

= Contrail (song) =

" Contrail " is a song recorded by Japanese recording artist Namie Amuro for her eleventh studio and second bilingual (Japanese and English language) album , Feel (2013) . The track was entirely written , composed , arranged , and produced by Japanese musician Nao 'ymt . The single premiered on May 29 , 2013 as the lead single from the album , and her second digital @-@ only single . Musically , " Contrail " is a dance song , influenced by electronic dance music . Lyrically , it is a self @-@ empowerment anthem that discusses themes of confidence and hope .

Upon its release , the track garnered generally favorable reviews from music critics . Many critics highlighted as one of the album 's best tracks , and complimented Nao 'ymt 's songwriting and production . Although it was unable to chart on Japan 's Oricon Singles Chart because of their restriction of digital sales , it did achieve success on the Japan Hot 100 chart provided by Billboard , peaking at number eight . It was certified platinum by the Recording Industry Association of Japan (RIAJ) for digital sales of 250 @,@ 000 units . An accompanying music video was shot in downtown Los Angeles , California at Pershing square , which featured Amuro walking through the city with children . Amuro has performed the song on her Feel Tour (2013) , and her 2014 Live Style Tour .

= = Background and release = =

In March 2013 , Japanese network Tokyo Broadcasting System (TBS) approached Namie Amuro and asked if she could record a theme song for their 2013 television series Flying Public Relations Office , which she accepted . Then in May 2013 , Japanese music magazine CD Journal confirmed the release of a new single , entitled " Contrail " . The track was entirely written , composed , arranged , and produced by Japanese musician Nao 'ymt . It was recorded by D.O.I. at Daimonion Studios , Shibuya , Tokyo in 2013 . The finished composition was then mastered by American music engineer Cris Gehringer at Sterling Studios , New York City , New York .

The single premiered on May 29 , 2013 as the lead single from Amuro 's eleventh studio and second bilingual (Japanese and English language) album , Feel (2013) . It is also her second digital @-@ only single after " Damage " (2012) , and Amuro 's second single released from her own label Dimension Point . The artwork to " Contrail " features a birds @-@ eye view of two contrails above a cityscape . Amuro had contemplated in releasing the single as a CD single , but later scrapped the idea because she felt the digital release and promotion through the television series would be enough . In 2014 , Amuro re @-@ recorded the song for her 2014 compilation album Ballada .

= = Composition = =

Musically , " Contrail " is a dance song , as described by staff members from CD Journal . A reviewer from music website 13th Geek compared the track to her song " Hands on Me " , explaining in a further detailed review ; " The song evokes a summer feel similar to ' Hands On Me ' but with a more relaxed and laid @-@ back approach . " Patrick St. Michel , writing for The Japan Times , included the track as part of a discussion about the Westernized music influences throughout the entirety of Feel , stating " nearly every track indulges in electronic trends , sometimes besting the American competition . " Michael McCarthy from Otakudx.com believed that the song 's composition was " progressive pop " , saying " It 's not quite a dance song and it doesn 't fit your traditional pop mold either . " In a detail review , he further explained the song 's melody and structure :

" It starts off with a bit of keyboards that lead to a series of rapid but somewhat quiet beats over which she sings softly , almost whispering , until she reaches the chorus and fulminating beats drop . " What is life ? " she asks during the bilingual chorus , which simply ends with the word " contrail . " After the chorus the beats quiet down again and she once again whisper @-@ sings . It 's really quite intoxicating , the way her airy vocals gently glide over the hypnotic but subtle beats . " I didn 't know then , what I know now , " a loud , robotic voice sings -- well , it 's more like it just says the

words about two thirds into the song . And that somehow makes it more intense when Namie sings the chorus again and asks " What is life ? "

Lyrically , it is a self @-@ empowerment anthem that discusses themes of confidence and hope . In an interview with Tokyo Broadcasting System (TBS) , Amuro stated that the song represented the " positive views of the world " . She furthered explained that " So when I 'm listening to the song on Sunday night , I 'll wake up on Monday morning feeling happy . " Nao 'ymt furthered commented to TBS that he song talked about looking forward and letting go of the past , alongside complimented Amuro 's " strong " vocals . In an interview with Billboard Japan , an English version of " Contrail " was written and recorded by Nao 'ymt , but was replaced with the Japanese version because Amuro felt the majority of the recordings on Feel felt " better in English " , and that the theme song for the television series was directed towards Japanese audiences only .

= = Critical response = =

Upon its release , " Contrail " received highly positive reviews from most music critics . A reviewer from 13th Geek was highly positive towards the track , believing that " The song is so good that even the non @-@ Japanese speaker will want to learn the lyrics and just blare out the powerful chorus along with her . " The reviewer also stated that the song 's chorus was completely " off guard " to the rest of the track . CD Journal 's editors were positive towards the song , commending Nao 'ymt for " exhausting " the " goodness " out of Amuro 's vocal abilities . The 2014 Ballada version also received positive reviews from music critics . In another review with CD Journal , a reviewer complimented Amuro 's vocals and the song 's background piano composition ; the reviewer also labelled the production as " dramatic " . In another positive review , staff member 's at HMV felt that it was the best ballad on the compilation album . David Cirone from Nekopop.com was slightly mixed in his review ; although he commended Amuro 's use of Japanese language throughout the song , he criticized the " heavy @-@ handed , obvious lyrics " .

= = Commercial performance = =

" Contrail " was unable to chart on Japan 's Oricon Singles Chart because of their restriction of digital sales and position . However , it did have success on the Japan Hot 100 , provided by Billboard . It debuted at number 44 during the chart week of May 6 , due to strong airplay . It had climbed steadily , eventually reached number 15 during its sixth week of charting on June 10 . The following week on June 17 , it peaked at number eight for one week . It fell outside the top ten the following week , stalling at number 16 . It made its final appearance at number 42 on the chart date of July 29 , staying in the chart for 13 weeks in total . It debuted on Billboard 's competent chart , the Radio Songs , at number 21 . It rose to number seven the following week , its peaking position . The song 's final appearance was on June 10 , where it stalling at number 39 . On Billboard 's Year @-@ End chart , " Contrail " was ranked at number 65 . It was certified platinum by the Recording Industry Association of Japan (RIAJ) for digital sales of 250 @,@ 000 units .

= = Music video = =

An accompanying music video was directed by production team IKIOI . It opens with a birds @-@ eye view shot from the ground , showing several buildings and trees ; just before the first verse , a short shot of Amuro is seen . The first verse opens with Amuro walking down a street in Los Angeles , California , singing to the track . During the verse , intercut scenes include various shadows of children holding instruments behind Amuro . The chorus opens with Amuro walking down along a bridge with the children playing their instruments behind her . When the second chorus starts , the camera pans over to several buildings and landscapes around Los Angeles . The camera then pans into several individuals citizens in the city : an elderly couple , a man in his car , a couple who have just finished surfing , and a woman walking her dog .

During the second chorus , Amuro and the children start marching and playing their instruments

through downtown Los Angeles . The individuals walking in Los Angeles stop for a moment , and look towards the sky , which is cut off screen . As close @-@ up shots of Amuro finish by the end of the bridge section of the song , the camera pans towards rainbow @-@ coloured clouds , which puts all the citizens in surprise and glee . The final chorus has Amuro and the children dancing and singing at Pershing Square , surrounding by several lighting effects and rainbow @-@ coloured clouds . Several scenes of the clouds start to float within the city , above and near skyscrapers , and the video ends with Amuro , the children , and the citizens smiling .

The music video received positive reviews from a reviewer at CD Journal ; they labelled the content " refreshing " , and praised the visual effects . Farea Stadmin from Far East Vibes praised Amuro 's introduction to " Americanized multiculturalism " , identifying the inclusion of American people as an example . The music video and its " behind the scenes " was included on the DVD and Blu @-@ ray formats to Feel .

= = Live performances = =

The single has been performed on some of Amuro 's concert tours . Its first performance was in 2013 , during her Feel concert tour . It appeared on the live DVD , which was released on February 26 , 2014 . It was included on Amuro 's 2014 Live Style Tour in Japan , which was later included on the live DVD , released on February 11 , 2015 .

= = Track listing = =

= = Credits and personnel = =

Credits adapted by the liner notes of the Feel album .

Recording

Recorded at Daimonion Studios , Shibuya , Tokyo (2013) .

Personnel

Namie Amuro ? vocals , background vocals

Nao 'ymt ? production , composing , arranging , songwriting , programming , vocal production

D.O.I. ? mixing

IKIOI ? music video direction

= = Charts = =

= = Certification = =

= = Release history = =