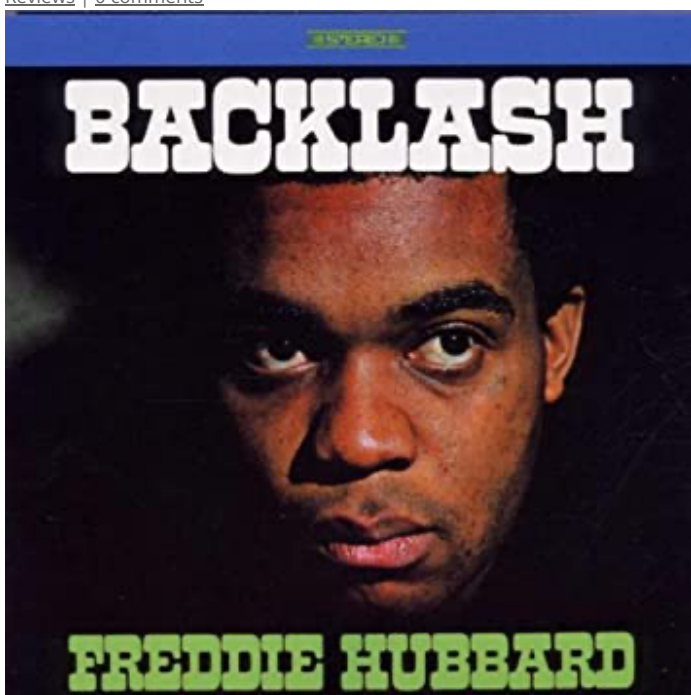


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Freddie Hubbard – Backlash – Speakers Corner Records

by [Audiophile Audition](#) | Apr 9, 2023 | [Jazz CD Reviews](#), [SACD & Other Hi-Res Reviews](#) | [0 comments](#)



Speakers Corner Records releases a vinyl upgrade of Freddie Hubbard's debut with Atlantic Records

Freddie Hubbard – Backlash – Atlantic Records 1477 (1967)/Speakers Corner Records (2022) 180-gram stereo vinyl, 40:06 **1/2:**

(Freddie Hubbard – trumpet, flugelhorn; James Spaulding – alto saxophone, flute; Albert Dailey – piano; Bob Cunningham – bass; Otis Ray Appleton – drums; Ray Barretto – percussion)

Trumpeter Freddie Hubbard was part of a surprisingly rich jazz scene in Indianapolis (Wes & Monk Montgomery, James Spaulding, Larry Ridley). His unique blend of tonal and atonal play enabled him to establish a notable career as a sideman. After moving to New York, he played with Sonny Rollins, Eric Dolphy, Philly Joe Jones, Don Cherry, Ornate Coleman and John Coltrane. By 1960, he began a solo career that lasted for more than forty years. He was proficient at *hard bop* and *modal jazz*. He even contributed to a song ("Zanzibar") on Billy Joel's Grammy-winning album *52nd Street*. In 2006, Hubbard was awarded the coveted *NEA Jazz Masters* award. His catalogue as a sideman



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and band leader is prolific and influential.

Speakers Corner Records has released a re-mastered 180-gram vinyl of Hubbard's 1967 debut for Atlantic Records, *Backlash*. He is joined by James Spaulding (alto saxophone, flute), Albert Dailey (piano), Bob Cunningham (double bass), Otis Ray Appleton (drums) and Ray Barretto (percussion). Side One opens with the sprightly title track. With a gritty drum and piano riff, the band coalesces around this soulful jam. Hubbard solos first with his unique precise and straight ahead style. Spaulding is up next on alto and keeps the rhythmic feel. Dailey's piano is jaunty like Ramsey Lewis and the group creates a tapestry of soul jazz. With similar arrangement and hooks, "Return Of The Prodigal Son" establishes a funky groove with great "feel". Hubbard's near vibrato-less horn is prominent with staccato accents. He is followed by the smooth play of Spaulding who occasionally stretches the tonality. In a change of pace, "Little Sunflower" has an airy resonance (with a finger-snapping pulse). Hubbard exchanges with Spaulding (on flute) to create a melodic flowing performance. It is easy to understand why this composition has become a jazz standard. Spaulding's flute soars and is countered by the rhythm section. Hubbard adds more vibrato for a different sound.

"On The Que-Tee" kicks off Side B with a drum solo by Appleton. Hubbard shows he is equally comfortable in hard bop with a blistering solo. Spaulding is also energetic on his run, and Dailey's articulate notation with descending chords is formidable. Again, the chemistry in the ensemble is superlative. With graceful waltz-time elegance, "Up Jumped Spring" is another accessible collaboration with harmonious trumpet and flute. Spaulding's feathery touch helps to create an airy resonance. Hubbard eases in with mellower tones and well-timed flourishes. This cut is jaunty and Dailey's solo is angular. When Hubbard and Spaulding join together it is special. The finale ("Echoes Of Blue") is a distinctive tempo adjustment. Hubbard invokes a bluesy reverie as Spaulding (on flute) adds texture to the jam. There is a slight touch of atonal play and a tempo uptick, underscoring the versatility of Hubbard's musical vision.

Speakers Corner Records has done an excellent job in re-mastering *Backlash* to 180-gram vinyl. The sound mix is vibrant with excellent separation. This vinyl pressing is top-notch with no hisses or pops.

—Robbie Gerson

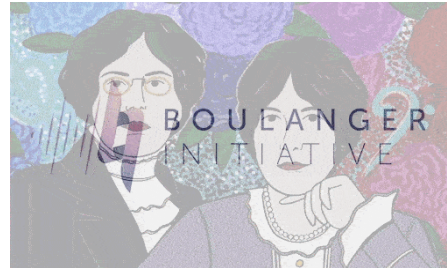
Freddie Hubbard – Backlash

TrackList:

Side A: Backlash; The Return Of The Prodigal Son; Little Sunflower

Side B: On The Que-Tee; Up Jumped Spring; Echoes Of Blue

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