

= Country Grammar =

Country Grammar is the debut studio album by American rapper Nelly . It was released on June 27 , 2000 , by Universal Records (who released the album after listening to demos by Nelly , before signing a record deal with the rapper in 1999) . The production on the album was handled by Jason " Jay E " Epperson , with additional production by C @-@ Love , Kevin Law , City Spud , Steve " Blast " Wills and Basement Beats . Nelly contributed to all lyrics on the album , with Epperson and City Spud also contributing . The album introduced a unique Saint Louis , Midwestern sound , and introduces Nelly 's vocal style of pop @-@ rap singalongs and Midwestern , Missouri twang . It was supported four successful singles : " Country Grammar (Hot Shit) " , " E.I. " , " Ride wit Me " and " Batter Up " . Its lead single , " Country Grammar (Hot Shit) " , peaked at number 7 on the Billboard Hot 100 and UK Singles Chart . " E.I. " charted at number 16 , number 12 and number 11 on the Hot 100 , UK Singles Chart and ARIA Singles Chart , respectively . " Ride wit Me " peaked within the top five on the Hot 100 , ARIA Singles Chart , Irish Singles Chart and UK Singles Chart . The album 's fourth and final single , " Batter Up " featuring Murphy Lee and Ali , achieved moderate chart success .

Country Grammar received positive reviews , with critics praising Nelly 's vocal style and the album 's production . It topped the US Billboard 200 chart for five consecutive weeks , and the US Top R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Albums chart for six consecutive weeks . It peaked in the top five on the New Zealand Albums Chart and Australian Albums Chart , as well as the top ten on the Canadian Albums Chart and Dutch Albums Chart . The album was certified three times platinum by the Recording Industry Association of New Zealand (RIANZ) and Music Canada (MC) , denoting shipments of 45 @,@ 000 and 300 @,@ 000 copies , respectively .

As of July 26 , 2016 , Country Grammar has sold 10 million copies , according to Nielsen SoundScan , ranking it as the ninth best @-@ selling rap album of all time in the United States . It was certified nine times platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) , making it one of the highest certified albums in the US history . Its commercial success secured Nelly 's status as one of the most successful hip hop acts of the 2000s decade . On Billboard 's decade @-@ end chart , Nelly ranked as the third most successful act of the 2000s decade , largely in part to the success of Country Grammar and his follow @-@ up album Nellyville (2002) .

= = Background and production = =

In his early years , Nelly frequently moved locations within the US , before residing in the city of St. Louis . It was there where he discovered rap artists synonymous within the city ; in his teenage years , Nelly moved to University City , where he shifted his aspirations from becoming a baseball player to producing stories and rhymes . Along with some high school friends ? Ali Jones , Torhi Harper , Kyjuan and Lavell Webb ? Nelly formed the group St. Lunatics in 1993 . Frustrated by the lack of attention from record companies , the group formed the consensus to allow Nelly to pursue a solo career , with the rest possibly releasing their own solo albums . Nelly produced demos , which were sent to national labels , eventually gaining attention from Universal Records who signed a record deal with Nelly and the St. Lunatics in 1999 , with Universal releasing the former 's debut album , Country Grammar , in 2000 . All songs on Country Grammar were recorded by Steve Eigner , and mixed by Rich Truvali . Kenny Dystra provided recording assistance and Jason Standard assisted in mixing . Mastering was performed by Herb Powers , with A & R directed by Kevin Law and Coordinated by Craig Yankowski . Management was provided by Tony Davis and Courtney Benson , with legality handled by Todd Rubenstein . Creative direction was handled by Sandra Brummels , with design and photography done so by BENTO Design and Jonathon Mannion , respectively .

= = Composition = =

Much of Nelly 's rap style draws from his origins , as it contains Southern drawl with Midwestern ,

Missouri twang , that incorporates both country and urban styles . In conjunction , Nelly approaches a pop @-@ rap singalong vocal style , which Allmusic 's Jason Birchmeier notes present within Country Grammar 's tracks including " Ride wit Me " and " E.I. " . Peter Shapiro described Nelly 's vocals as using " unforgettable hooks based on schoolyard songs , double @-@ dutch chants , and nonsense rhymes " . Much of Country Grammar 's tracks are bass @-@ heavy , that are primarily Southern hip @-@ hop based and minimalistic . In the album 's self @-@ titled track , Nelly 's vocals are slurred and slow , and are a " smooth , slippery @-@ fast instrument " with " reggae inflections " . Rolling Stone found the song 's lyrics to depict Nelly " riding around town in an expensive SUV with an assault weapon " . " Ride wit Me " is rap , pop crossover , that samples composition from DeBarge 's 1982 " I Like It " , and its lyrics feature Nelly introspecting . Rolling Stone found the chorus of " E.I. " to contain the vocal style of rapper The Notorious B.I.G .. " Luven Me " samples " Don 't Stop (Ever Loving Me) " and " Whatever You Want " from bands One Way and Tony ! Toni ! Toné ! , respectively . NME interpreted " Luven Me " as a " virtual rewrite " of rapper Tupac Shakur 's 1995 " Dear Mama " .

= = Singles = =

" Country Grammar (Hot Shit) " was released as the album 's first single on February 29 , 2000 in the US . The song was written by Nelly and Jason " Jay E " Epperson , and produced by the latter . Its lyrics are based off the children clapping game Down Down Baby . " Country Grammar (Hot Shit) " peaked at number seven on the US Billboard Hot 100 and the UK Singles Chart . It also reached number ten and twenty on the Canadian Hot 100 and ARIA Singles Chart , respectively . The song was certified gold by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) . The second single , " E.I. " , was written by Nelly and Epperson and produced by the latter . It reached number sixteen on the Hot 100 , number eleven on the UK Singles Chart and number twelve on the ARIA Singles Chart . It was certified gold by the ARIA .

Written by Nelly and Epperson and produced by the latter , " Ride wit Me " was released as Country Grammar 's third single . The track features City Spud , and reached number three on the Hot 100 , the highest charting song from Country Grammar in the US . It also peaked at number three on the UK Singles chart , number four on the ARIA Singles Chart , Irish Singles Chart , number five on the Dutch Singles Chart and number seven on the Norwegian Singles Chart . It was certified gold by the RIAA and platinum by the ARIA . " Batter Up " was released as the fourth and final single from the album . It features Murphy Lee and Ali , and was written by Nelly , Epperson and Steve " Blast " Wills , while being produced by Wills . " Batter Up " peaked at number eight on the Belgian Singles Chart (Flanders) and number nineteen on the ARIA Singles Chart .

= = Critical reception = =

Country Grammar was well received by music critics . NME lauded the album , praising Nelly 's utilization of vocal characteristics from other rap artists , including Tupac Shakur and Cypress Hill . The magazine described the album as a " rarity " , noting stand @-@ out tracks such as the " seductive rap / pop crossover " " Ride wit Me " , while likening " Batter Up " to " DMX with a humour infusion " . NME closed their review declaring Country Grammar as " album of the year " . Giving the album a B ? , Entertainment Weekly 's David Browne wrote the album demonstrates that " tiresome rap topics " are not restricted to " the coasts " . Though what salvages the album is Nelly 's " smooth , slippery @-@ fast " voice , which contains " reggae inflections " . Browne describes the album 's content as minimalistic , with " introspective moments " such as " Ride wit Me " .

In Robert Christgau 's Consumer Guide review , he wrote that Nelly presents an " easy mix of N.O. Bounce , Cleveland thug harmony , and L.A. tweedle @-@ twaddle " , noting Nelly 's heavy accent which makes his hedonism more accessible . People noted that Nelly implements his own " laid @-@ back charm " to Country Grammar 's southern hip hop . Despite Nelly showing " limited thematic vocabulary " he articulates escapism to compensate for this . Allmusic 's Jason Birchmeier

praised the album 's " tongue @-@ twisting " self @-@ titled track as " infectious " , noting other tracks to contain the same elements , including " Ride wit Me " and " E.I. " . Birchmeier wrote that the album transcends regional styles such as southern hip hop to appeal to rap @-@ pop audiences , while praising producer Jason " Jay E " Epperson 's contribution to the album .

Rolling Stone explained that the album 's " liquid bass bumps " interlopes well with Nelly 's " wordplay @-@ heavy sing @-@ song rhyme @-@ flow " , while declaring Country Grammar to be the best thing to come out of St. Louis since comedian Redd Foxx . At the 2001 Soul Train Music Awards , Country Grammar earned Nelly the award for Best R & B / Soul or Rap New Artist . Nelly was nominated for four awards at the Online Hip @-@ Hop Awards , for Favorite Music Video , Song of the Year (both for " E.I. ") , Album of the Year (for Country Grammar) and Outstanding Graphic Design for his official website . He won the awards for Song of the Year and Artist of the Year .

? = Commercial performance = =

Country Grammar entered the Billboard 200 on the week of July 15 , 2000 , at number 3 , selling 235 @,@ 000 copies . The album remained within the top ten for several weeks before topping it on the week of August 17 , 2000 , selling 235 @,@ 000 copies and passing 1 @.@ 5 million in sales that week . Entertainment Weekly put the album 's sales down to its support by its lead single , " Country Grammar (Hot Shit) " , as well as the lack of releases from other music artists during that period . The album sold 235 @,@ 000 copies again the following week , continuing to stay atop the Billboard 200 . Country Grammar topped US Top R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Albums chart for six consecutive weeks . On October 30 , 2000 , the album had sold three million copies , and was certified three @-@ times platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) , denoting shipments of three million copies . On June 29 , 2002 , Country Grammar had sold 7 @.@ 7 million copies , according to Nielsen SoundScan . The album was certified nine @-@ times platinum by the RIAA on April 27 , 2004 , denoting shipments of nine million copies . As of June 2014 , Country Grammar had sold 8 @,@ 561 @,@ 000 copies in the United States .

Country Grammar entered the New Zealand Albums Chart on the week of September 24 , 2000 , at number 5 . It reached its peak at number 3 , for twenty @-@ eight weeks after its debut on the chart , where it remained there for two non @-@ consecutive weeks . It stayed on the chart for forty @-@ two weeks before dropping out . The album was certified three times platinum by the Recording Industry Association of New Zealand (RIANZ) for shipments of 45 @,@ 000 units . On the Australian Albums Chart , Country Grammar debuted at number 45 . It re @-@ entered the chart five times , and reached its peak at number 4 on the week of October 7 , 2001 . The album remained on the chart for thirty @-@ three weeks , and was certified three times platinum by the Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) . Country Grammar reached at number 7 on the Canadian Albums Chart , and stayed on the chart for twenty @-@ five weeks before dropping out . It was certified three times platinum by Music Canada (MC) , denoting shipments of 300 @,@ 000 copies . On the Dutch Albums Chart , the album peaked at number 8 .

On the UK Albums Chart , Country Grammar reached at number 14 , and stayed on it for thirty @-@ one weeks . It was certified gold by the British Phonographic Industry (BPI) , for shipments of 100 @,@ 000 units . The album peaked within the top thirty on the Belgian Albums Chart (Flanders) , Finnish Albums Chart and Danish Albums Chart . It reached at number 45 on the German Albums Chart , remaining on it for forty @-@ three weeks . It peaked on the Swiss Albums Chart and French Albums Chart at number 90 and number 109 , respectively . Country Grammar topped the US Top R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Albums year @-@ end chart in 2000 .

= = Legacy = =

Country Grammar 's success cemented Nelly 's position as one of the most successful hip hop acts of the emerging decade . Vibe emphasized Nelly 's expeditious fame , writing that the rapper debuted without the benefit of " guest spots or Pen and Pixel produced teasers on his CD cover " . The magazine continued to note the rapper 's absence of being associated with a notable group , " he just came out and sold two million records in less than a month " . Nelly 's success helped in

making St. Louis more notable for emerging hip hop acts , increasing the city 's general reputation . Country Grammar experienced commercial success , topping the US Billboard 200 chart for five weeks in 2000 , eventually going on to sell over 9 million copies in the US , making it the ninth best @-@ selling rap album of all time in the country . It is one of the highest certified albums in the US history , being certified nine times platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) . Nelly ranked third on the Billboard 200 ? 2009 decade @-@ end chart , due to the success of Country Grammar as well as his follow @-@ up album Nellyville (2002) . The latter album went on to sell 6 @,@ 488 @,@ 000 copies in the US .

= = Track listing = =

All songs were written by Nelly (Cornell Haynes , Jr .) , additional writers listed below .

Notes

" Ride wit Me " contains a portion of composition from DeBarge 's 1982 's " I Like It " .

" Batter Up " contains a portion of composition from Primal Scream 's " Movin ' on Up " .

" Luven Me " samples elements from One Way 's 1984 " Don 't Stop (Ever Loving Me) " . It also samples elements from Tony ! Toni ! Toné ! ' s 1990 's " Whatever You Want " .

= = Personnel = =

Credits adapted from liner notes .

Steve Eigner ? recording

Kenny Dykstra ? recording , assistant

Rich Travali ? mixing

Jason Standard ? mixing , assistant

Herb Powers ? mastering

Kevin Law ? A & R directing

Craig Yoskowitz ? A & R coordinating

Tony Davis ? management

Courtney Benson ? management

Todd Rubenstein ? legal

Sandra Brummel ? creative directing

BENTO Design ? design

Jonathen Mannion ? photography

= = Charts = =

= = Certifications = =

= = Release history = =