

= Telephone (song) =

" Telephone " is a song recorded by American singer Lady Gaga featuring Beyoncé , for Gaga 's third EP , The Fame Monster (2009) . The song was written by Gaga , Rodney Jerkins , LaShawn Daniels , Lazonate Franklin and Beyoncé . Inspired by her fear of suffocation , Gaga explained that the lyrics preferring relaxing on the dance floor to answering her lover 's phone call are a metaphor , the phone calling her representing the fear of not having worked hard enough to succeed . Originally , Gaga wrote the song for Britney Spears , who recorded a demo . Musically , " Telephone " consists of an expanded bridge , verse @-@ rap and a sampled voice of an operator announcing that the phone line is unreachable . Beyoncé appears in the middle of the song , singing the verses in a rapid @-@ fire way , accompanied by double beats .

The song received positive reviews from critics who frequently noted " Telephone " as a stand @-@ out track from The Fame Monster . It was Grammy @-@ nominated for Best Pop Collaboration with Vocals in 2011 . " Telephone " charted in a number of countries due to digital sales following the album 's release , namely in the United States , Australia , Canada , the Netherlands , New Zealand , Sweden and Hungary . The song was particularly successful in Europe where it reached the top of the charts in Belgium , Denmark , Hungary , Ireland , Netherlands , Norway and the United Kingdom . According to the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry , the single sold 7 @. @ 4 million digital copies worldwide in 2010 , making it one of Gaga 's best @-@ selling singles .

The accompanying music video is a continuation of the video for her 2009 song , " Paparazzi " , and is also shot as a short film . After Gaga gets bailed out of prison by Beyoncé , they go to a diner and poison the guests having breakfast . After the homicide they escape and end up in a high speed police chase . The video referenced Quentin Tarantino and his films Pulp Fiction (1994) and Kill Bill : Volume 1 (2003) . The video received generally positive reviews was nominated for three awards at the 2010 MTV Video Music Awards , including one for Video of the Year . In January 2015 Billboard named it the best video of the first half of the decade . In memory of Alexander McQueen , Gaga performed an acoustic rendition of " Telephone " mixed with " Dance in the Dark " at the 2010 BRIT Awards . It was also added to the set list of The Monster Ball Tour in 2010 , the Born This Way Ball in 2012 and ArtRave : The Artpop Ball in 2014 .

= = Background = =

" Telephone " was originally written by Gaga for singer Britney Spears 's sixth studio album , Circus , but Spears rejected it . Later , Gaga recorded the song as a collaboration with Beyoncé for The Fame Monster . Gaga said , " I wrote it for her [Spears] a long time ago and she just didn 't use it for her album . It 's fine because I love the song and I get to perform it now . " Spears ' demo for the song leaked in May 2010 . Additionally , the guest vocalist was originally going to be Spears , but ultimately Gaga made Beyoncé the featured vocalist instead . The main inspiration behind the song was Gaga 's fear of suffocation as she felt that she seldom found time to just let loose and have fun .

Fear of suffocation ? something that I have or fear is never being able to enjoy myself , ... ' Cause I love my work so much , I find it really hard to go out and have a good time I don 't go to nightclubs , ... You don 't see pictures of me falling out of a club drunk . I don 't go ? and that 's because I usually go and then , you know , a whiskey and a half into it , I got to get back to work .

In May 2011 , Gaga said her " emotional connection " with the song was difficult . When she was asked if it was because the song was originally written for Britney Spears , she answered : " Well that ? s not exactly what happened , but I don ? t want to delve into that . I could delve into it if you turn that (motions to recorder) off ... But ultimately the mix and the process of getting the production finished was very stressful for me . So when I say it ? s my worst song it has nothing to do with the song , just my emotional connection to it . "

= = Composition = =

" Telephone " was written by Lady Gaga , Rodney Jerkins , LaShawn Daniels , Lazonate Franklin and Beyoncé . Musically , the song has been described as dance @-@ pop . Although constructed as a duet , Beyoncé 's first appearance is in the middle verse . She sings her lyrics through a brief interlude , and later backs the chorus during the rest of the song . The song starts off unassumingly , with Gaga singing in a solemn voice over a harp melody , which changes immediately to a pounding beat . Essentially , Gaga is in a club and her boyfriend keeps calling , but she cannot talk as she was drinking and dancing to her favorite song . The chorus runs as follows : " Stop calling , stop calling , I don 't want to talk anymore . " " Telephone " consists of an expanded bridge , verse @-@ rap and an epilogue where a voice announces that the telephone line is not reachable at that moment . According to the sheet music published at Musicnotes.com by Sony / ATV Music Publishing , the song is set in the time signature of common time , with a tempo of 122 beats per minute . Gaga 's vocals range from the low @-@ note of F3 to the high @-@ note of C5 . It is set in the key of F minor , specifically , F Dorian mode , and has a basic sequence of Fm ? A ? ? B ? ? Fm as its chord progression .

" Telephone " ' s lyrics relate to the singer preferring the dance floor to answering someone 's call . She further tells her lover that she left her head and her heart on the dance floor . The verses are sung in a rapid @-@ fire way , accompanied by double beats . According to Gaga , the phone addressed in the lyrics of the song is not just a physical phone , but also a person in her head telling her to keep working harder and harder . Gaga explained , " That 's my fear ? that the phone 's ringing and my head 's ringing , ... Whether it 's a telephone or it 's just the thoughts in your head , that 's another fear . "

= = Critical reception = =

The song has garnered positive reviews from music critics . Michael Hubbard from MusicOMH said that the song was " probably the best thing here [on The Fame Monster] . " He also complimented the " brilliant bridge " and the ending of the song where the caller gets through to her voicemail . Popjustice gave the song a positive review : " It 's a little bit like Gwen 's ' What You Waiting For ? ' meets Timbaland 's ' The Way I Are ' meets about fifty other things ... The structure 's quite exciting ... there is something tumultuously brilliant about Beyoncé 's contribution that makes everything seem fine and as if it was the plan all along . " Evan Sawdey from PopMatters said that " The much talked @-@ about Beyoncé collaboration ' Telephone ' , which ? with its double @-@ time beat and rapid @-@ fire verses ? proves to be one of the most adrenaline @-@ pumped songs that Gaga has yet crafted , the whole thing feeling like it 's about to veer of [sic] the tracks at any moment simply due to the giddy excitement shared between the two divas , easily turning it into the unquestioned highlight of The Fame Monster " . Mikael Woods from Los Angeles Times felt that " Telephone " is " a carefully considered meditation on how annoying it is when a dude keeps calling you while you 're throwing down at the club . " The New York Times ' Jon Caramanica commented that " Video Phone " and " Telephone " , " promised a new direction , but all Beyoncé did was show up to prove she could out @-@ Gaga Gaga , then return to her comfort zone . "

Nicki Escuerdo from Phoenix New Times listed " Telephone " as a stand @-@ out track from the album . Sarah Hajibagheri from The Times and Armond White , music and film critic for the New York Press , were not impressed with the song . Hajibagheri said " The appearance of Beyoncé 's vocal alongside ringtones on Telephone adds to the sense of utter chaos . " White elaborated that " [The song] celebrates a heedless refusal to communicate ; to mindlessly , heartlessly indulge pop culture ? Tarantino style . " Melanie Bertoldi from Billboard gave the song a positive review , stating " Much like Kesha 's ' Blah Blah Blah ' , ' Telephone ' sets out to silence bugaboos , with whom featured artist Beyoncé is all too familiar By the time " Telephone " surges through a wall of cellular bleeps to return to its simple introduction , Gaga and Beyoncé have left the listener with just one option : surrender to the dancefloor . "

= = Accolades = =

In the annual Pazz and Jop mass critics poll of the year 's best in music , " Telephone " was ranked number 16 in 2010 . It was placed at number three by Rob Sheffield of Rolling Stone on his Top 25 Singles of the 2010 list . Sheffield further stated that " Telephone " was a " communication breakdown on the dance floor " and added , " Beyonce , the most egregiously non @-@ crazy pop star of our time , gets to pretend she 's as nuts as Gaga for a few minutes . " Amy Phillips from Pitchfork Media placed " Telephone " at number 55 in her list " Top Tracks of 2010 " saying it was " one of the less weird tracks " on The Fame Monster . The same year , the song was also included on year @-@ end lists of best songs compiled by MTV News and PopMatters at numbers ten and 29 respectively . On April 26 , 2011 , Gary Trust of Billboard listed " Telephone " at the fourth position on his list of the 10 All @-@ Female Hit Collaborations .

In 2010 , " Telephone " was nominated in the category for Favorite Song at the Australian Nickelodeon Kids ' Choice Awards and the 37th People 's Choice Awards . The following year , the song was nominated in the category for Best Pop Collaboration with Vocals at the 53rd Annual Grammy Awards . It was recognized as one of the Most Performed Songs in 2011 at the ASCAP Pop Music Awards . The same year , BMI listed " Telephone " as one of the Award @-@ Winning Songs at their awards ceremony . It also received nominations for Best Single and Best Collaboration at the 2011 Virgin Media Music Awards winning the latter .

= = Chart performance = =

In November 2009 due to strong digital sales , the song charted in Ireland , Australia , and the United Kingdom , debuting at numbers twenty @-@ six , twenty @-@ nine , and thirty respectively . The song became the top debut on the U.S. Billboard Hot 100 issue dated December 12 , 2009 , at number thirty , due to digital sales . After weeks of fluctuating up the charts , " Telephone " reached a peak of three , becoming Gaga 's sixth consecutive top ten hit in the United States . The song peaked at number one on the Hot Dance Club Songs chart on the issue dated February 27 , 2010 . On March 15 , 2010 , Billboard announced that the song reached number one on the Pop Songs chart , thus becoming Gaga 's sixth consecutive number @-@ one on the chart , making her the only artist in history to do this . It also became Beyoncé 's sixth number @-@ one on Pop Songs . With this , Gaga and Beyoncé tied with Mariah Carey for most number @-@ ones since the Nielsen BDS @-@ based Top 40 airplay chart launched in 1992 . As of April 2016 , " Telephone " has sold 3 @, @ 400 @, @ 000 digital downloads in the United States .

In Australia , the song has reached a peak of three , and was certified triple platinum by the Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) for shipments of 210 @, @ 000 copies of the single . In New Zealand , the song debuted at thirty @-@ one , becoming the highest debut of that week . It ultimately reached a peak of three on the chart . " Telephone " debuted at number fourteen on the Canadian Hot 100 and moved to a peak of three , making it Gaga 's sixth consecutive top three single there . The song has been certified triple platinum by the Canadian Recording Industry Association (CRIA) for sales of 240 @, @ 000 digital downloads .

In the United Kingdom , " Telephone " reached number twelve on the UK Singles Chart on March 14 , 2010 . It climbed to number one the chart the following week , becoming Gaga 's fourth number @-@ one single ? and Beyoncé 's fifth ? in Britain . It has sold 757 @, @ 000 copies in the UK as of April 2016 , and was certified platinum by the British Phonographic Industry (BPI) . According to the Official Charts Company , " Telephone " is the third best @-@ selling vinyl single in the UK for the 2010s decade . In Ireland , the song debuted at number twenty @-@ six , and moved up to number two , before reaching the summit of the chart the following week . " Telephone " debuted at thirty @-@ three on the Swedish charts , and in the top @-@ ten at number three on the Hungarian charts . According to the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry , the song has sold 7 @. @ 4 million copies across the world in 2010 .

= = Music video = =

== Background and development ==

The music video was filmed on January 28 , 2010 , and directed by Jonas Åkerlund . New York magazine reported that the concept of the video involved Beyoncé as she bails Gaga out of jail . In published photos from the set , Gaga and Beyoncé were seen shooting in a car called the " Pussy Wagon " , which Uma Thurman 's character drove in Quentin Tarantino 's 2003 film Kill Bill : Vol . 1 . Other concepts of the video involve scenes at a diner , a cameo from singer Tyrese Gibson , and a prison shower scene . Gaga and Beyoncé wore " destroyed denim pieces " , designed by Frank Fernández and Oscar Olima . In an interview with E ! Online , Gaga explained the deeper meaning behind the video .

There was this really amazing quality in ' Paparazzi ' , where it kind of had this pure pop music quality but at the same time it was a commentary on fame culture ... I wanted to do the same thing with this video ... There certainly is a Tarantino @-@ inspired quality in the [' Telephone '] video ... His direct involvement in [it] came from him lending me the Pussy Wagon . We were having lunch one day in Los Angeles and I was telling him about my concept for the video and he loved it so much he said , " You gotta use the Pussy Wagon . "

On February 5 , 2010 , Gaga was interviewed by Ryan Seacrest on KIIS @-@ FM . She commented on the video , saying , " What I like about it is it 's a real true pop event , and when I was younger , I was always excited when there was a big giant event happening in pop music and that 's what I wanted this to be . " Gaga also said that her intent was to take " the idea that America is full of young people that are inundated with information and technology and turn it into something that was more of a commentary on the kind of country that we are . "

Rock band Semi Precious Weapons confirmed to MTV News that they would have a cameo role in the music video . On February 15 , 2010 , three film stills from the music video were posted on Gaga 's website . The stills depicted Gaga in three separate scenes : a kitchen scene where she wears a plastic chef 's hat and a telephone made entirely of hair on her head , a scene in a diner with her dancers , where she is seen wearing an American flag patterned bikini and bandana , and a black @-@ and @-@ white photo of Gaga wearing a hat made from multiple triangles and corded telephones . The video was originally slated to premiere in February 2010 but was pushed back to March 2010 instead . On March 9 , 2010 , more stills of the video were posted online . The video premiered on E ! News and Vevo on March 11 , 2010 .

== Synopsis ==

The music video is over nine minutes long and begins where " Paparazzi " left off after Gaga was arrested for killing her boyfriend by poisoning his drink . Gaga is taken to a women 's prison , where she is led to her cell by two prison guards , who strip her of shoulder @-@ padded dress and left lying nude , while she is mocked by the other women prison inmates . One of the guards comments : " I told you she didn 't have a dick " , referring to the rumors that Gaga is intersex . For the video 's first three minutes , it shows Gaga 's activities in the prison ? including kissing a lesbian prisoner (Heather Cassils) in the exercise yard , wearing sunglasses made out of half @-@ smoked cigarettes , and watching catfights in the commissary . Gaga 's sister , Natali Germanotta , makes a cameo in the commissary scene . After that , Gaga answers a call from Beyoncé , and begins to sing the song . She performs the first verse and chorus with other scantily clad inmates , followed by a bridge featuring Gaga wearing a yellow caution tape outfit designed by Brian Lichtenberg .

Gaga is bailed out and exits to find Beyoncé waiting for her in the " Pussy Wagon " . Beyoncé is nicknamed Honey Bee , a reference to the character Honey Bunny in Tarantino 's 1994 crime film Pulp Fiction . After an exchange of dialogues , Gaga and Beyoncé travel through the desert and pull over at a diner . Beyoncé sits opposite to her boyfriend , Gibson , but becomes tired of his stupidity and poisons him , but it does not kill him like she had hoped . The video later shifts to an intermediate sequence called " Let 's Make a Sandwich " , where Gaga stands in a kitchen , wearing a folded @-@ up telephone on her head , while dancers cavort behind her , holding salad tongs and assorted cutlery . Ultimately , Gaga prepares a sandwich and eats it , after a dance sequence . In

the meantime , Gaga mixes poison into all of the dishes she is preparing for the unsuspecting customers causing Gibson and everybody else , including characters played by Semi Precious Weapons and her Great Dane , Lava , to die . Gaga and Beyoncé perform another dance sequence , wearing American flag inspired garments and shredded denims , while strutting around the dead bodies . Gaga and Beyoncé leave the diner in the " Pussy Wagon " and travel on a highway as a news reporter (played by Jai Rodriguez) reports the murders at the diner . The final shots shows Gaga and Beyoncé travelling through the desert with police sirens wailing in the background . The video ends with the line " To Be Continued ... " followed by end credits .

= = = Reception = = =

James Montgomery from MTV commented : " With ' Telephone ' , Gaga has entered the rarest of pop stratospheres , up there with the Madonnas and the Michael Jacksons . " Matt Donnelly from Los Angeles Times wrote that the " Telephone " music video is a " visual feast , packed with fantastic fashion , girl fights , poisoned diner food , an army of headpieces and lots of Gaga goodness . " Amy Odell from New York magazine felt that " This is Gaga 's video , but Beyoncé is the best part : she actually shows the angry , crazy side that we just knew lurked beneath her too @-@ perfect facade . " Monica Herrera from Billboard wrote : " [The video] more than measures up to the hype ' Telephone ' clip is chock full of intrigue , prison fights , makeout scenes , mass poisoning and plenty of skin @-@ baring versions of what you might call ' outfits ' . " Tanner Stransky from Entertainment Weekly commented : " Is it as good as her epic ' Bad Romance ' video ? Sadly , I don 't think so . But it 's better than anything else out there . " Jennifer Cady of the website E ! Online praised Beyoncé 's " always fierce " look during the video . A writer of The Huffington Post wrote , " As usual there is murder , masturbation , product placement , Tarantino referencing and lots of impractical headwear . " In January 2015 , Billboard named the video as the best music video of the first half of the 2010s (decade) .

Sandy Rios , president of the Culture Campaign criticized the video on Fox News in an interview with Megyn Kelly , calling it " disgusting ... poison for the minds of our kids " . Critic Armond White , of the New York Press , described the video as " cruel and ugly " also stating that it " epitomizes the insanity of the contemporary pop mainstream " and pays " homage to Tarantino 's influence " in distorting " pop culture pleasure into nonsense " . William Goodman of Spin called the video a " Whitman 's sampler of pop nuggets " and found a " boom @-@ pow effect of brightly @-@ colored Japanese television . " He finished his review by concluding that the " video must have cost a fortune " and described it as a " big @-@ budget , pop masterwork " . Caryn Ganz of Rolling Stone called the video a " mash @-@ up of lesbian prison porn , campy sexploitation flicks and insidery winks at the two divas ' public personas . " He noted that " If Quentin Tarantino and Russ Meyer remade Thelma & Louise as an orgy of product placement with fiercely choreographed interludes , this would be the result . " Ganz finished his review by saying that " The clip is certainly cinematic and oddly feminist , and gasps at a larger statement about consumer culture . "

In May 2011 , Gaga expressed some dissatisfaction with the video in an interview with Time Out , saying : " I can 't even watch the Telephone video , I hate it so much . Beyoncé and I are great together . But there are so many ideas in that video and all I see in that video is my brain throbbing with ideas and I wish I had edited myself a little bit more . "

= = = Recognition and accolades = = =

The video was placed at number three on NME 's list of " 50 Best Music Videos of 2010 " along with the comment that it 's " nearly ten minutes of product placements , a Thelma and Louise storyline , bizarre outfits and some uniquely Gaga @-@ esque dance moves . " It was also placed at number 17 on NME 's list of " 100 Greatest Music Videos " and the writer concluded , " ' Telephone ' eschews all the overreaching cosmic weirdness of her recent clips and settles for a nine @-@ minute lesbo action @-@ filled Tarantino rip @-@ off . " On Spin 's list of " The 20 Best Music Videos of 2010 " , the video was put at number seven along with the comment that " the decision to

enlist the normally buttoned @-@ up Beyoncé in Gaga 's lezzie jailbird fantasia was genius . " The writers of Pitchfork Media also put the video on their list of " The Top Music Videos of 2010 " . On August 3 , 2010 , the video received three nominations at the 2010 MTV Video Music Awards , in the categories of Best Choreography , Video of the Year and Best Collaboration , winning the latter and losing the former to Gaga 's own " Bad Romance " video .

= = Live performances = =

Gaga performed " Telephone " at the BRIT Awards on February 16 , 2010 , at Earls Court Exhibition Centre . The performance was inspired by the recent death of her friend , fashion designer Alexander McQueen . Initially she had planned a different version of the performance , but changed the concept at the last minute , since she wanted to pay tribute to McQueen . Hence she chose an acoustic version of " Telephone " and a remix of " Dance in the Dark " . Before the show , she posted a message on her Twitter account : " Tonight 's performance is inspired by our friend . Mask by Phillip Treacy , Sculpture by Nick Knight , Music by Lady Gaga . We miss you . " She started the performance by announcing " This is for Alexander McQueen . " Gaga was dressed in a complete white outfit with a huge Marie @-@ Antoinette style wig . The whole performance was low @-@ key in comparison to her previous ones .

Gaga added the song to The Monster Ball Tour 's setlist , for the European leg . It was performed in the second act , titled " Subway " . She was dressed in black and played a keytar . " Telephone " , as well as " Brown Eyes " (from The Fame) , was also performed on the British comedy chat show Friday Night with Jonathan Ross , on March 3 , 2010 , for an episode that aired two days later . Gaga performed " Telephone " on the Japanese television show Music Station on April 16 , 2010 . She wore a lace cat suit and a pair of plastic batwing shoulders , designed by Somarta and Yuima Nakazato respectively . In May 2011 , Gaga performed the song during Radio 1 's Big Weekend in Carlisle , Cumbria . On June 26 , 2011 , Beyoncé performed the song during the Glastonbury Festival in front of more than 175 @, @ 000 fans . The song was also performed on Gaga 's 2012 Born This Way Ball Tour with the same dance choreography . During the tour ArtRave : The Artpop Ball in 2014 , the song was performed again with the same melody as " Poker Face " .

= = Other versions = =

On May 2 , 2010 , a demo of " Telephone " featuring vocals by Britney Spears leaked onto the web . After suggestions that the demo may be fake , the producer of the song , Rodney Jerkins , confirmed the authenticity of the song , via Twitter . He added that the leaked version was an early , unmixed demo recording and , moreover , denied leaking the song , arguing that , despite the fact that he has been asked to leak the full song , he did not do it . The musical style of the demo was compared with Spears ' 2007 single " Piece of Me " , and the song itself generated comparisons with Spears ' sound in her fifth studio album Blackout . Rob Sheffield of Rolling Stone praised Spears ' version including it at number twenty @-@ five on his Top 25 Singles of the 2010 list .

Little Mix blended " Telephone " with Queen 's " Radio Ga Ga " (1984) during the eighth series of the British The X Factor and later released this version as a single . " Telephone " was covered by Lea Michele as Rachel Berry and Charice Pempengco as Sunshine Corazon for the American TV show Glee episode " Audition " , which aired on September 21 , 2010 . This version was released as a single , and reached number seventeen in Canada , eighteen in Ireland , twenty @-@ three in the US , and thirty in Australia .

= = Track listing and formats = =

= = Credits and personnel = =

Recording and management

Gaga 's vocals recorded at Darkchild Studios (Los Angeles , California)
Knowles ' vocals recorded at Studio Groove (Osaka , Japan)
Mixed at Chalice Studios (Los Angeles , California)
Mastered at Oasis Mastering (Burbank , California) , AfterMaster Recording and Mastering Studios
(Hollywood , California)
Knowles appears courtesy of Music World Entertainment and Columbia Records
Published by Stefani Germanotta P / K / A Lady Gaga (BMI) , Sony / ATV Songs LLC , House Of
Gaga Publishing Inc . , Glojoe Music Inc . (BMI) Rodney Jerkins / EMI Blackwood Music Publishing
(BMI) , EMI April Music (ASCAP) , EMI Blackwood / RJ Productions LLC , B @-@ Day Publishing
and EMI April Music , Inc . (ASCAP)
Personnel
Credits adapted from The Fame Monster album liner notes .

= = Charts = =

= = Certifications and sales = =

= = Release history = =