

CARLO SANTANA & MAHAVISHNU JOHN MCLAUGHLIN 'LOVE DEVOTION SURRENDER VINYL RECORD' (COLUMBIA RECORDS/SPEAKERS CORNER RECORDS/GERMAN IMPORT)

In the spirit of JOHN COLTRANE two legendary musicians recorded an album together in the early 1970s. CARLOS SANTANA and JOHN MCLAUGHLIN were both huge back then with their bands SANTANA and THE MAHAVISHNU ORCHESTRA, but with this album they went for an experimental improvised sound that here and there sounded like extremely complex progressive jazz-rock. Now SPEAKERS CORNER RECORDS has remastered the album, so a new vinyl record release is done at the best possible analogue way like they do with each release. The 5 included songs on the album were recorded in 1972 and 1973 and they are a mix of JOHN COLTRANE covers, a traditional Gospel song and 2 self-written songs by John. Besides Carlos on guitar and John on guitar and piano, the other involved members were Mahalakshmi Eve McLaughlin – piano, Larry Young (under his Muslim name Khalid Yasin) – piano, organ, Doug Rauch – bass guitar, JAN HAMMER – Hammond organ, drums, percussion, BILLY COBHAM - drums, percussion, Don Alias – drums, percussion, Mike Shrieve – drums, percussion, Mingo Lewis – percussion and Armando Peraza – congas, percussion, vocals. An incredible line-up with as result an album that is one of the most difficult and complicated albums CARLOS SANTANA has even been involved with. It might also be his heaviest record, because already during the opener A Love Supreme there's a lot of shredding going on by Carlos. It's improvised heavy proggy jazz-fusion rock, with a rather cool twin-guitar solo as well halfway, while a hammond comes along with some vocals later on and all together that gives it an exciting twist. This 8 minutes counting tune is followed by a calmer piece titled Naima, which is mostly situated around the Spanish guitar. The Life Divine clocks in at 9:30 minutes and is an interesting mixture again, with some more melodies this time due to the vocals that feel like tribal singing and this song is basically progrock orientated, yet with the vibe of World Music, African meets Latin rhythms and here SANTANA delivers an incredible guitar solo! I do miss however the melodic SANTANA sometimes here, because it is a lot of shredding we hear on the record, something that would make YNGWIE

MALMSTEEN jealous! Carlos plays on the longest song of the album, the Gospel traditional Let Us Go Into The House Of The Lord, as if he is playing a complicated jazz saxolo, with a lot of guitar shredding and some moments it is really quite heavy, almost complex progressive rock you could call this. Closing track Meditation is a calmer piece, a relaxing piano/acoustic guitar dominated song that is much needed after the previous heavy complex tune. Once again the perfect sound of this remastered album sounds like Carlos and John recorded it yesterday, but as already mentioned the music is quite extreme here and there, not the kinda SANTANA music you're probably familiar with. On the other hand, the fans of complex prog and jazz in the classic 70s improvisation direction will absolutely love this album. The vinyl album is available through: <https://www.jpc.de/?lang=en> (Europe) and <http://www.acousticsounds.com> (USA).

(Points: 8.3 out of 10)