

ZZ Top ■ Journey ■ Pat Benatar ■ Rickie Lee Jones  
Yoko Ono ■ Ramones ■ David Johansen ■ Foghat

# RECORD REVIEW

OCTOBER 1981

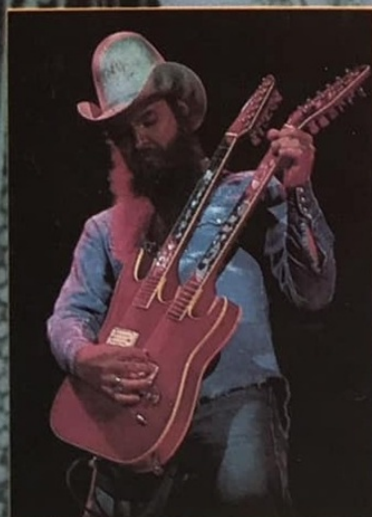
\$1.50

**Ozzy  
Osbourne**  
Ex-Sabbath singer  
starts over with  
super guitarist

**Santana**  
With Zebop! behind  
him, the guitar legend  
discusses things  
old and new

**Jack Douglas**  
Producer of Aerosmith,  
Patti Smith, John Lennon,  
The Knack...

**Four Tops**  
Pop's most durable  
foursome is coming  
back



**ZZ Top**  
Interview with a Texas  
band that the times  
are catching up to

**RETROSPECTIVES:**  
Bob Marley and Dizzy  
Gillespie



## Santana, post-Zebop!

Born in Autlan, Mexico on July 20, 1947, Carlos Santana was the son of a mariachi musician and spent his formative years working in the redlight areas of Tijuana. His move to San Francisco during that city's Haight-Ashbury period was what brought him his first recognition.

He recorded his first album in 1969 and in that same year the band's appearance at Woodstock did much to set the machinery in motion. On following albums he honed and defined the sound which borrowed both from Latin and jazz and on his newest album titled *Zebop!* the music is as fresh as it was over a decade ago.

While Santana might spend much time playing his music he spends little talking. So on this rare occasion when he had spare time, the guitarist talked about his records, his music, and his desires.

### By Steven Rosen

#### What are your feelings about *Zebop!*?

It really came as a repercussion from doing the *Swing of Delight* album. I was so enthused and excited about working with Wayne Shorter and Tony Williams and Herbie (Hancock) and Ron (Carter) that I wanted to play some different kinds of music as soon as that was over...to just do something totally drastic.

#### Does playing with musicians of that caliber make you play better?

Oh, immediately. I keep calling them the Himalayas of musicians. They can go anywhere, anytime. Herbie the most by far, but all of them. It's really something playing with Tony. The way some people feel about motorcycles and hot rods is the way I feel about playing with Tony. It's extremely exciting.

#### Do you choose the material for *Zebop!*?

We all pick; everybody brings material and then

we all choose and see which material becomes most natural for the band. Sometimes there's material that we try and then don't pull out for three or four years. Sometimes it's a matter of musicians in the group not being able to do the best with the material so fortunately this band keeps going through musicians.

#### Is that why your bands are always changing members?

It's not *the* reason but it's one of the reasons.

#### Do you listen much to new music?

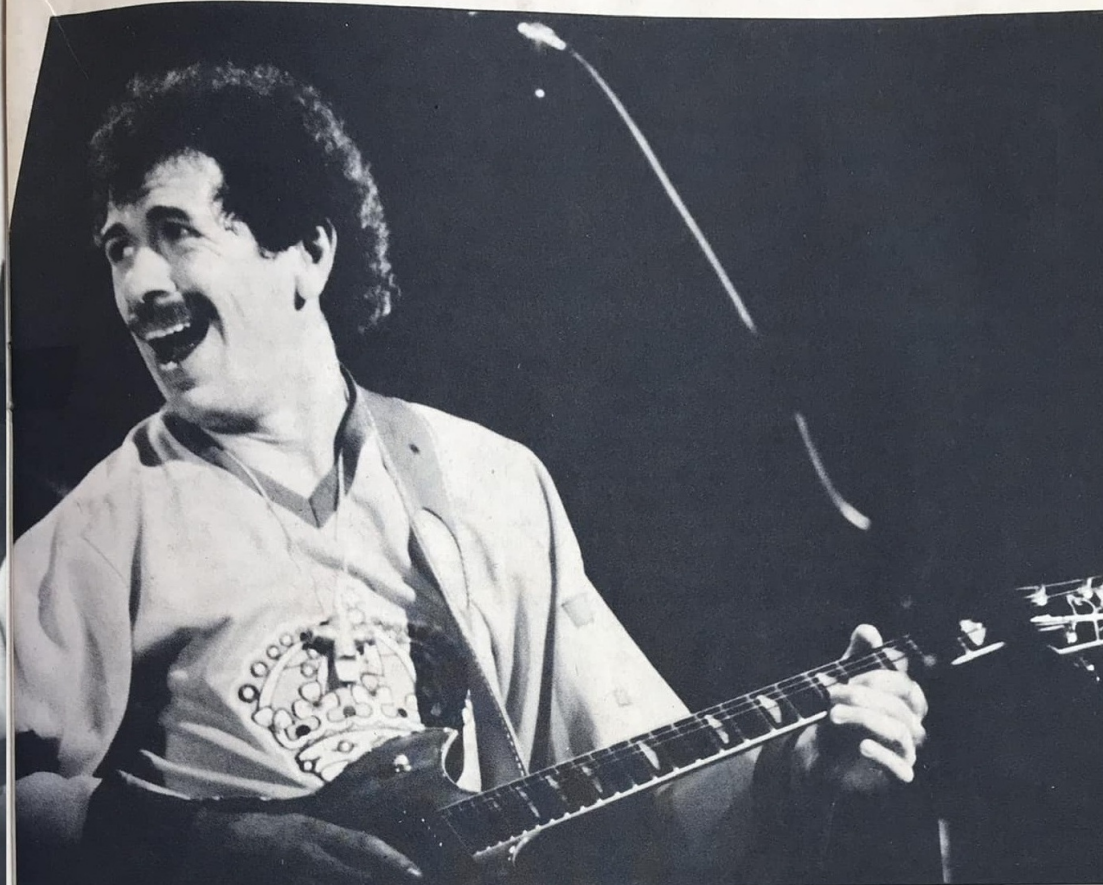
I listen to the Police and Van Halen and Led Zeppelin and Stevie Wonder. All of them are great but for some reason the Police strike me as extremely genuine. Led Zeppelin is probably the best of all the groups like that. When I listen to other groups they're so pale as far as composition. They're brilliant as far as their playing but I like composition and Jimmy (Page) is fantastic, he's incredible, as far as his knowledge and wisdom for using the studio and his compositions. He's brilliant. You get spoiled after listening to that for a while. But I listen a lot to Miles Davis and Coltrane. So it's not just guitar players.

#### Do you like working with Keith Olsen?

I like working with Keith Olsen; I like the way he records. It's fantastic. I also like Fred Catero. Fred Catero is innovative, but it works. It's like a Model T Ford, it works. Keith is a little more current. You lose something and you gain something. You lose the spontaneity because sometimes people are so concerned with the makeup of the guitar. But our band deals a lot with live sound. That's where a lot of the energy comes in. You lose the sound but you gain spontaneity. It's good to learn from all those people. Keith Olsen is brilliant but there's always room for improvement in everybody's house.

#### How much of the improvising on stage is structured?

Photo by Glen LaFerman



**"As a rule people want to be moved. They don't want to be blasted—sometimes they do—but as a rule they want to be punched."**



Photo by Glen LaFerman

Some of it is structured. The heads and the tails are pretty structured but not totally. Just enough so you know how to get into something and how to get out of it. And give it to the next guy. The rest of the stuff is improvised.

**Do you like working with other guitarists?**

It depends who it is. If the composition is really personal I'd rather do it myself and then I don't have to put anybody through head changes or myself through any unnecessary head changes. And explain to them how to feel something. If it was another guitarist who was already established I wouldn't say anything because he would immediately find the harmony. But as a rule on our own albums I tend to do it myself.

**Was working with John McLaughlin a positive experience?**

It was very, very positive, extremely positive. He's played with so many people and has so much knowledge about music. He can go from Muddy Waters to Ravi Shankar to Miles Davis to Stravinsky and back. So playing with him you're bound to hit all kinds of joyful moments. It's not like he just plays John McLaughlin. John McLaughlin is very, very vast. Unfortunately sometimes people know him for playing as John McLaughlin for whatever that thing means. Yet he can go anywhere. He can play with Jimmy Page or Miles Davis or Muddy Waters. That's the beauty of him. Sometimes he's short changed because people don't give him that space. He can play some blues. He really can. If anybody has any doubts they should listen to 'Jack Johnson.' When Miles Davis told Jimi Hendrix he was going to put the greatest rock and roll band in the world together that was the proof. Listen to 'Jack Johnson' with Billy Cobham and Miles Davis and Michael Henderson. It's a fantastic album. It's a straight ahead shuffle. Check it out. It's something that Jeff Beck and Jimi Hendrix and all of us had backed up against the wall.

**Were you real aware of Jimi Hendrix?**

Yeah, oh yeah. He was the Da Vinci of the guitar. He's extremely brilliant.

**Do you consider yourself a loud guitarist?**

When I listen to people like Charlie Byrd

and Earl Klugh I guess I have to be. I learned from Woodstock that you have to project, unless you're playing in a club. Then you turn down and project in a different way. As a rule people want to be moved. They don't want to be blasted—sometimes they do—but as a rule they want to be punched. Especially kids. Older people would rather stay home and watch TV but kids want to be moved.

**Was Woodstock important for you?**

Yeah, it was extremely special. Mainly because there was so much creative energy; the force was incredible. I didn't see any violence. Musicians were allowed to express themselves in any way they could. Nowadays people say all kinds of ungodly things on the microphone and they swear and spit and all that kind of stuff and people are bored with that. Where it's not even artistic anymore, it's just trash. In the old days people used to do it in a certain way and if you did it you'd get in trouble, so it was a certain innovative era. There was a thin line of what you could and could not do.

We lost a lot of music and we gained a lot of clowns. No, it's true. The standard of Jimi Hendrix even when he was fooling around was brilliant. People don't do that now even when they're fooling around. So we have lost something but we have gained other things. We have people like the Police who are extremely special. And Weather Report.

**How do you see the first Santana album?**

We had been playing that album for about a year and a half before we recorded it, so when we went into the studio we were one of those bands who got a week to record and a week to mix and that's it. So it was no sweat because we knew it. *Abraxas* took a little longer and the third took much, much longer. By the fourth everybody was on Mars. I think it happens to everybody. It happened to the Doors from what I read. You go to the studio and everything is magnificent the first time, and by the second time around you can't even tune your guitar. I don't know why it is but I think it's a common thing. Now it's much easier; now it takes us a month to do an album.

Unless you're doing an album like *Zebop!* that we started with Keith Olsen and then Bill Graham and I produced it. It took about a year because we were travelling a lot in between recording the album. And not necessarily because it was taking that long in the studio. But as a rule it doesn't take that long to record anymore. We're back to the beginning again.

**When you go into a studio you have all the material done?**

Yeah. We have fifteen songs and out of those fifteen songs maybe some of them don't sound as exciting in the studio as they did at rehearsal. So sometimes you make up a song. For example, 'Brightest Star,' that blues song. I just counted off and I said 'F' and I started playing and Alex started singing and we recorded it. I edited some of it and that was it.

**Can you look back at past albums and see a change in your playing?**

Oh, yeah, there's more self-awareness; I'm more secure. Before it was like a shot in the dark. Looking for the right note and looking for the right moods and things. Getting loaded at that time did help, because when you'd trip around it was a form of imagination. Whereas now I have a tremendous amount of imagination without the dope. I pretty much know where something is on the guitar, even with my eyes closed. I'm more acquainted with myself and the instrument. So it's infinitely easier now.

**Was San Francisco magical during the '60s?**

It was magical in the sense that there were a lot of natural things happening. When it first started it wasn't all those artificial hippies and all those people coming from the midwest or wherever they came from and destroying the whole thing. Everybody had a certain grin and you knew who was getting loaded and who wasn't getting loaded. There was a certain camaraderie. It was special. The street fairs were beautiful; people were always creating certain things.

It was very innovative. Charles Lloyd was extremely innovative; this was before Miles Davis or anybody was playing psychedelic music. And John Handy. And the Kaleidoscope who even Led Zeppelin were into. It was a merging, it was the first merge of the rainbow—Jim Kweskin's band, country and western with psychedelic.

**Did bands like Big Brother and Jefferson Airplane hold any interest for you?**

No. I went to see them but I liked the Dead; the Dead was fascinating. They would go from Chuck Berry to Mozart to Weather Report and then all of a sudden they'd become liquid and you couldn't understand the music. They covered a lot of moods. A lot of the other bands I didn't like as much. I loved the Doors, the Young Rascals, Quicksilver, but some of the other bands were not so special. They were just tripping; they had something but it wasn't enough to hold my interest. The Doors were extremely special. Even if you were stone square they'd make you trip. They'd

**"Even if 50,000 people are going crazy and you didn't play a good solo you're grateful to them that they liked it, but you know."**

capture your imagination and your mouth would drop and hang from your jaw.

**Were the Fillmore shows memorable?**

They were memorable because who else would put Laura Nyro, Miles Davis and the Grateful Dead on one bill? Or Jefferson Airplane, Gabor Szabo, and Jimi Hendrix? People don't do that anymore. You have Rush, Ted Nugent, and AC/DC. It's the same thing and who wants to see the same act three times? They pretty much border on doing the same thing is what I'm trying to say. Where before it was extremely different. I miss those times. Sometimes I say to Bill (Graham, Santana's manager) 'Why don't you book things like that again?' I'd go out of the house if he booked the Police, Weather Report, and us. Somewhere along the line we've got to make it interesting again. Right?

**Was *Abraxas* when you first met Neal Schon?**

He started hanging around then but *Santana III* was the first album he played on. All of a sudden I popped the question and said, 'Hey you guys seem to be very fond of Neal and he's really hot—why don't we bring him into the band? And some of the double melodies I play he can play on stage and we can trade off.' I don't know if it's ever been on record but I'm the one who popped the question for him to come into the band. I don't know if the other guys thought I was just going to tell them to go to hell or something. I feel Neal was very creative and had something to say.

**What do you think of his playing now?**

I think he's significant, he's special. I don't like his compositions as much as I like his fire. And his playing. For composition, it takes maturity and growth and vision and depth. For composition, you have to listen to cats a lot and not just see one part of the puzzle, you have to see the whole thing. I'm learning composition by trial and error, by picking up the albums and finding out just how they put things together. So it's not just picking up licks and riffs. But I think when he sees the whole picture he's going to be very valid. He already is saleswise and that speaks for itself in platinum. I think he'll

fall into it very naturally once he puts it all together.

**Do you like to sing?**

Yeah, I like to sing. On this demo I just did with Gregg Rolie I started to sing. It's the first time I've felt very comfortable singing. It's new. Ask anybody what they think about hearing their voice for the first time on a tape recorder. It's kind of strange but after awhile you learn to shape it like your hair or your guitar sound or anything and you learn to express it the way you want to present it. I do like the sound of my voice but I mainly like the sound of my guitar while I'm singing. Because I've been doing it for so long now that I'd rather hear my guitar than my voice.

**Is there an art as a guitarist to backing up a singer?**

Yeah, there is. You can't get in his way. At that moment he's the quarterback and if you get in front of him he's going to hit you with the ball so you've got to get out of the way and enhance and protect him. Sometimes I make comments and I ask him not to sing. He says 'What do you mean?' and I say 'Don't sing, cry.' It's the same thing Miles Davis told Mahavishnu one time. He said 'Play the guitar like you've never played it before' and if you listen to *Bitches Brew* you can see what he means. He's playing the guitar very, very universally. A lot of times a guitar player you can take or leave if you're a horn player or a piano player. But if you know what to say to a guitar player everybody will claim it.

**You've been making some demos with Gregg Rolie?**

Right. We did it with Steve Smith, the drummer from Journey, and David Margen our bass player and Gregg Rolie and myself. We did four songs in four days and it was great. Everybody is really excited about the material and we're hoping CBS will pick it up, but if they don't, no problem, we'll take it to somebody else.

Gregg is very creative and very assertive and if you feed him the right encouragement—I don't mean butter him up—Gregg is extremely special. I like his composition more, opposed to other people who are

players. His composition is his forte for me. The way he puts songs together. I like his voice very, very much. He's a great player also, but he has all those assets.

We both grew up together listening to Procol Harum and these people and that's what I like about Gregg. It's a certain collaboration of the Jazz Crusaders, Eddie Harris, and Procol Harum. That's what became the Santana/Gregg Rolie sound. And later on when he drifted from that, it was probably good for him. But for me it was different.

We used to listen to a lot of people. When we sat down it was like a funnel and we'd suck all that stuff up, and when we started playing it sounded like us. I mean it's no secret, anybody can do that kind of stuff. It's just like merging colors and boom, by the time you put it on the table it's your own color, your own personality. Unless you don't have any identity and you sound like them.

**Did you used to listen to bands like King Crimson?**

Yeah, we used to see them at the Fillmore. Fleetwood Mac was one of my favorites with Peter Green. They were extremely soulful. That's one of the reasons we did 'Black Magic Woman.' We went to see them and said 'Hey, that's a great song.' He (Green) used to hang around a lot and he used to come over to the concerts a lot and we'd always compliment each other like crazy. He still has the stuff. My personal comment is that he needs to be surrounded by better musicians but in his composition and feel, nobody can touch him. It's precious. He didn't lose anything by not playing the guitar for so many years.

Neither did Gregg. Not that Gregg didn't play but I think Gregg's been in the background with Journey, as a writer.

**Did you listen to Cream?**

Yeah, very much. And we listened to Traffic a lot. We always wanted to do 'Feel-in' Alright?' but everybody always beat us to it. Joe Cocker would beat us to it and Mongo Santamaria and Dave Mason would do it *again*. It's a great Santana song but I think we'll leave it alone. Because of the congas and stuff it would be so natural.

**What do you think of Eric Clapton's playing now?**

I like it. I like it because when he gained something, I gained something. I like his singing. I like it because there are only two people doing it, Dire Straits and him. They've got that sound and the resources in there are rich. Sometimes I miss the old sound of the SG through the Marshalls but I can always turn the old records up. I doubt if he'd play them just as good anyway because all of that stuff was a combination of environment and pressure, and you can't go back, you've got to go forward. So why even ask him? I'm very contented with him closing his eyes and giving me what he has and what he is.

**Does your playing change from the studio to the stage?**

Oh, yeah. In the studio, the walls don't

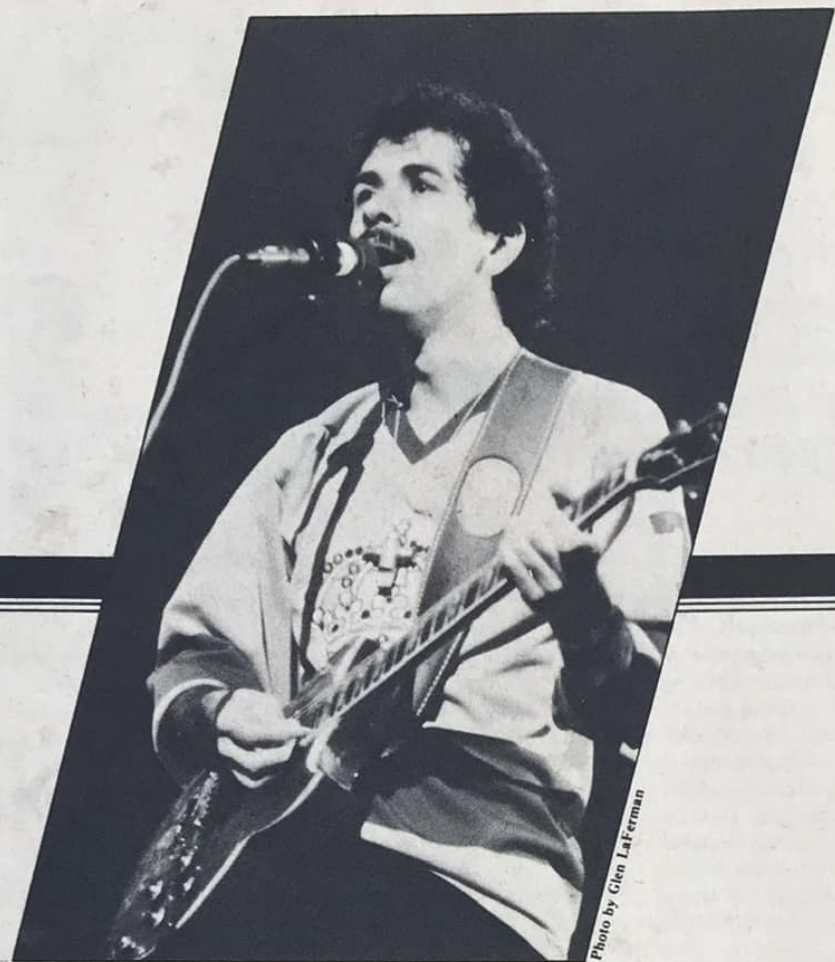


Photo by Glen LaFerman

feed you energy. You have to feed yourself and you have to feed the band and the band has to feed you. The walls just drain you. As soon as you play in front of people, their eyes... they're taking something and they're giving something. At that moment you're like a runner—you see all the obstacles in front of you and you have to do a couple of laps and you see the people in front of you and they want to see a record. And the juices start going. In front of people, you're at your best.

Sometimes you don't have to entertain people and you have to please yourself. And that's a whole other kind of thing which Keith Jarrett is into, and it's extremely valid. At that moment you are your greatest audience.

Let's face it, you know when it's happening and when it's not happening. Even if 50,000 people are going crazy and you didn't play a good solo you're grateful to them that they like it, but you know. Right?

A lot of times, being a human being, you try and hit a chord and your hand does something else and you go 'Oh, really?' It happens with the drummer and it happens with everybody. That's just part of being human. But all that's good. I once heard Feliciano say 'If you make a mistake, do it again and nobody will notice.' I know a lot of people who listen to Miles Davis and copy his solos note for note, mistakes and everything.

**What did you think of your playing on Lotus?**

*Lotus* was great, because it was our biggest quest in proving to ourselves that we could play with Chick Corea and Herbie Hancock. So we could get out of that realm of rock and roll players. Let's face it they're both extremely significant and special but you're talking about little leagues and big leagues—musically. I'm not talking about sales, I'm talking musically. I don't care what anybody says: you take a rock and roll player that only plays rock and roll and all of a sudden you put him on stage with Tony Williams or Herbie Hancock, and it's like swimming in the deep water for the first time. He's going to go, 'Oh, help me,' because those guys have got it covered. Fortunately those people are very kind and very warm. Herbie and Tony will help you; they can throw you a chord which can open the door for you. It's like if you throw wind at a bird he'll start gliding more naturally. It's an inspiration, a breeze. Musicians like Herbie are full of inspiration; they're very positive. I've played with other musicians, I won't name their names, who were very negative. They'll create traps for you so you'll look like a total fool. They look at you and they look at the rest of the guys, and it's like saying you're limited. You feel naked, like an idiot. But then again there are other ones who know where your strength is at and they'll throw chords at you so you can express yourself at your best.

**What are your plans for the future?**

I want to record an album with Gregg

Rolie and I want to record with Herbie. I still look forward to recording an album with Chris Blackwell and some of the guys from Third World and some of the guys from the Fabulous Thunderbirds. I want to try a combination of blues-reggae. And I like the way Chris Blackwell produces things. That started with the *Swing of Delight* album and I thought, 'I wonder how those guys approach the music?' I'd like to record with Miles, and that's not impossible or improbable. It's really possible in the future. I'd like to record with Elvin Jones and McCoy Tyner but that's going to take me a while because those guys are cruising way up there.

I'd like to record also with Jimmy Page as soon as he finds the space. We talked about it in Frankfurt and he said he was interested in doing just a blues album. He's open for it, but a lot of times I tend to think the people around him don't want him to do it. He's an artist, and any artist wants to create and transcend all the time. Right? It would be fascinating, it would be a great honor.

**Do you have any desire to play with Jeff Beck?**

Yeah. He's more of a snake—and I don't mean that in a bad way. He's more of a sidewinder. It's like getting into a ring with somebody who doesn't stand still too much. It would be interesting. I would enjoy it tremendously because he's a lot of fun. But as I said he bobs and weaves all the time. It would be a great challenge.