

Rolling Stone



50th ANNIVERSARY YEAR

Issue 1291/1292
July 13-27, 2017

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The guitarist on training his inner child, aging gracefully, and why he might do peyote again

What are the best and worst parts of success?

I get to meet like-minded people like Harry Belafonte and Desmond Tutu. I also got to meet Dr. J and Wilt Chamberlain. You ask Wilt, "Hey, how's the weather up there?" He says, "Which state?"

Sometimes you also get to meet a knucklehead. If I'm out at a restaurant, I'm more than happy to take a photo with someone, but if they get a little too intense or drunk, I tell them, "I need you to honor my wife and honor me because you may have to call an ambulance for you and the police for me." They say, "Oh, I thought you were spiritual." I say, "I am, and I'm trying to stay that way." **What was your favorite book as a kid, and what does it say about you?**

Anthony Quinn's autobiography *The Original Sin*. He had an inner child who was always putting him down. Everyone has some serious inner child that can be a demon and make you feel like crap. I learned to train that child to respect me and honor me.

What's the most indulgent purchase you ever made?

A fire-engine-red Excalibur car, around 1970 or '71. I didn't know how to drive, so after 15 miles on the freeway, the police pulled me over. The guy says, "You're Santana, right? Don't even try looking for your license because I know you don't have one. We're gonna help you." He gave me a card for someone who would pick me up and teach me how to drive. People have always been very, very gracious and accommodating to this Mexican.

What album do you put on to chill out?

John Coltrane's *A Love Supreme*. That music could compel a person who is strapping themselves with bombs to cry like a woman cries when she gives birth. They'll think, "What was I thinking?" Coltrane's music corrects a twisted and crooked mind.

You'll turn 70 in July. You used to say you would retire around this age.

I'm retired from retiring. We just recorded our next album, with Rick Rubin. It's mostly African rhythms, and I'm going to call it *Global Revelation*. Rick doesn't know that yet.

For a period in the Seventies, you followed the Indian guru Sri Chinmoy and renamed yourself "Devadip." Does anyone still call you that?

Only certain people who are still in the spiritual path. I'm really grateful for those 10 years I spent with that spiritual master. I don't believe I will be lost in the evil ocean, be-

cause what I learned was very much like a West Point discipline, like a Marine.

How does one age gracefully?

Some people get their face done. All I did was become conscious of what I was thinking. I said to myself, "When you get on the freeway, someone's going to flip you the bird. So don't do like you used to do. Let the person have their energy, and five seconds later you won't remember this person." All of a sudden, all that emotional investment is not haunting you. You go, "I passed the audition."

What advice would you give to your younger self?

Pay accountants and lawyers by the hour. Don't pay them a percentage. You have to show me how much you work in that hour and what you did.

Does the state of the world shake your belief in God?

When Hitler was in power, there was the Resistance, and from there it went to the goatees and beatniks, and then to Bob Dylan and Greenwich Village, and then it went to San Francisco and the hippies. There's always a new wave. We're in that process.

What memories does the 50th anniversary of the Summer of Love trigger?

For me, '67 means something that's not happening right now that should be happening, which is more people taking LSD, peyote and mescaline. More people discarding plastic values. Even Cary Grant was taking LSD. It's therapeutic. Under supervision, people will be better.

We're two years away from the 50th anniversary of Woodstock. If there's a reunion concert, would you participate?

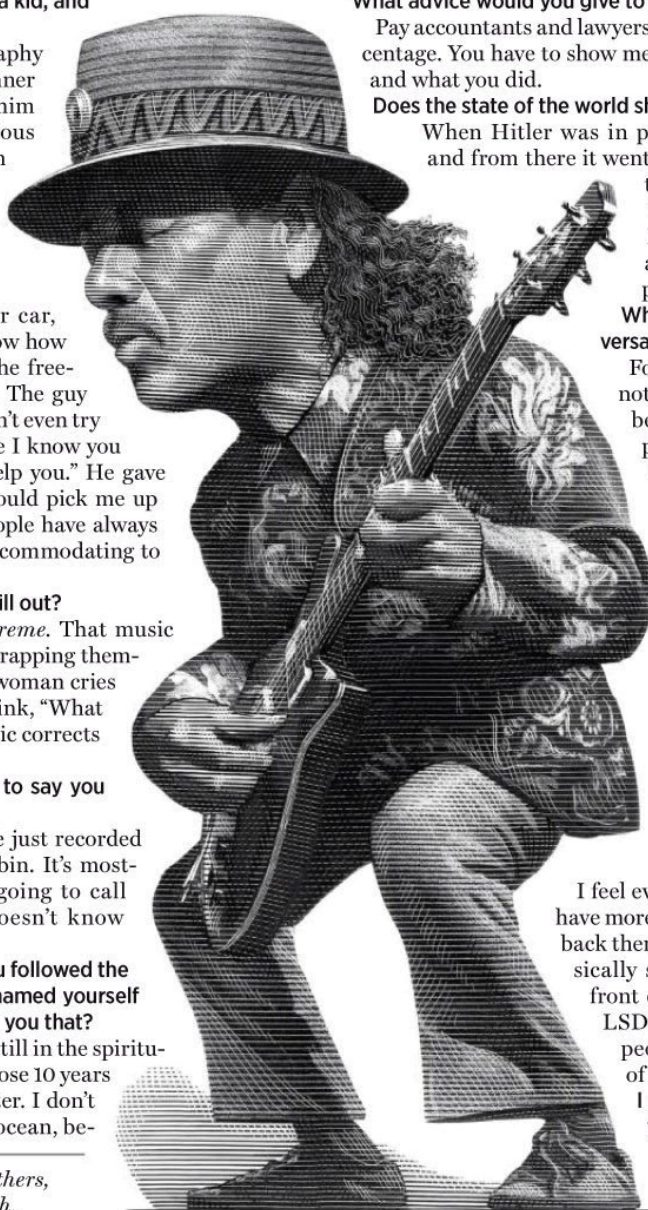
I plan to do something with [his current band, with his wife], hopefully part of the original band, and also with Larry Graham. So I might be coming to Woodstock with three bands. Fifty years went fast, but now

I feel even younger and more clear, and I have more energy and more conviction than back then. That [1969 Woodstock] was basically some of the highest I've been in front of so many people. To peak with LSD or peyote in front of 400,000 people, you almost have no control of anything.

I don't imagine you'll be doing peyote at the Woodstock 50th.

I'm not afraid. Seriously, I'll do it if you do it.

INTERVIEW BY DAVID BROWNE



Santana's LP with the Isley Brothers, *"Power of Peace,"* is out July 28th.