

= Applause ( Lady Gaga song ) =

" Applause " is a song by American singer Lady Gaga from her third studio album , Artpop ( 2013 ) . It was released as the album 's lead single through Interscope Records on August 12 , 2013 . Written and produced by Gaga , DJ White Shadow , Dino Zisis and Nick Monson , additional songwriters included Martin Bresso , Nicolas Mercier , Julien Arias and William Grigahcine . " Applause " was inspired by the cheering of her fans , which kept her motivated during the months she toured with the Born This Way Ball in pain , before cancelling it due to a hip injury . It is an electropop and Eurodance song built around synthesizers and hi @-@ NRG beats , with lyrics addressing how Gaga is dependent upon her fan 's adoration and how she lives to perform .

The song received generally positive reviews from music critics , who praised its catchy chorus and favorably compared it to the material featured on Gaga 's debut album , The Fame ( 2008 ) . " Applause " achieved commercial success in a number of major music markets . In the United States , it peaked at number four on the Billboard Hot 100 , becoming Gaga 's twelfth top @-@ ten single . " Applause " has been certified triple platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America ( RIAA ) .

An accompanying music video directed by fashion photography duo Inez and Vinoodh was released on August 19 , 2013 , and broadcast on jumbotrons across Times Square . The video received positive reviews from critics , who saw it as a profile of Gaga herself and noted references to German Expressionist cinema and Andy Warhol . To promote the record , Gaga opened the 2013 MTV Video Music Awards with a performance of the song in which she represented her career through several on @-@ stage wardrobe changes . She also performed it live on Good Morning America , Saturday Night Live , her residency show at Roseland Ballroom , and on her tour ArtRave : The Artpop Ball .

= = Background and writing = =

Development of Artpop began shortly after the release of Born This Way ( 2011 ) , and by the following year , the album 's concepts started building as Gaga collaborated with producers Fernando Garibay and DJ White Shadow . Initial recording sessions for Artpop coincided with the Born This Way Ball : up to fifty songs were written and considered for inclusion . Gaga herself admitted that she intended to make audiences have " a really good time " with Artpop , engineering the album to mirror " a night at the club " . Meanwhile , the singer began presenting tracks to her record company and hoped to reveal the album 's working title by September , instead was announced one month in advance .

A hip surgery in February 2013 caused the singer to take a six @-@ month hiatus , during which she studied literature and music with the Haus of Gaga . It also allowed her to review and enhance her musical direction , which she described as a meticulous " gazing process " . " Applause " was written and produced by Gaga and DJ White Shadow , along with Nick Monson and Dino Zisis while on the road for her Born This Way Ball tour in 2012 . Other songwriters working on the track included Martin Bresso , Nicolas Mercier , Julien Arias and William Grigahcine . Talking to Sirius XM Radio , Gaga explained the inspiration behind the songwriting of " Applause " :

" I realized it was the applause of the fans that really kept me going . Because I would be ready to go onstage and just be crying hysterically not understanding even how I was feeling . I was feeling very dizzy , I had a lot of vertigo , I had pain but it 's like fuck if I know what hurts the most because I 'd been on tour for a year . But I didn 't want to let them down and I just couldn 't cancel because the thought of leaving 50 @,@ 000 kids in the arena just broke my heart . So I went out every night and I played and I played and I played until I couldn 't walk one night . "

= = Recording and composition = =

Recording sessions for the song took place at Record Plant Studios , Hollywood , California , and Platinum Sound Recording Studio , New York City by Dave Russell , with Benjamin Rice and

Andrew Robertson working as assistants . Russell also did the mixing of the track at Record Plant and at Heard It ! Studios . Additional mixing was carried out by Bill Malina , with assistance from Rice and Ghazi Hourani . Rick Pearl performed the additional programming and Gene Grimaldi completed the audio mastering at Oasis Mastering Studios in Burbank , California .

" Applause " is set in the time signature of common time and has a tempo of 140 beats per minute . It is composed in the key of G minor , following the chord progression of Gm ? F ? E ? ? Cm ? F ? Gm , with Gaga 's vocals spanning from F3 to D5 . The record has been pinned to the electropop and Eurodance music genres , and has been cited as returning Gaga to her career roots by mirroring the sounds of her debut album . Evan Sawdey of PopMatters described it as " closer to ' Just Dance ' in style over any of her Born This Way @-@ era hits , but in a much more aggressive fashion , catering to the gradual EDM @-@ stranglehold of pop radio . " Erin Coulehan of Rolling Stone concurred , calling it " a throwback to ' LoveGame ' -era Gaga . "

The song 's production is primarily centered around hi @-@ NRG beats , " stuttering synthesizers " , and hard snares . Robbie Daw of Idolator noted that the " opening , pulsating synths are a straight @-@ up throwback to the ' Poker Face ' intro ? albeit slightly sped up ? while the handclap @-@ laden chorus swells and soars with the same pop frenzy that made ' Paparazzi ' such a delight . " The Guardian 's Michael Cragg described the song 's composition as " brilliantly camp ? all squelchy synths and juddering beats " and likened it to a " ridiculous glam @-@ rock song given a techno makeover " . The chorus has been noted to contain " a solid mixture of EDM @-@ influenced pop , glitchy k @-@ pop @-@ lite euphoria and just a twinkle of that original joy of The Fame " and features Gaga singing the lines , " Give me the thing that I love ( I 'll turn the lights on ) / Put your hands up make ' em touch ( Make it real loud ) " . Her vocal acrobatics during the song 's verses have been compared to those of David Bowie , Annie Lennox , and Grace Jones .

Lyrically , " Applause " is about how Gaga is dependent upon her fan 's adoration , while also serving as " a kiss @-@ off to critics " . Bradley Stern of MuuMuse opined that " Unlike ' Born This Way ' , ' Applause ' is about celebrating no one but Mother Monster herself " . According to Gaga , the song 's lyrics highlight the difference between an artist and a celebrity . She elaborated , " I live for the applause but I don 't live for the attention in the way that people just love you because you 're famous . I live for actually performing for people and then them applauding because they 've been entertained . "

= = Artwork and release = =

During the process of picking the lead single from Artpop , Gaga played numerous songs for Jimmy Iovine , an executive at Interscope Records . Of the 40 songs she played for Iovine , he preferred " Applause " , the last song played . Gaga revealed that " Applause " was almost excluded from the final cut of Artpop , due to an abundance of recorded material , until the meeting with Iovine . Gaga confirmed " Applause " as the upcoming single , and announced that it would be released on August 19 , 2013 . The official artwork for " Applause " was debuted on Women 's Wear Daily 's website on July 29 , 2013 . The cover features Gaga 's face smeared with multi @-@ colored paint and surrounded by a white sheet . Gaga explained that she chose the smeared makeup look for the cover to symbolize the moment at the end of a show when the performer is vulnerable and longing for the audience 's approval . The artwork was compared to the cover of David Bowie 's 1980 album Scary Monsters ( And Super Creeps ) .

On August 10 , 2013 , two snippets of the song leaked online . Gaga urged fans to " please take these down as much as possible " and provided instructions on how to report information regarding the unauthorized distribution of her song to her label 's parent company , Universal Music Group . In response , fans reported websites seen distributing or linking to the snippets of the single , with nearly 2 @, @ 500 individuals sending a singular link to Universal 's takedown page . However , despite such efforts , a leak was eminent . So Gaga released the song a week early onto various radio stations across America . The single was made available in most countries just before midnight ( EST ) on the iTunes Store , coupled with a pre @-@ order of Artpop . Following day , Gaga was seen in goth costume with clown @-@ like face paint similar to the " Applause " artwork ,

at various promotional events . The Huffington Post compared the style @-@ shift to Marilyn Manson , saying : " With her black hair slicked back , a face full of white powder and her black blazer and shirt combo , Gaga could have easily been mistaken for Manson if it wasn 't for her towering heels . " Gaga also premiered a short clip of " Applause " that quoted harsh journalism that attacked her credibility as an artist . In the video , Gaga was seen sitting naked in a white room and wearing a transparent visor . The sound of an audience booing and jeering was heard in the background . Direct quotations from critics and detractors appeared at the bottom of the video , which included : " Lady Gaga is over " and " Do not buy Lady Gaga 's new single ' Applause ' " . The clip was construed as an attempt at reverse psychology .

Due to the proximity of the single 's leak to fellow pop singer Katy Perry 's " Roar " , " Applause " was fervently compared to it . Gaga received negative press after news arose of her attempting to artificially increase the single 's placement on the Billboard Hot 100 chart , which some sources reported as an attempt to beat the sales of " Roar " . She was criticized for tweeting fans and encouraging them to purchase numerous copies of the single , with the chance to meet the singer in London offered as an incentive . The tweet provoked criticism from Billboard 's Editorial Director Bill Werde , who opined that " An artist tweeting out and Facebooking a link that enables a fan to hit play and leave their computer is not in the spirit of what we chart " . Following this , Gaga stated that she would be rewarding the fans with the most creative ideas , and not those who purchased the most copies of " Applause " .

= = Critical reception = =

" Applause " received generally positive reviews from music critics . Chris Richards of The Washington Post wrote , " It 's good . Maybe even slow clap good . Because while so many ( too many ! ) of Gaga 's songs have been designed to boost the esteem of her flock , this song finds her openly pining for the mass @-@ adulation that all superstars need to survive . " Jason Lipshutz of Billboard lauded the song 's hook and remarked , " As always , Gaga has turned a lofty idea into a jingle for the masses . " Lewis Corner from Digital Spy gave the song four out of five stars , stating that " Lady Gaga makes no secret that she 's after mass adoration , and as far as lead singles go , her next grand spectacle is off to a strong start . " Carl Williot of Idolator praised the track , saying that it " ticks all the right boxes when it comes to being a balls @-@ to @-@ the @-@ wall pop delight ... this is pop doing what good pop songs should do , which is grab you by the collar from the first listen and make you fall in love on the spot . " The Huffington Post writer Baggers described it as " pop at its best : instant , euphoric , joyful and impossible to get out of your head " .

Bradley Stern of MuuMuse gave the song a positive review and concluded , " Is it a solid start ? I ? d say so . On par with " Bad Romance " ? Well , let ? s not get ahead of ourselves . " Sal Cinquemani of Slant Magazine believed the song lacked " the bigness " of Gaga 's previous lead singles but noted that " it proves she can still craft a catchy hook " . Mof Gimmers of The Quietus noted that the song was " a bit sticky in places " but explained " if you stop expecting too much of Gaga , you 'll realise it has a furiously irresistible chorus . " Kevin Fallon of The Daily Beast was critical of the song 's " disjointed verses " but noted that they were " increasingly forgivable every time the song ? s unshakable chorus blasts " and praised it as a fitting climax to the album . Melinda Newman of Hitfix gave the song a B + rating and labelled it " a layered , dance twirler " . Positive feedback also came from Mike Driver from Clash who highlighted " Applause " as one of the tracks on Artpop that ticks " all of the prerequisite Gaga boxes ? dazzling production , a clutch of clever couplets , choruses you can demolish a tower block with " , but found that it did not represent a notable musical progression for the singer . Hilary Hughes from Esquire offered similar commentary , feeling that Gaga was playing it safe and that " the song doesn 't break new ground for the reigning Queen of Pop " .

In a mixed review , Evan Sawdey of PopMatters called the song generic and that " were it not for her heady lyrics and warped lead @-@ in synth line , " Applause " wouldn 't stand out all that much in radio , which makes it an even more curious choice as a lead single . " Spin 's Marc Hogan criticized the song 's " bland dance @-@ bot foundations " as " a bit behind the times at a pop

moment where the biggest song @-@ of @-@ the @-@ summer candidates have moved back toward ' 70s @-@ inflected guitars . " Another mixed review came from Harry Hawcroft of Contactmusic.com , who wrote " I can 't give it more than a polite clap . "

= = Chart performance = =

In the United States , Nielsen SoundScan predicted " Applause " to sell upwards of 400 @,@ 000 units in their first week . By the end of the week , Nielsen SoundScan and Billboard had lowered the estimated amount of " Applause " ' s first week sales from 400 @,@ 000 to 200 @,@ 000 ? 225 @,@ 000 . " Applause " did not enter the Billboard 's Hot 100 in its first week . It also ranked below the top 75 threshold of the US Radio Songs chart , with 16 million audience impressions across 210 stations , with the track officially impacting radio stations on August 19 , 2013 . " Applause " reached number one on the Dance / Electronic Songs chart , and entered the US Pop Songs Chart at number 20 ; the highest debut on that chart , by a solo female artist in 2013 . The following week , " Applause " debuted at number six on the Billboard Hot 100 . Following its radio and retail release the track charted on Digital Songs at number three , Streaming Songs at number nine and Radio Songs at number forty .

On its second week on the Hot 100 , the song climbed to number four while reaching number three on Streaming Songs ( due the release of the music video ) , and number thirty @-@ five on Radio Songs , and falling to number five on Digital Songs with sales of 163 @,@ 000 . In its sixth week , the song sold 160 @,@ 000 copies and reached sales of 1 million copies , becoming her eleventh song to do so . In the same week , it rose to number nine on the Radio Songs chart , becoming her tenth single to reach the top @-@ ten there . It managed to stay in the top @-@ ten of the Billboard Hot 100 for 14 consecutive weeks . As of April 2016 , the song had sold 2 @,@ 640 @,@ 000 copies in the United States , and has been certified triple platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America ( RIAA ) .

According to the Official Charts Company , " Applause " sold over 10 @,@ 000 copies within a few hours in the UK . It debuted and peaked at number five on the UK Singles Chart , making it her highest charting single since " Born This Way " ( 2011 ) . " Applause " sold 38 @,@ 042 copies by the end of the first week , and dropped to number nine on its second week . It was present for a total of 20 weeks within the top @-@ 100 of the chart . The British Phonographic Industry ( BPI ) certified it Silver , and as of November 2013 , it had sold 234 @,@ 979 copies . " Applause " was also certified Gold in other international markets including Italy , New Zealand , and Sweden .

= = Music video = =

= = = Development = = =

The music video for " Applause " was directed by fashion photography duo Inez and Vinoodh , who had previously collaborated with Gaga on a series of fashion films in 2011 and a photoshoot for V magazine . The video was filmed at Paramount Pictures studio in Hollywood , California on two different sets over three days . Gaga was inspired by silent film and early horror films and explained that the concept behind the video is that of her passion for shape @-@ shifting and transforming . She described it as " Iconography in motion , as magic . " Gaga and her team decided to use several different looks for the video , with each being representative of different facets of her as a performer . Attires worn in the video included designs by Gareth Pugh , vintage John Galiano , as well as outfits crafted by the Haus of Gaga .

Inez and Vinoodh explained that the video symbolizes " this idea that she goes through this struggle to go back onstage , which is in that pink laser tower . And she 's sort of dragging that leg as a trophy and making it back on stage as a fully @-@ realized , complete new person " . Jo Ratcliffe , a London @-@ based illustrator known for her hand @-@ drawn graphic design , was hired to provide animation effects for the video . She described Gaga as " really tough " during filming and added

that she had " never seen anyone push themselves so hard . " Gaga spoke of this intensity during an interview with the radio station Z100 New York , explaining that it was difficult for her to quickly mould herself into the different personalities portrayed in the video .

= = = Release and synopsis = = =

Prior to the release of the music video , Gaga debuted a lyric video for the song . The lyrics were displayed over footage shot by Gaga at the drag nightclub Micky 's in Los Angeles . On August 19 , 2013 , Gaga announced that she would be debuting the music video for " Applause " and filming a live interview on ABC 's morning television show Good Morning America later that day . The singer arrived at the Times Square Studios in New York City , where the show is filmed , wearing a dress made entirely out of paper . The video premiered on the show after Gaga 's live interview and was broadcast on jumbotrons across Times Square in Midtown Manhattan simultaneously .

The video itself includes shots taken in both color and black @-@ and @-@ white . It drew heavy inspiration from the arts and featured references to Sandro Botticelli 's The Birth of Venus and Andy Warhol 's Marilyn Diptych . The video included artistic and complex scenes such as Gaga 's head on a swan , a scene in a bird cage , and the singer seated in a large top hat , as well as more simplistic scenes including Gaga walking in a black outfit wearing a headscarf , and the singer dancing with a white cloth in bright make @-@ up , in a scene similar to the cover art of the single . Throughout the video bursts of color are shown theatrically . As Gaga sings the line " One second I 'm a Koons then suddenly the Koons is me " , she is transformed into a black swan / human hybrid . Gaga also wears hand @-@ shaped lingerie and a seashell bra with matching shell decoration . Near the climax , the singer features in a violet , crystal @-@ like scene , and at the end , Artpop is spelled using hand gestures .

= = = Reception and analysis = = =

The video received generally positive reviews . Glenn Gamboa of Newsday described it as a barrage of artistic images that continued the song 's theme of combining art with pop culture . Erin Coulehan of Rolling Stone magazine noted that the video was in " typical Gaga fashion " , further calling it a spectacle of flashing lights , vivid colors and intricate choreography . Kyle Anderson of Entertainment Weekly also echoed Coulehan 's statements about the video being in Gaga fashion , adding that it " makes the song sound infinitely better ... It doesn 't quite hit the high notes of ' Paparazzi ' or ' Bad Romance ' , but it 's definitely a step up from the middling clips from the Born This Way era . " A writer of Billboard described the video as " a collection of arty postures and scenarios " and compared the black @-@ glove bra look to Janet Jackson 's 1993 Rolling Stone magazine cover . Randall Roberts of Los Angeles Times saw the video as " basically like 20 different Vogue shoots documented and spliced . There is no plot other than the basic lyrical premise , " I need you to pay more attention to me , " given heft by a syllabically rocky first @-@ person observation about pop culture , fame and art that Andy Warhol noted 50 years ago . " Chiderah Monde of New York Daily News described the video as " a straight @-@ forward profile of the artist herself . "

A writer of Rolling Stone compared the black @-@ and @-@ white look of the video with Madonna 's " Vogue " , 1920s German Expressionist cinema and Ingmar Bergman 's The Seventh Seal . He further noted influences from Liza Minnelli , Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers ' " Don 't Come Around Here No More " , and Sandro Botticelli 's The Birth of Venus . A writer of The Independent wrote , " Showing Gaga in a number of guises ( as a Beatnik performance artist , her face smeared with clown make @-@ up , sporting David Bowie @-@ esque androgyny while wearing a bra made of black , leather gloves and as various winged creatures ) , the high energy accompaniment to her new track is a hotch @-@ potch of imagery that seems to highlight the pop princess ' ever changing appearance . " Chris Rovzar of Vanity Fair described the video as a moving photo shoot for Interview magazine " except with more sanity " . Rovzar concluded that it also featured " the standard Gaga nonsense " and praised Gaga 's smile during several scenes of the video as a

highlight . James Montgomery of MTV News saw the video as Gaga " pulling the curtain back on her creative process , showing the viewer how she 's willing to do anything to please the public . " Melinda Newman of Hitfix felt Gaga " continues her one @-@ woman performance art with the very theatrical video " and interpreted it as showing that " there is nothing Lady Gaga won ' t do to get your attention " .

Conversely , Spin 's March Hogan wrote , " ' Some of us just like to read ' , she sings , and hey , that includes us . But it 's easier to clap for something that moves or touches you , rather than serves as an advertisement for Gaga as incomprehensible high @-@ end brand . " Consequence of Sound wrote in their review , " Gaga 's head appears on a black swan and she boogies down in a clam bikini . If this doesn 't bump up her sales , I no longer believe in art . " Hilary Hughes of Esquire said that the video " hits all the marks of Gaga @-@ esque eccentricity : glitter , boob grabs , weird animals , space , severed limbs , devotional imagery , nudity , neon , etc . It just doesn 't redefine those marks , as previous music videos of Gaga 's ? namely " Bad Romance , " " Paparazzi " and " Judas " ? have " . Spencer Kornhaber of The Atlantic believed that Gaga was parodying herself with the video and suggested that her aim was " to make a video both celebrating and poking fun at her career thus far . " However , he considered it forgettable when compared to Gaga 's previous efforts .

= = Live performances and media appearances = =

The song was performed live for the first time at the 2013 MTV Video Music Awards . Gaga began the performance wearing a square @-@ shaped head piece and an all @-@ white cape as pre @-@ recorded boos were quickly replaced by sound of cheers . Gaga then glided across the stage and was assisted by her dancers as she changed into a black sequin leotard and performed the intricate choreography seen in the song 's corresponding music video . Throughout the performance she cycled through costumes and wigs she had previously employed throughout her career . After dancing with a Jeff Koons blue gazing ball , she concluded the performance by emerging from behind jungle @-@ like scenery dressed in a seashell bikini ensemble and taking a bow . Gaga collaborated with experimental theater director Robert Wilson on the performance . His designed set featured a shimmering white jungle background with letters spelling " Applause " suspended from tree branches . Gaga characterized the performance as : " So beautiful , it is so indicative of me as an artist . I feel in many ways that the performance is like a giant metaphor for me . " She also commented that the production was " the most physically challenging performance I 've done , ever . "

" Applause " was the final song Gaga performed at London 's Roundhouse as part of a show that was broadcast live online on September 1 , 2013 for the month @-@ long iTunes Festival . Gaga completed her last look of the show with " a green ringmaster jacket , top hat and sparkly silver boots " and performed the song alongside " an endless supply of supple dancers in gothy fetish wear " who danced behind her on chairs . On September 9 , 2013 , Gaga performed the song on Good Morning America and appeared dressed as multiple characters from The Wizard of Oz . " Applause " served as the encore during the singer 's Artpop launch party event , dubbed the ArtRave , held in the Brooklyn Navy Yard in New York during the early hours of November 11 , 2013 . The singer was the host of the November 16 , 2013 episode of Saturday Night Live , where she opened the program with a Chicago @-@ style performance of " Applause " , which subsequently morphed into a rendition of " New York , New York " . Later that month , Gaga also performed the song on the television special Lady Gaga and the Muppets ' Holiday Spectacular as both a solo and a reprise with The Muppets . Another performance took place at the Jingle Bell Ball on December 8 , 2013 , where she sang " Applause " along with other songs from her discography .

Gaga reprised " Applause " at the South by Southwest ( SXSW ) music festival in Austin , Texas in March 2014 , where she was joined onstage by her opening acts and friends , the Dirty Pearls , Semi Precious Weapons and Lady Starlight . " Applause " was later included in the setlist of Gaga 's Manhattan residency show at Roseland Ballroom . Gaga appeared in a purple sequin studded two @-@ piece with a matching face @-@ mask and green colored wig during the performance . The

song was included on the set list of her ArtRave : The Artpop Ball tour . Following " Bad Romance " , Gaga joined her dancers on the catwalks , where she performed a choreographed dance routine in a rave inspired outfit . Brad Wheeler of The Globe and Mail described Gaga 's performance as " unstoppable and enthralling " but criticized the show 's production for drowning out Gaga 's vocals and said : " She ? s not like Jennifer Lopez or Britney Spears or even Madonna , who were raised as dancers and lime @-@ lighters , not musicians . And yet , she prefers to perform spectacles that , by design , fail to showcase all of her abilities . "

The song was performed by the members of glee club in the Glee episode " A Katy or a Gaga " The track was also featured on the fictional radio station Non @-@ Stop @-@ Pop FM in the PS4 , Xbox One and PC versions of Grand Theft Auto V. In 2016 , it was featured in a lip sync battle ( known as the " Lipsync for Your Life " segment ) between drag queens Naysha Lopez and Laila McQueen on the season premiere of RuPaul 's Drag Race ( season 8 ) .

= = Track listings and formats = =

= = Credits and personnel = =

#### Management

Recorded at Record Plant Studios , Hollywood , California and Platinum Sound Recording Studio , New York City , New York

Mastered at Oasis Mastering Studios , Burbank , California

Stefani Germanotta P / K / A Lady Gaga ( BMI ) Sony ATV Songs LLC / House of Gaga Publishing , LLC / GloJoe Music Inc . ( BMI ) , Maxwell and Carter Publishing , LLC ( ASCAP ) , administered by Universal Music Publishing Group and Maxwell and Carter Publishing , LLC ( BMI ) administered by Universal Music Publishing Group , Etrange Fruit ( SACEM ) , Mercer Music ( SACEM ) , Guess Publishing ( SACEM ) , Fuzion ( SACEM ) Administered by Get Familiar Music ( ASCAP )

#### Personnel

Credits adapted from the liner notes of Artpop .

= = Charts = =

= = Certifications = =

= = Release history = =