

= 8701 =

8701 is the third studio album by American singer Usher ; it was first released on August 7 , 2001 , by Arista Records . Recording was handled by several producers including The Neptunes , Jermaine Dupri , Babyface , Kevin " She 'kspere " Briggs , Mike City , Bryan Michael Cox , Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis . It was intended for an October 31 , 2000 release under the title All About U , the album was delayed numerous times , following the leak of several tracks onto the online music store Napster . Usher subsequently recorded new tracks and released the album under the new title , 8701 , which is derived from Usher singing for the first time in his local church in 1987 and the album 's release date of 2001 .

8701 takes inspiration from multiple artists , including Donny Hathaway , Stevie Wonder , Marvin Gaye , and Michael Jackson . It follows the theme of Usher 's relationship experience , along with the emotions of love and heartache . Usher promoted the album by embarking on the supporting tour , Evolution 8701 Tour in 2002 , to which it he performed in forty @-@ four shows across North America . He also made appearances in television shows , including Live ! with Kelly and Total Request Live . 8701 produced two Billboard Hot 100 number one singles ? " U Remind Me " and " U Got It Bad " stayed on top for four and fives weeks , respectively .

The album debuted at number four on the US Billboard 200 chart , with 210 @,@ 000 copies sold in its first week . It has sold over 4 @.@ 7 million copies in the United States , receiving a 4 x platinum certification from the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) ; worldwide sales stand at over eight million . 8701 received generally positive reviews from critics , who praised Usher 's vocals and development as an artist , but were ambivalent towards some of the album 's material . The album earned Usher numerous awards , including two Grammy Awards , three Billboard Music Awards and a BET Award .

= = Background = =

Usher had initially planned to release the album entitled All About U , as his third studio album on October 31 , 2000 . The album was to follow his successful My Way (1997) which to date , has sold over seven million copies . On March 13 , 2000 , multiple tracks from the album had leaked on to online music store Napster several months prior to its release , including " T.T.P. " , " U R the One " and " Pop Ya Collar " . Following the event , the album 's release was delayed twice , on December 5 , 2000 to July 17 , 2001 . During the taping of MTV Icon Janet Jackson special , Usher explained that he returned to the studios to record new songs , stating " I didn 't want that to be the way my record was remembered or the way I would present that to my fans [...] It turned out a lot better " while adding that tracks that were available for download on the site were not going to be included on the new album . With new tracks produced , Usher 's publicist announced a new name for the album , under the title 8701 , who claims that it is " practically a new album " . The origin of its new name was initially unknown , with speculation that it subsides with its US release of August 7 , 2001 (8 / 7 / 01) , though Usher 's publicist claimed that this was purely coincidental , and was not the reasoning for the title . Usher hinted that it was derived after something significant to him , and he would disclose it in the upcoming months . Eventually , his spokesperson revealed that the ' 87 ' segment of the title refers to the year 1987 , when Usher sang in public for the first time at his church in Atlanta , with the ' 01 ' referring to the year 2001 .

= = Recording = =

8701 was recorded in the United States , in the cities of Los Angeles , New York , Minneapolis and Atlanta . The album 's production was handled by several producers including The Neptunes , Jermaine Dupri , P. Diddy ? who had produced the majority of Usher 's previous album , My Way ? Babyface , Kevin " She 'kspere " Briggs , Mike City , Bryan Michael Cox and Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis . Both Jam and Lewis were asked by Usher 's mother , and then manager , to contribute to 8701 's production , during the 2000 MTV Music Awards . According to Jam , his mother had said "

Oh my God , Usher 's got this track and we thought you guys would be perfect to produce it " . Several months later , Jam and Lewis produced the song " Separated " , to which the producers then turned in to L.A. Reid , who liked the track , and asked them to produce more . Following this , Usher asked both producers to create a song similar to their 1985 " Tender Love " , performed by R & B vocal group Force MDs . Though he wanted it to be his own unique record , which contains a small similarity , to which Jam and Lewis created " Can U Help Me " . Following the completion of 8701 , Jam and Lewis were sent back to the studio by Reid to revamp the album 's second single " U Remind Me " , explaining " we already know he can dance , and he 's got the style and that whole thing . But I want people to just go , he can sing .

= = Composition = =

In an interview with MTV , Usher commented that lyrically , 8701 represents his " soul " , and elaborated by explaining that he was inspired by love and heartache ; " I listen to a lot of Donny Hathaway 's , Stevie Wonder 's , Marvin Gaye 's and Michael Jackson 's earlier records , those Motown greats . There 's a little bit of all of that in the album . I really appreciate what music was back then as well as in the early ' 90s when you had artists like Troop and Jodeci , and Michael Jackson was in his prime . " Usher explained that the album 's lyrics also reflect on what has been going on with his relationship ; 8701 is predominantly an R & B album . " Can U Help Me " , is about a deep relationship to which Usher experienced . " U Don 't Have to Call " is a hip @-@ hop song inspired by Jackson , while " U Got It Bad " is an R & B slow @-@ jam . About " U Got It Bad " , Kyle Anderson of MTV wrote that it makes use of the acoustic guitar and a " slow @-@ burning bassline " throughout . The album 's lead single " U Remind Me " is also an R & B track , and its lyrics is based on meeting a woman who reminds Usher of an ex @-@ girlfriend , and therefore cannot date her .

= = Singles = =

" Pop Ya Collar " was released from Usher 's previously intended third studio album All About U as the first single . Following the song 's leak on online music store Napster , along with several other tracks , it was added to some editions of 8701 . It entered and peaked at number two on the UK Singles Chart , but achieved less success in the United States , with a peak of number sixty on the Billboard Hot 100 and number twenty @-@ five on the Hot R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Songs chart . 8701 's first official single was " U Remind Me " , released on June 19 , 2001 . The song sold nearly 100 @, @ 000 copies in its opening week ; it received positive reviews from most critics , who cited it as a highlight from the album . The song topped the Billboard Hot 100 , for four consecutive weeks . " U Remind Me " also reached the top five in several countries , including France , Belgium (Wallonia) , New Zealand , the United Kingdom and Australia . It has been certified platinum by the Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) and gold by the Recording Industry Association of New Zealand (RIANZ) . " I Don 't Know " , featuring rapper @-@ producer P. Diddy , was planned as the album 's second single . It was receiving radio play prior to the release of " U Remind Me " peaking at # 68 on the Hot R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Songs chart and a video was to be produced in Los Angeles , directed by the latter artist .

The album 's second single was instead " U Got It Bad " , released on September 4 , 2001 . The song , like its predecessor , topped the Billboard Hot 100 chart , for five weeks . It remained number one for one week , before being replaced by Nickelback 's " How You Remind Me " for four weeks . The song then returned to the top , replacing the latter for four more weeks . " U Got It Bad " also achieved chart success in other territories , reaching the top five in New Zealand , Australia and the UK . The song has been certified gold by both the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and the Recording Industry Association of New Zealand (RIANZ) . " U Don 't Have to Call " was released as the third single , on January 12 , 2002 . It impacted the Hot 100 , peaking at number three , and the Hot R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Songs chart , at number two . It was released with P. Diddy 's " I Need a Girl (Part One) " in the UK as a B @-@ side single , and reached number four . " U @-@ Turn " was released as the album 's 4th single , on April 30 , 2002 as an international

single . It reached the top @-@ ten in Belgium and Australia . " Can U Help Me " was released as the album 's final single , on August 20 , 2002 . It peaked at # 57 on the Hot R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Songs chart and # 30 on the Rhythmic Top 40 chart .

= = Release and promotion = =

Usher initially planned to release his third studio album on October 31 , 2000 under the title All About U , but due to the leak of multiple tracks several months prior to the date , it was delayed . First to December 5 , 2000 it was delayed again to July 17 , 2001 . In regards to this , Usher commented that " Pushing the record back was a risk , but I thought it would build anticipation " . 8701 's final release date was August 7 , 2001 , on Arista Records , in the United States , United Kingdom , Australia and Canada . On the day of release of the album in the United States , to which Arista labelled as " Usher day " , Usher performed the album 's lead single " U Remind Me " on the show Live ! with Regis and Kelly . He also performed the single during the 2001 BET Awards and the United We Stand : What More Can I Give concert at RFK Stadium in Washington D.C. , which was held in tribute to the victims of the September 11 , 2001 attacks . Usher appeared on Total Request Live , attended an auto @-@ graph signing session in a Virgin mega store , and a listening session for the album in the Planet Hollywood restaurant . Usher performed " U Got It Bad " at the 2001 American Music Awards , and again on June 16 , 2002 at the Tweeter Center along with " U Don 't Have to Call " during his concert .

= = Critical reception = =

8701 received generally positive reviews from music critics . At Metacritic , which assigns a normalized rating out of 100 to reviews from mainstream critics , the album received an average score of 67 , based on 11 reviews . NME 's Lucy O 'Brien commended Usher for producing a more mature album , that " reflects his emotional experience " writing " Versatility is the key here : staccato beats with mellifluous melody , rich slow @-@ jams and edgy harmonies ? but woven through with Usher 's own perspective . A winner . " BBC Online 's Christian Hopwood also favoured the album , commenting on how Usher has developed " his producing , singing and song writing skills to a new level " noting his contribution to twelve of the seventeen tracks . Dan Leroy of Yahoo ! Music declared the album an improvement " over Usher 's " old " new album " ? All About You ? and depicted it as his best work to @-@ date . Leroy credited the production groups The Neptunes and Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis , depicting that they have done " some of their best work " on the album . J. D. Considine of Blender commented that the album " does what it 's supposed to , giving Usher a grown @-@ up R & B sound without reducing his boyish charm " . Kathryn McGuire of Rolling Stone described Usher 's vocals as " velvety " and further wrote that " Amid all the playboy pouting and preening , Usher 's vocals are impressively adaptable [...] . McGuire noted the album 's primary fault is that " Usher never surrenders his meticulously groomed veneer " , with every track being formulaic , or " radio @-@ safe " .

Sal Cinquemani of Slant Magazine noted the distinction between several of the album 's songs with Janet Jackson 's , while comparing Usher 's vocals to that of another Jackson member , Michael Jackson " [...] bring out the other Jackson in Usher , bolstering falsetto vocal bridges on " I Don 't Know " and " U Don 't Have to Call " that are undeniably Pop Royalty . " Vibe 's Jason King complimented some of the material on the album , but was disappointed with the " heavyweight producers " not producing any " masterpieces " . Stephen Erlewine of Allmusic gave a positive opinion on Usher 's development , writing " He looks good , his material is smooth and seductive , and he has a nice voice , even if he tends to favor melisma " . Erlewine also labelled the album as " a classy , seductive affair " but was ambivalent towards its material , due to the lack of memorable tracks . Entertainment Weekly 's Josh Tyrangiel said that the tracks " blend harmlessly together " , but was ambivalent towards the quality of the songs produced after Usher 's four @-@ year hiatus .

= = = Accolades = = =

The album earned Usher numerous accolades . At the 44th Grammy Awards he won his first Grammy , for Best R & B Vocal Performance Male (for " U Remind Me ") . The following year , at the 45th Grammy Awards , he won the award again , for " U Don 't Have to Call " . As an act Usher won several awards , including three Billboard R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Awards in 2002 , for Top R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Singles Artist , Top R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Male Artist and Top R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Artist , and a BET Award for Best R & B Artist . At the 2002 Soul Train Music Awards , the album earned him an award for Male R & B / Soul Album . In December 2009 , the album and its single , " U Got It Bad " , were ranked as some of the best records of the 2000 ? 2009 decade . The former was positioned at number sixty @-@ three and the latter at number fifteen , respectively , on the Billboard 200 and Hot 100 Decade @-@ End Charts . In 2008 , " U Got It Bad " was ranked as one of the all @-@ time Hot 100 songs , positioned at number ninety @-@ nine .

= = Commercial performance = =

The album debuted at number @-@ four on the US Billboard 200 Chart selling 210 @,@ 000 copies in its first week ; it was the second highest debut of the week , behind Isley Brothers ' Eternal . The album exceeded its predecessor 's sales , My Way (1997) , which debuted at number fifteen selling 66 @,@ 000 copies in its opening week . Eighteen weeks after the release of 8701 , it had sold 1 @.@ 94 million copies , and was predicted to be on pace to out @-@ sell My Way , which sold 1 @.@ 32 million units during the same period . On the week of February 25 , 2002 8701 's total sales stood at 3 @.@ 2 million and it was charted at number eleven on the Billboard 200 . By March 9 , 2010 the album had sold 4 @.@ 7 million copies in the United States , and had received a 4 x platinum certification from the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) .

The album debuted atop the Canadian Albums Chart , and spent three weeks on the chart . It topped the UK Albums Chart on the week ending August 21 , 2001 , and remained on it for forty @-@ seven weeks before dropping out . The album was certified platinum by the British Phonographic Industry (BPI) . On the Australian Albums Chart , 8701 peaked at number seven , and remained on the chart for forty @-@ three weeks . It was certified 2 x platinum by the Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) . The album debuted in the top five on the Danish Albums Chart and Belgium Albums Chart (Wallonia) . It debuted in the top ten in several countries , including New Zealand , The Netherlands , Switzerland and Norway . By November 2010 , the album had sold over 8 million copies worldwide .

= = Track listing = =

(*) Denotes co @-@ producer .

= = Personnel = =

Credits for 8701 adapted from Allmusic .

David Ashton ? assistant engineer

Babyface ? guest artist

Dave Barry ? guest artist

Bryan @-@ Michael Cox ? instrumentation , producer

Jermaine Dupri ? guest artist

Kevon Edmonds ? guest artist

Brian Garten ? engineer

Kevin Guarnieri ? assistant engineer , engineer

Jimmy Jam ? guest artist

Kelis ? guest artist

Terry Lewis ? guest artist

Puff Daddy ? performer , primary artist , featured artist , guest artist

David Rideau ? engineer
Usher ? primary artist , vocals

= = Charts = =

= = Certifications = =

= = Release history = =