learnt to read books instead of comics and I started to understand that to articulate means to condense emotions, experiences, knowledge.

**To help support your family you washed dishes at a café. Then, around the time you started the Santana Blues Band, you quit the job, left home and didn't speak to your parents for two years.**

There comes a point where even your mother's going to get in the way. Your mother or wife or kids, if they don't believe in something that you really need to do while you're on the planet – you discard them. I don't mean coldly; you let them go and trust God will take care of them. I was listening to *Sgt. Pepper's* and the music from San Francisco which... How could I explain “consciousness revolution” to my mom? Or my ardent desire to be on-stage? She said, “Let me get this straight: you gonna make your own music and people gonna *pay* you? You must have been smoking too much marijuana, you're crazy!”

**Putting Latin music and rock together was some innovation. What inspired you?**

When we first came to the Mission district I went

to a Mother's Day picnic in this plaza and here they had mariachi music, in the middle a Latin band with congas and timbales – (*sings a salsa piano line*) dj-dj-djing-dja-djing – and then over there a rock'n'roll band, guitars and bass. I heard all three of them at the same time. And I was like, “Yeah.” Why not mix the Afro-Cuban music I'd heard in Tijuana – Tito Puente, Mongo Santamaría – with B.B. King and Motown and Kenny Burrell jazz guitar and organ like Jack McDuff or Jimmy Smith? Pretty soon Fleetwood Mac got congas, The Rolling Stones got congas. But some of the English bands hadn't learnt about the *wah*.

“Commercial suicide?  
It's healthy. You  
follow the light like a  
moth. If you're gonna  
burn, you burn.”

#### The wah?

Picture a hundred women in a circle and they're all going (*stands and sways with hands clasped over his crotch, singing*), “Hey nah-nah-nah, hey nah-nah-nah, *wah!*” (*flings his arms wide*). They go wah and they open their hands like they're showing you their privates. Santana understood the wah. We don't know why! (*laughs*) Chepito [Areas], [Mike] Carabello, Gregg [Rolie] – we hit the wah together!

**Before your breakthrough at Woodstock, Bill Graham told you, “You guys are going to show that blacks, Chicanos and Anglos can work together.” Had you given it a thought?**

No. He said “You're one of the first United Nations bands.” We looked at each other like, “Oh, that's right.” That's what happens in San Francisco.

**You played both Woodstock and Altamont; they're characterised as the peak of the peace and love era, then the sudden terminal descent into violence and hatred.**

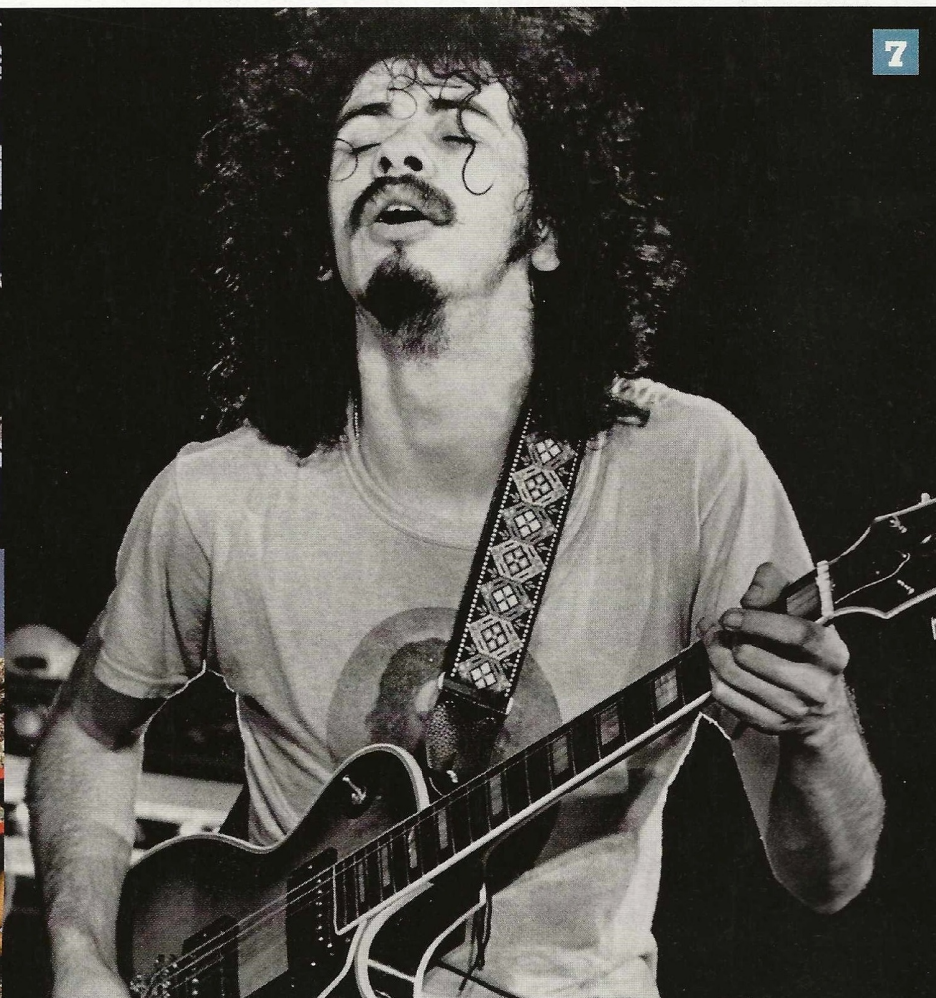
That's too glib. Woodstock is still every day. Altamont is still every day. Altamont was a collective mistake. People say Woodstock was useless, but I saw a collective adventure representing something that still holds true today. When the Berlin Wall came down Woodstock was in there, when Mandela was liberated Woodstock was in there, when the world celebrated the year 2000 Woodstock was in there.

**About your own musical development, was there a moment when you discovered yourself as a soloist?**

I remember being alone one evening... until then when I heard my records it was like seeing myself in the mirror and there was no *me* there, only a lot of other guitarists' faces: B.B., George Benson, Peter Green. That evening I heard Samba Pa Ti [*Abraxas*, 1970] on the radio and I looked in the mirror and

it was my face, my tone, my fingerprints, my identity, my uniqueness. Because when I recorded it I was thinking of *nothing*, it was just pure feeling. I have a suspicion it came from stuff bottled up inside me, that I didn't know how to express or articulate. I get angry because, “Why can't I say what I really mean?” Then Samba Pa Ti comes out of me. And everybody understands it.

**That original band only lasted three albums. One problem seems to have been that you told them not to take heroin and cocaine while using and advocating psychedelic drugs yourself.**







Keeping it up:  
Carlos Santana  
in Los Angeles,  
August 2008.

◀ It was about religion that imprisons you and spirituality that liberates you. Although I didn't know that then. The musicians had become tired, cranky, take 20 takes to get two notes right, because cocaine is designed to amplify your ego, not your spirit. And I was watching all the other guys going down: Jimi, Jim Morrison, Janis Joplin, all victims of their own self-indulgence. It might seem like a contradiction, but take mescaline and you start reaching for the intangibles. Then after a while those drugs got boring too and I realised the best drug is called imagination. Take a backwards flip into the unknown.

**After that band broke up in 1971, you met several people who proved crucial to your life, including your now ex-wife Deborah. Can you talk about that relationship at all?**

I choose not to because everything we did together until she decided she was done with me, it stands on its own. Beautiful, perfect, aesthetically, spiritually, monetarily. Our children alone... She helped me along the way of self-discovery and hopefully I did the same thing with her.

**What did your friendship with John McLaughlin and recording 1972's *Love, Devotion, Surrender* mean to you?**

Trust. I trusted him to take me to Sri Chinmoy, John's teacher. I felt I would learn from him something everlasting, which I did – love to life, devotion to people, surrender to God. Bill Graham called the album "commercial suicide"!

**But you still went ahead.**

It's healthy. You follow that light. Like a moth. If you're gonna burn, you're gonna burn...

**Back then you said, "Without a guru I'm a waste." Wasn't that unhealthy subjugation?**

My convictions are a thousand per cent. Sri Chinmoy represented the inner voice reaffirming that music can be used for the betterment of humanity – the way my dad played, to make people's eyes brighter, the smile bigger. That's why I surrendered my existence to him. But only for a while.

**You ended it because he denounced Billie Jean King for coming out?**

That was one of many things – he was spiritual and he should have understood. I came back from a tour really tired and he was talking to me... and I just knew I was done. Sever the umbilical cord and I'm on my own. I did have a problem with him telling his disciples, "I'm taking his name back, he cannot be Devadip".

But he passed last year [October, aged 76] and I choose to remember only the good things.

**The *Multi Dimensional Warrior* compilation concentrates on your long "middle" period of commercial decline. Is it a call for reconsideration of neglected work?**

Yes, that's one angle. Pride in what we were doing from '73 to '99. And every lyric I chose

## OYE COMO VA?

How's it been with Carlos Santana since 1970? Phil Sutcliffe offers his verdict.

### THE QUINTESSENTIAL ONE

**Abraxas** ★★★★★ COLUMBIA, 1970



Essence of incandescence. On a percussive cloud of sweat and sex, Santana soar through frantic jazz-rocking Incident At Neshabor, the sweeter sway of Samba Pa Ti and Tito Puente's Oye Como Va and majestic Black Magic Woman/Gypsy Queen – linked guitar showcase covers of two contrasting Carlos heroes, English master of soulful sustain Peter Green and jagged Hungarian jazzier Gabor Szabo.

### THE INSPIRATIONAL ONE

**Caravanserai** ★★★★★ COLUMBIA, 1972



After three albums the original band grumpily split... then, relieved, mostly drifted back, along with some new blokes, and found themselves going for the jugular. The gang gallivant around their leader as he explores his Coltrane inspiration but, mercifully, can't stop sounding Latino. Even the cicadas aboard Eternal Caravan Of Reincarnation get in the groove.

### THE COMMERCIAL ONE

**Supernatural** ★★★★★ ARISTA, 1999



The best "special guest" extravaganza album ever? Santana's guitar, revived by this go-ahead enterprise, commands the tracks with Spanish titles – like old-time fireball (Da Le) Yalleo – and otherwise gets powerfully behind the strongest lead vocal performances he's ever had (Rob Thomas, Everlast, Dave Matthews and more). A big, bright commercial hit, hot from start to finish.

includes the word "Light". I'm saying, Claim your Light.

**But you haven't written many lyrics over the years. Are you still somewhat self-conscious about words?**

No. I'm pretty consistent in what I want to talk about. Not "Baby, I love your lips." I wanna talk about divine romance. When the right person comes and we can dance together, when there's no issues, when there's no one imposing their emotional blackmail on me... and vice versa. This is why my lyrics are not articulate because this is where I really want to go.

**The different kinds of music you made in those years do suggest a constant conflict between rock or pop and the spiritual inspiration you found in, say, John Coltrane.**

It was never a conflict. But, thinking of Tijuana, I had been playing more for The Convoy than the church. There is a middle path, but I didn't know that so I went to extremes, like in most of my life. Then after a while I just said, "Shut up and play and stop thinking about the halo or the horns!" Though I do like the intensity to maintain. If you die getting that perfect note, then freaking die. But get that note.

**Well, in the late '90s, you did decide to try for a commercial rebirth via Clive Davis and the *Supernatural* album.**

Yeah, my spiritual quest had been more important than airplay. But Clive Davis enquired of Deborah what I was doing; I was getting out of a contract with Island Records. He said, "Call me when you're done, I'm interested." He said I was "unbelievable" live but radio's another arena, and, "Are you open and flexible enough to trust me to bring songs to you and artists to you?" I said, "I'll trust you, you trust me." And just before I talked to him an archangel called Metatron told me that this was going to happen. He said, "We're going to get you back on to the airwaves."

**As you know, this is where some people think, "This man's a crackpot."**

There's a TV milk commercial right now featuring an ageing rock star who has an angel appear to him – of course it's me! (Laughs) Anyway, you haven't experienced what's in my heart, but Metatron [he appears in the Talmud and medieval Jewish texts] is another name for the Holy Spirit or the Christ.

**I gather you told Clive Davis you wanted "to make music to unify the molecules with the light". How did he react?**

He said, "I want to go out to lunch with Metatron, can you hook me up?" I said, "He's already with you."

**Did you discover a new longing for money?**

Money is just more zeros to the right. I still attend to the '1' on the left. God.

**But you changed direction and made smash hit pop records like *Smooth* with Rob Thomas. Did that music satisfy you?**

Yes, because I could see the reaction in people's eyes. Hallelujah is hallelujah. And, live, I can still go from Coltrane to John Lee Hooker and everything in between.

**In your sixties, intimations of mortality must be inevitable. How do they affect you?**

Like a snake sheds its skin, let it go. When it's time, I did my absolute very best with what I had and who I am (snaps fingers). And some serious angels are gonna come and invite me in: Miles Davis, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Jaco Pastorius, Marvin Gaye. But don't call me yet! Yeah, don't call me yet...

