



**HÉCTOR LAVOE'S GRAMMY®-NOMINATED FINAL ALBUM  
STRIKES BACK  
RETURNS TO VINYL FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE ITS 1987 RELEASE**

*One of “El Cantante’s” most emotional and honest recordings, the album includes such powerful performances as “Loco,” “Ella mintió” and “Escarcha”*



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Los Angeles, CA (April 23, 2025)—**Craft Latino** announces the **first-ever vinyl reissue** of *Strikes Back*, the GRAMMY®-nominated 10th solo album from legendary singer **Héctor “El Cantante” Lavoe**. The 1987 title, which marked the artist’s final release during his lifetime, includes such poignant tracks as “Ella mintió,” “Escarcha” and the salsa hit “Loco.” Pressed on **180-gram vinyl**, the LP features **all-analog mastering** by **Dave Polster** and **Clint Holley** at **Well Made Music**. Returning to vinyl format for the first time since its original release, this reissue arrives on **June 20th** and is available for [pre-order today](#). A **limited-edition “Loco Green”** color vinyl variant (**limited to 300 copies**), with an **exclusive bundle option** that includes a classic Fania logo T-shirt, is also available for pre-order at [Fania.com](#).

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Perhaps *the* greatest interpreter of salsa music, singer **Héctor Lavoe** (1946–1993) was instrumental in popularizing the genre during the ’60s, ’70s and ’80s. Known for his impeccably bright vocals, seamless phrasing and ad-libbed anecdotes, it’s no surprise that Lavoe earned the nickname “**El Cantante**” after his 1978 hit of the same name (penned for him by the great **Rubén Blades**). Born Héctor Juan Pérez Martínez in Ponce, Puerto Rico, the singer relocated to New York City at 17, where he picked up his stage name and began performing in bands led by Roberto García, Kako and **Fania Records** owner **Johnny Pacheco**. It was through Pacheco that Lavoe met 16-year-old **Willie Colón**, with whom he would form one of Latin music’s most celebrated partnerships. Beginning in 1967, Lavoe appeared as a vocalist on 10 legendary studio albums with the Willie Colón Orchestra, including the boogaloo classic, *El Malo* (1967), plus bestsellers like *Cosa Nuestra* (1970), *Asalto Navideño* (1971) and *Lo Mato* (1973).

In the mid-'70s, Lavoe embarked on a solo career, just as salsa was reaching its peak popularity in the US. Before long, he was one of the genre's biggest stars with such bestselling (and now classic) albums as *La Voz* (1975), *De Ti Dependes* (1976) and *Comedia* (1978). The mid-'80s, meanwhile, brought another career surge for Lavoe, thanks to projects like the *Vigilante* film soundtrack—which reunited him with Colón—and his bestselling follow-up, 1985's *Reventó*.

In the wake of the acclaimed release, Lavoe returned to the studio to work on his 10th solo album, *Strikes Back*. Joining him was Colón, who served as producer, as well as an all-star band, including **Justo Betancourt**, **Tito Allen** and **Milton Cardona** on backing vocals. Written amid an era of personal tragedies and struggles with addiction, the 1987 album would prove to be one of the singer's most honest and poignant recordings, thanks to such deeply personal songs as "Loco." The album's biggest hit, penned by Tommy Sánchez, found Lavoe confronting and questioning the public's judgment of his life.

That sense of sadness and frustration is a recurring theme throughout *Strikes Back*. "An air of melancholy and profound existential agony prevails, on a personal level as well as in affairs of the heart," journalist Jaime Torres Torres once wrote about the album. Lavoe invites listeners to understand the depth of his despair and bitterness in tracks like "Escarcha," "No soy plato de segunda mesa" and a salsa reworking of Amanda Miguel's ballad "El mintió"—"Ella mintió" ("She Lied"). The heartbreaking bolero "Taxi," meanwhile, finds the singer begging a driver to take him to "13 Sadness Street [at the] corner of Agony," to die. The album also has some lighter moments, including the Tommy Sánchez-penned "Ponce," an ode to Lavoe's beloved hometown in Puerto Rico.

Out of Lavoe's pain, however, came one of the most powerful albums of his career. The emotion that the singer poured into *Strikes Back* resonated deeply with fans and, a year later, earned him his first and only GRAMMY® nomination (Best Tropical Latin Performance). Sadly, the album would also be the artist's final Fania studio release before his untimely passing at the age of 46.

A hugely influential figure in the Latin community, Lavoe left behind a legacy that extends far beyond his lifetime. In addition to his 10 solo albums and classic releases with Willie Colón, Lavoe was also a regular guest with the celebrated **Fania All Stars**, appearing on more than a dozen live and studio albums with the collective. Over the decades, his contributions to Latin music have been honored in New York and Puerto Rico through street dedications, statues and murals. Lavoe's life also inspired an off-Broadway play, a tribute album and two feature films, including the Marc Anthony/Jennifer Lopez-led *El Cantante* (2006). In 2000, Lavoe was inducted into the International Latin Music Hall of Fame.

[Click here](#) to pre-order *Strikes Back*.

[Click here](#) to find the exclusive bundle including the "Loco Green" color vinyl with a classic Fania logo T-shirt.

#### **Vinyl Tracklist\*:**

##### **Side A**

1. Loco
2. Ponce
3. Taxi
4. Como no voy a llorar

##### **Side B**

1. Ella mintió
2. En el fiando
3. Escarcha
4. No soy plato de segunda mesa

\*Digital tracklist mirrors Vinyl

**About Fania:**

Highly influential, both musically and culturally, Fania Records spread the sound of salsa music from the clubs of New York City to the rest of the world and became a revered global brand in the process. Fania's master recording catalog is the definitive home for genres such as Latin big band, Afro-Cuban jazz, boogaloo, salsa and Latin R&B and includes artistic giants such as Celia Cruz, Willie Colón, Héctor Lavoe and Rubén Blades. With the creation of the international supergroup known as the Fania All-Stars, the label's signature musical style became known as the "Fania Sound." Fania's rich master catalog also includes the Pete Rodríguez's boogaloo classic "I Like It Like That" which was sampled by Cardi B in her #1 hit "I Like It." Additionally, three Fania Recordings, *Celia & Johnny* by Celia Cruz and Johnny Pacheco, *Azucar Pa' Ti* by Eddie Palmieri and *Live at Yankee Stadium* by the Fania All-Stars, appear in the National Recording Registry, a list of sound recordings that "are culturally, historically or aesthetically important, and/or inform or reflect life in the United States." For more info, visit [Fania.com](http://Fania.com) and follow on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8v11111111111111111111), [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/faniarecords), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/faniarecords), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/faniarecords), and [TikTok](https://www.tiktok.com/@faniarecords).

**About Craft Latino:**

Craft Latino is home to one of the largest and most prestigious collections of Latin music master recordings and compositions in the world. Its rich and storied repertoire includes legendary artists such as Antonio Aguilar, Joan Sebastian, Pepe Aguilar, Celia Cruz, Héctor Lavoe, Willie Colón, Ray Barretto, La Lupe, Ruben Blades and the Fania All Stars, to name just a few. Renowned imprints with catalogs issued under the Craft banner include Musart, Fania, TH, Panart, West Side Latino and Kubaney, among many others. Craft creates thoughtfully curated packages, with a meticulous devotion to quality and a commitment to preservation, ensuring that these recordings endure for new generations to discover.

Craft Latino is the Latin repertoire arm of Craft Recordings. The catalog label team for Concord. For more info, visit [CraftRecordings.com](http://CraftRecordings.com).

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