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IN THE STUDIO

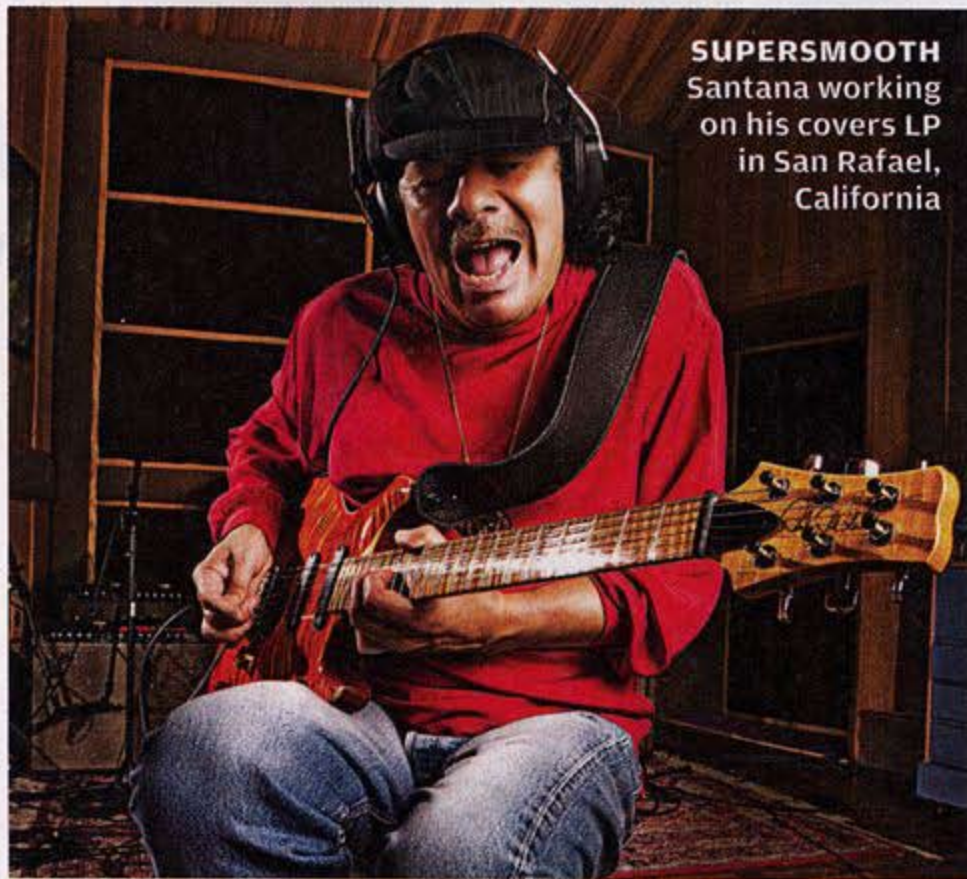
Santana Tackles Zep, Hendrix, AC/DC on Latest Covers Album

Album Title TBD
Due Out September

By Andy Greene

CLIVE DAVIS HAS expertly guided Carlos Santana's career since he signed him more than 40 years ago, but it took Davis nearly two years to talk the guitarist into his newest idea: a covers album of classic guitar-driven rockers, from "While My Guitar Gently Weeps" to "Back in Black." "He kept calling," says Santana, checking in from a Bay Area studio. "I just put the phone up to the ceiling and said, 'Oh, my God!'" Eventually, Santana folded. "I said to him, 'Clive, each of these songs are masterpieces like the 'Mona Lisa,'" says Santana. "But he convinced me. So I dated the 'Mona Lisa' - and I found out she's a freak!"

Using *ROLLING STONE*'s 2008 list of the 100 greatest guitar songs as a guide, Santana and Davis each selected seven tracks and guest singers. They recruited Chris Cornell for "Whole Lotta Love," Joe Cocker for "Little Wing," Rob Thomas for "Sunshine of Your Love" and Nas for "Back in Black." "We made the songs



SUPERSMOOTH
Santana working on his covers LP in San Rafael, California

sound completely new," says Santana. "I paid special attention to the groove so the females would get completely aroused."

He brought in Ray Manzarek to play organ on the Doors' "Riders on the Storm." "Our version, with a slide guitar, is really far out and psychedelic," says Santana. "You won't even have to take mescaline or peyote. I call it a light show for blind people." He didn't know AC/DC's music very well before covering "Back in Black,"

but he's since fallen in love with Angus Young's guitar style. "It would make a bulldog break a chain," he says. "It reminds me of being 17 with pimples bursting from my pores."

Santana hits the road with Steve Winwood for a tour in July, and he hopes the pair can write together. "I love his spirit," Santana says. "I'd also like to record some Alice Coltrane or Miles Davis with a symphony. As Jimi Hendrix would say, 'There's so many groovy things to get into, *maaaaaan.*'" 