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CIRCUS

The pivotal sixth and nearly final game of the 1971 World Series. The crucial ninth inning of the sixth game of the 1971 World Series and it was the last half of the ninth and it was either no outs or one out. Suddenly somebody near the control booth or the broadcast booth or wherever it was TURNED ON HIS RADIO and guess what was playing. It wasn't the Beach Boys. No and it wasn't Tyrannosaurus Rex and it wasn't a test pressing of Bob Dylan's next one. No it was something bigger and much, much better: Santana. Santana was getting played to people the world over glued to their TVs watching the culmination of a season's worth of national pastime. People were passing their time with baseball and they were having fun. Change the u to an a and you got fan. Change the f to an s and you got san. Add a "tana" to the san-you're allowed to, nobody's gonna stop vou, not even an umpire-and you got SANTANA, and that spells fun in any language.

Including Spanish. For instance: "Nuestro invitado, Santana, acaba de concluir la temporada de novato. Bateo .330 con 25 cuadrangulares y 88 carreras empujadas—una hazana mayor que la de los super-estrellas Mays, Aaron o Mantle." That's baseball doing the talking, and what it says is true: Santana can't be beat. They've won the game so many times that they've even decided to try their hand at another very popular Western Hemisphere sporting event, boxing. The 'iew York State Athletic Whatsit recused them a boxing license, but that didn't stop them from doing the next best thing-playing a humdinger of a concert at the Felt Forum. Not only is the Felt Forum named after Irving Mitchell Felt, but it's just about everybody in the world's favorite arena for small-potatoes welterweight conflicts, some of which are awesomely exciting.

They played the Felt the nite be-fore that big sixth game and right across the street from it in New York City there's the New York City General Post Office. And it's nice to know that even after a concert there's a post office somewhere open at that hour so you can mail a letter to mom and dad and little sis or maybe a cousin or a friend and tell them all about the show. It's cheaper than a phone, and since music is eternal there's no hurry in telling them all about it, so a letter's

just as good as Graham Bell, And you can bet your bottom dollar at least 65 people wrote home to tell them all about Santana after the show had played its last note and the curtain sadly dropped.

Nick Tosches was one who wrote his dad, and here's what he said: "Dear Father, What I just saw you would like too. It is music for people of all ages and ethnic backgrounds. Next time they're in town I want you and mommy to come with me and we'll emerge from the concert a better family unit as a result. Their name is Santana and they sure know their music. Your son, Nick.' Postage was eight cents.

For only four dollars and ninety cents more he could have bought himself a copy of Santana's latest discosmash, Santana (Columbia KC 30595). Wasn't that the same title as their first million-selling LP, San-tana (Columbia CS 9781)? Yes it is, but that's no matter. Whichever one you buy you'll be buying yourself a piece of salvation. The Lord knows no better way to get it on for you than the music of the spheres, and there's even a sphere on the latest Santana cover. There's no sphere on the cover of the original Santana, but there is a lion and the lion is the king of the beasts and you don't just find kings lying around the streets anymore.



Photos by Helleman

But there is sort of a similarity between the two albums that extends slightly beyond the similitude of titles. That is: IT'S ALL EX-ACTLY THE SAME! Every cut. every sound, every utterance, every beat, every note, every sound, every everything, it's all the same, But don't let that throw you: all music is the same anyway. For instance: the Ides of March are the same as Chicago, therefore all music is the same, right? Okay so there's no reason to think that it's just because it's Latin that it's the same, cause that's wrong. Wrong because it isn't even all Latin. "Quajira." for example, is bar-mitzvah music, and those of Yiddish extraction will no doubt get up and dance like dervishes when they hear it.

And it's every bit as professional as Jewish mitzvah music too, not to mention Jewish weddings. Gregg Rolie's piano is a killer, and they don't even always have a piano on hand at weddings; sometimes they just have horns and a drummer. All of which Santana has anyway, including an electric bass that's manned by David Brown, and he was in many, many tickets were allocated attendance at the Mick Jagger wedding, as a matter of fact.

And if he hadn't been invited there would have had to be some answering done, because the very best cut on the Sticky Fingers album is,

of course, a Santana cop. I'm speaking of "Can You Hear Me Knocking" by Jagger and Richards, but stolen (borrowed?) from Mr. Carlos Santana and company. So some of the guys in the band got invited to the big affair in St. Tropez, and they had to sweat out all the delays just like everybody else. Their membership in the musicians' union didn't mean a thing once the delay got going. The delay was caused by Mick and Bianca disagreeing over what kind of marriage they wanted. There are two kinds in France: one where the money gets shared equally, and one where he gets it all. She wanted the first, and he wanted the second, and he won. Quite a vast difference between that and the way it is in Santana's home state of California, U.S.A., where they have community property and every-

body's happy as two bugs in a rug. But like all good guests, the Santana people kept their mouths shut, so they've continued to get invites to all the big parties in town. They were on hand for the recent Jefferson Airplane gala in Frisco and for their family cause it's a big one. almost as big as the Grateful Dead's. As the Airplane's Grunt paraded its talents across the broad stage, they could certainly have taken the stage themselves for a quick version of "Everything's Coming Our Way" from off the new album, but they weren't in a working mood, and you can dig that, can't you? Even the most callous, hard-toplease fan will recognize an artist's right to an occasional rest, and the City By The Bay is no exception.

But Santana'd be the last band to rest on its laurels. Ass is okay, but not laurels. Not even laurel tree, unless there's a tree house in it. Tree houses are mighty sophisticated these days, and many are even furnished with electricity and hi-fis and stereos and radios. Which means that people can go up there and listen to the latest comedy album by Cheech and Chong, the comedy duo. They have this routine where one of them is a Chicano and the other one is a white L.A. hippie and the hippie gets in the other guy's car and they smoke some reefer together. Before the smoke has cleared the guy whose car it is sez, "Hey did you catch the name on the car as you stepped in?" To which the passenger responds, "No, can't say as I did;" and so the driver tells him the car's called "Evil Ways." NAMED AF-CIDCLS 5



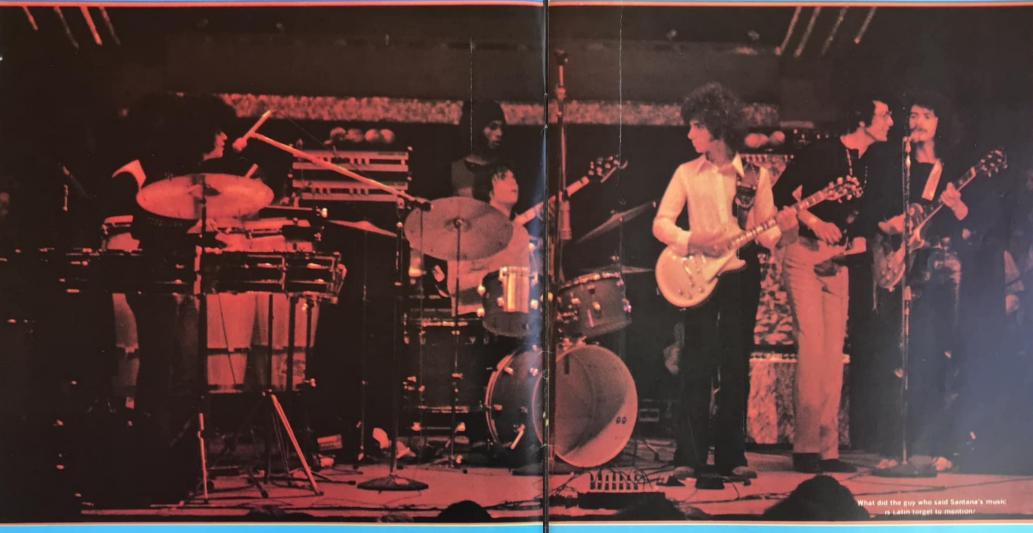
What peculiar power gets Santana into other people's comedy routines?

Clues To

Culture

Storm

4 CIDCUS



TER A SONG BY SANTANA!!!
Their original amazing tremendous hit, and they've already become such a part of the culture that they're in other people's comedy routines! The only other time that ever happened was with the Beatles, and that sure is select company.

And it's their savage rhythms which make it possible. You know from the word go that these descendants of the great god Dionysus are not partisans of the polka. Nor do they fancy the foxtrot or the

two-step. Michael Shrieve doesn't fancy it, nor do Mike Carabello or Jose Chepito Areas, Santana's masters of percussion. They hate the two-step, and most likely you do too, so why not just come right out and admit it?

Jose's last name is not that different from Arias, and if you've read anything about the history of boxing you already know that Ramon Arias gave flyweight champ Pascual Perez one of his toughest fights, before Pascual finally surrendered his

crown to Thai swatter Pone Kingpetch, the division's only three-time champ. When Jose's workin out on the congas with bare hands, it's a good thing he's not using his fists or the conga's skin would be kayoed in a minute, and by a bare knuckler at that.

Jose Ferrer was never a boxer himself but he sure has a way with words and consequently they gave him an ad to do about Aspira, which keeps kids in school and off the street and gets them jobs and sends them to college. It's a good ad but Santana's not in it. On the other hand there's another ad with some guy named Terry Thomas (not the) or something like that that does have Santana featured in the background—and featured is just the word for it, anything with Santana in it is a feature.

The Film-Maker's Cooperative catalogue lists as a feature anything over 45 minutes in length; and less than 26 films have attained that designation. Of that number there are

four which feature the music and/or visual appearance of Santana; "Santana" by Jonas Mekas, "Hot Blazing Tubs" by Kenneth Anger. "Wandered Lonely in the Glen" by Sarah Rinuli, and "Rock and Roll Diary" by Hogan Love. Take my word for it, none of them are as good as Santana.

Or even as good as their new album. Not only is it good but it can't be bad. Even warps can't harm it. Records are only human and so sometimes they get warped in ship-

ping, and Santana is no exception. I've heard two different copies with two entirely different warps and let me tell you something right now: the warps don't make a difference! It sounds just as good! And there's even an additional new and exciting rhythm riff thrown in by the warp, and it's a good one indeed. Not the best on the record but almost. Which means Santana knows how to use its readymades. Which means Santana is the best group in the whole wide world.

Carlos Loosens His Grip

S antana has appeal. A spoonful of rock with a dash of Latino soul brewed in that Great American Melting Pot. How could they miss?

In the beginning, the question was "how could they succeed?" The Spanish-American flavor just wouldn't fit into the American pie. Musicians like Willie Bobo tried to cram it in and failed. But Santana slipped into the American diet because they had more than just Latino spice—they were also part of that important rock casserole, The San Francisco Sound. Santana did a TV special with the Airplane and the Dead last year, and they all jammed at the end. Jerry Garcia and Jack Casady spread the word-of-mouth about Santana a year be-

Santana's
new album,
says humorist
Richard Meltzer,
is exactly
the same as its last.
But critic
Richard Birch
disagrees.

fore their first album came out.

Who is the group named after: Onstage, Carlos Santana wrinkles his nose as he pulls a note, slinking left and right like a king lion inspecting his lair. It was his blood, sweat & tears that put this group together. Sure, they're all great musicians, but there's no doubt that it's Carlos' group. He took the longest solos, he sang lead, he signalled the endings, he stands in the middle of the stage.

Carlos' drive and image kept Santana going through its first two albums. On its third album, called Santana (Columbia), Carlos is letting his other musicians step out more and experiment in their own directions. The group still stays very tightly rooted to its tried and true sound, but the experiments are definitely there, and they show signs of substantial changes in the future.

Gregg Rolie and Michael Carabello do more lead vocal work on the new album, especially in "Taboo" and "Everything's Everything." Rolie's organ also plays a more important role in tunes like "Everything's Coming Our Way." The percussion is further upfront and Carlos' guitar is spending more time following the other instruments instead of just leading them.

Swapping leads: Carlos' new attitude shows up especially in the way he treats Neal Schon, Santana's

new guitarist. Carlos doesn't keep Neal in the background—he gives Schon the honor of the first solo on the album (in "Batuka"). And he must respect the younger guitarist tremendously, since he allows Neal to swap leads with him and to occupy the same space in the group sound.

Two guitars either drive each other sky-high or clash terribly. Santana and Schon mesh and boost each other to higher and higher

energy levels.

Carlos has developed a smooth and sinewy lead style, registering pain and pleasure by slowly pulling notes up and then letting them down just as slowly. Schon likes to express himself in staccato bursts and quick, intense jabs. His rhythms add new bounce to the sound. In "Jungle Strut," Neal uses a Hendrix-type riff that really spurs the timbales and congas. On "Taboo" his rhythm work fills in spaces between the organ's notes so that the two flow together as a backdrop for Carlos. In "No One To Depend On," Neal and Carlos play guitar harmonies which show that Neal sometimes functions in the group as Carlos' second pair of hands. Since Neal gets enough time to step out on his own, he probably doesn't mind playing second fiddle, at least not vet.

Santana and Winwood: After listening to "Everybody's Everything," it's easy to see why Traffic invited Santana to jam on "Gimmie Some Lovin" during the last Traffic concert in New York. The organ and vocal in "Everybody" are very Winwood-oriented. On the other hand, Traffic's addition of congas, timbales and tambourine to its sound is very Santana-oriented.

It looks as if the Santana influence has seeped across the Atlantic. Even the Rolling Stones end a tune on their Sticky Fingers album ("Can't You Hear Me Knockin'?") with a long Santana jam. Yes, Santana has definitely added Latino soul to the Rock Melting Pot. And they've generated enough new heat to get things melting faster.

