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# Carlos Santana: Using Music to Unite Communities

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# Carlos Santana: Using Music to Unite Communities

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# Abstract

- Carlos Santana, a musician born in Mexico and raised in America, has spent his entire career creating music for the masses. In 1966, he formed the Santana Blues Band whom, over the next several decades, would become internationally known for their music and charitable nature. Using his fame to promote the good in the world, Santana has become an international icon for the Latino community in America. Utilizing several scholarly and newspaper sources, I will explore in more detail Santana's influence on the Chicano community in America. I analyze the way Carlos Santana has used his music and fame to raise funds for charities that help people who have been affected by poverty, natural disasters, and other problems. I examine the ways in which Santana has been able to raise awareness of the issues that many Chicano's face in American society, such immigration. Finally, I delve further into how Santana, through his music, has helped create a better acceptance of the Chicano culture in today's mainstream American community.

# Background Information

- Born in Jalisco, Mexico on July 20, 1947.
- Moved to California in 1955 where his music career would begin at the local bars.
- Played Woodstock in 1969 which skyrocketed the band to fame.
- 27 career albums with at least one #1 hit in each decade since the 1960's.
- One of the most well respected guitar players in the world.



# Methods

- I searched several databases including The Latino American Experience, JSTOR, and ProQuest for articles on Carlos Santana.
- I did research about Santana's charity work and community outreach programs.
- I investigated Santana's popularity among both the Chicano and Anglo populations.
- I also took a closer look at some of the collaborations Santana has taken a part in.

# Discussion

- While Santana has been criticized by many for his outspokenness, he has used his fame to help promote equality for minority groups (especially Chicanos).
- By creating a charity foundation, Santana has been able to change the lives of thousands of underprivileged children around the world.
  - Money from concert sales help to fund the Milagro Foundation.
- At an Atlanta Brave's civil rights game Santana spoke out about immigration saying "I am here to give a voice to the invisible." (USA Today).
- Most recently Santana released his 27<sup>th</sup> album which debuted at #1 on the Latin Billboard Charts and #9 on the Top 200 Billboard Charts.
  - "Oye 2014" Santana featuring Pitbull
    - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odt-2S06Pz0>

# Discussion

- By collaborating with many Anglo-American musicians, Santana has been able to show the mainstream culture that Chicanos are just like them.
  - Collaborations with artists like Rob Thomas helped land him 9 Grammys in 1999 for his album *Supernatural*.
  - “Smooth” Santana Featuring Rob Thomas
    - [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Whgn\\_iE5uc&feature=kp](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Whgn_iE5uc&feature=kp)
- This research has helped to demonstrate how Carlos Santana has created a better image for Chicanos in the mainstream American culture.
- Being one of the first mainstream Chicano artists has given Santana a major influence over both cultures.
  - An influence he is using to promote good.

# Conclusion

- Santana's use of music at charity events has allowed him to help raise funds for many communities suffering from the effects of things ranging from natural disasters to extreme poverty.
- By collaborating with mainstream artists like Steven Tyler, Rob Thomas, and Dave Mathews; Santana is bringing Latin Pop music into the mainstream American culture.
  - “Just Feel Better” Santana Featuring Steven Tyler
    - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=enbTb8PizTI>
- The Milagro Foundation founded by Carlos and his family in 1998 to help underprivileged youth.
- Carlos Santana has also been a big supporter of immigration rights, speaking out candidly on the topic in some instances.



Any Questions?

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