



HÉCTOR LAVOE'S LONG-OUT-OF-PRINT SALSA CLASSIC *EL SABIO* RETURNS TO VINYL FOR ITS 45TH ANNIVERSARY

Newly remastered (AAA) and pressed on 180-gram vinyl, this reissue includes fan favorites like "Lloré," "Noche de farra" and "Plazos traicioneros"



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Los Angeles, CA (May 21, 2025)—**Craft Latino** salutes **Hector “El Cantante” Lavoe** with a **45th-anniversary reissue** of his classic sixth solo album, *El Sabio*. A longtime fan-favorite, the 1980 LP includes such tracks as *“Lloré,” “Noche de farra”* and *“Plazos traicioneros.”* Making its **debut on 180-gram vinyl on July 18th**, and **returning to the format for the first time since its original release**, *El Sabio* features **all-analog mastering by Dave Polster and Clint Holley at Well Made Music** for an optimal listening experience. In addition, a **limited-edition** (only 300) **“Verde Natural”** (Natural Green) color vinyl variant is available exclusively at Fania’s online store, bundled with a collectible T-shirt. Both vinyl options are available for [pre-order](#) starting today.

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 ten legendary studio albums

with the Willie Colón Orchestra, including the boogaloo classic, *El Malo* (1967), plus best-sellers like *Cosa Nuestra* (1970), *Asalto Navideño* (1971), and *Lo Mato* (1973).

In the mid-'70s, Lavoe embarked on a solo career, just as salsa reached its peak popularity in the US. Before long, he was one of the genre's biggest stars with such best-selling albums as *La Voz* (1975), *De Ti Dependes* (1976), and *Comedia* (1978). That momentum carried into the new decade with another standout album considered to be among his best works, 1980's *El Sabio* ("The Wiseman").

Produced by Colón (who oversaw the majority of Lavoe's albums) and arranged by **Jose Febles**, *El Sabio* features an array of standout performances, including the title track. Penned by the great Puerto Rican bandleader Tito Rodríguez, "**El Sabio**" is the perfect platform for Lavoe's bold personality. In liner notes for an earlier edition of the album, author, activist, and bandleader Aurora Flores writes, "This is a confrontational song...recounting rivalries wrapped in hypocrisies." She continues, "'El Sabio' sports Lavoe vocally wrestling with what is paradoxically an arrogant, smart-alec version of a paper alter-ego."

But the album also allows Lavoe to reveal his softer side—particularly through emotionally charged songs like "**Plazos traicioneros**," a romantic bolero by Luis Marquetti (first made famous by crooner Vicentico Valdés), and "**Llore**," sung from the point of view of a womanizer, whose brash behavior is a cover for his deep-set insecurities. Contrastingly, "**Aléjate**" (which translates to "Get away from me") finds the singer callously rejecting a woman he once loved.

Joining Lavoe is a talented collective of musicians, including brothers **José** and **Luis Mangual** on the bongos; pianist **Professor Jose Torres**; keyboardist **Gilberto "Pulpo" Colón**; and a meaty brass section that features the likes of **Puchi Boulong** and **Ray Maldonado** (trumpets), plus trombonists **Papo Vázquez**, **Reynaldo Jorge**, and **Colón**, among others. The band shines particularly bright on *El Sabio* through two instrumental tracks (a rarity for Lavoe): a rumba-fied version of Lee Morgan's hard-bop ballad, "**Ceora**," and a mambo take on the Cuban classic, "**Para Ochun**."

Lavoe and his band also reimagine another well-known tune out of Cuba, "**Noche de farra**," first made famous by La Sonora Matancera in the '50s. Giving the cha-cha-cha an updated New York feel, Lavoe "Redefines the usual Cuban style of *soneando*, bringing to it a very rustic Puerto Rican attitude, making it more rhythmic, than melodic in style," notes Flores.

Even though Lavoe was only featured on five of the album's seven songs, *El Sabio* became an instant fan favorite—thanks in large part to its highly danceable nature. In the years following *El Sabio*, Lavoe recorded four more albums, including the 1983 *Vigilante* soundtrack (with Colón) and 1987's GRAMMY® nominated *Strikes Back*, which marked the final release of his lifetime.

While Lavoe's life was tragically cut short at the age of 46, the singer's legacy continues to live on through his vibrant catalog of music. In addition to his ten solo albums and classic releases with Colón, Lavoe was a regular guest with the celebrated supergroup **Fania All Stars**, appearing on more than a dozen live and studio albums with the collective. Over the decades, his extensive contributions to Latin music have been honored in New York and Puerto Rico through a myriad of 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 *El Sabio*.

[Click here](#) to find the exclusive bundle including the "Verde Natural" color vinyl with a collectible T-shirt.

Tracklist:

Side A

1. El Sabio
2. Plazos traicioneros
3. Noche de farra

4. Para Ochún

Side B

1. Aléjate
2. Lloré
3. Ceora

*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 Rodriguez'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 and follow on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com), [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com), [Twitter](https://twitter.com), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com), and [TikTok](https://www.tiktok.com).

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.

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