

= A Forest =

" A Forest " is a song by the English alternative rock band The Cure . Co @-@ produced by Mike Hedges and The Cure 's Robert Smith , it was released as a single from the band 's second album Seventeen Seconds in April 1980 . It was their debut entry on the United Kingdom chart , where it reached number 31 . The accompanying music video was first shown on BBC 's Top of the Pops programme on 24 April 1980 .

Recorded and mixed over seven days , along with the rest of the songs from the album , " A Forest " is representative of The Cure 's early 1980s gothic rock phase . The song has featured on the band 's setlists for many years . Several versions have appeared on concert albums , and it was remixed and released as a single from the Mixed Up album in 1990 . The song has been covered by several artists including Blank & Jones , Sophie Barker and Ror @-@ Shak .

= = Background and recording = =

Mike Hedges co @-@ produced the album Seventeen Seconds as well as " A Forest " with The Cure 's Robert Smith . Hedges had first worked with the band on the track " Killing an Arab " . Interviewed in 2004 , he did not recall any demos existing for Seventeen Seconds ; the band generally played the track in the studio before laying down a backing track to which overdubs were added . At the time of the recording of the album , bass guitarist Simon Gallup and keyboardist Matthieu Hartley had been added to the band 's lineup . Gallup had replaced Michael Dempsey , who had departed to join The Associates . Gallup and Hartley joined remaining Cure members Smith (vocals) and Lol Tolhurst (drums) in late 1979 during the group 's Future Pastimes tour , on which " A Forest " was one of the new songs added to their setlist .

Due to budgetary restraints , Seventeen Seconds was recorded and mixed in seven days on a budget of between £ 2000 and £ 3000 , which resulted in the band working 16 or 17 hours a day to complete the album . Hedges and Robert Smith knew " A Forest " would take more work to complete than other songs on the album , and would require more overdubs . " A Forest " was one of the last tracks recorded ; the backing tracks were recorded first , followed by touch @-@ ups to the individual parts , then Smith 's vocals . Fiction Records owner Chris Parry told Smith that the song had the potential to be a hit if they made it sound " radio friendly " , but Smith refused , stating that the way the track sounded was the sound he envisioned in his head , dismissing concerns about radio friendliness . Work on mixing " A Forest " took up much of the final day of sessions for the album .

= = Composition and lyrics = =

" A Forest " and its parent album Seventeen Seconds are representative of The Cure 's gothic rock phase in the late 1970s and early 1980s . Cure biographer Jeff Apter refers to " A Forest " as " the definitive early Cure mood piece " and he argued the song is the centrepiece of the album . Smith 's intention with " A Forest " was to make a song that was " really atmospheric " . He has stated that it was a pivotal recording for the group , and represented " the archetypal Cure sound " .

" A Forest " is performed in the key of A minor . Initially only the synth , guitar and drums are heard , followed by the introduction of the bass guitar and a second guitar part . The song initially follows an Am ? C ? F ? Dm progression . Later on the track , its bridge contains a B ? C ? F # m ? C ? B ? C sequence , which ends with a chromatic movement to the F chord before returning to Am . Following the echoing repetition of the word " again " , a guitar solo appears which avoids string bends and moving in a pentatonic manner . The single version of the song fades out at around four minutes , while on the longer (album) version the instruments exit one by one , concluding with the sound of the bass guitar at 4 @. @ 46 " . The sound of Smith 's guitar was a departure from that prevalent in the 1970s . Mike Hedges favored the use of flanging at the time , and he estimated that there were seven flanger devices used on " A Forest " . Rikki Rooksby said that the slow phase effect heard on the guitar in " A Forest " " almost became a Smith trademark for a while " . Simon Gallup said that

his playing on the track was intended to be reminiscent of the bass work in the music of The Stranglers , whose bassist Jean -Paul Jacques Burnel was a major influence on him .

Smith has given varying explanations behind his lyrics for " A Forest " . He has said that the lyrics were based upon a dream he had as a child where he was lost in the woods unable to escape but later denied it and stated , " It 's just about a forest " .

= = Release and promotion = =

" A Forest " was released as a single on 5 April 1980 . Its B -side was " Another Journey by Train " , an instrumental remake of The Cure 's " Jumping Someone Else 's Train " . The single received a mixed critical reception , though commercially its sales were an improvement for the band . In early 1980 , it spent eight weeks in the UK Singles Chart , peaking at number 31 on 12 April of that year . It was the highest they had placed on the chart by that point in their career . In the United States , the song reached number 47 on the Billboard Dance Music / Club Play Singles chart .

The version included on 1986 compilation Standing on a Beach (Staring at the Sea) is neither the album version (which was also on the 12 " single) , nor is it the 7 " single edit (which removes a few bars between verses and fades out part way through the guitar solo ending) .

Andy Anderson , who later became the Cure 's drummer , said " A Forest " was the first song he heard by the band . He was taken by both the music and vocals , and was especially drawn to Smith 's guitar work and the keyboard melody , which he described as " haunting " . He described the spare and simple 4 / 4 drum pattern as straightforward ; " all that is needed " .

= = Re -recordings and cover versions = =

Since its release , " A Forest " has become the most played Cure song , with nearly 1 ,000 live appearances . A live version of " A Forest " appeared on a four -song edition of " The Hanging Garden " released in July 1982 . It was performed with what has been described as a " rough , punk -edged " sound on the 1984 live album Concert : The Cure Live . A performance appears on the live video The Cure in Orange , highly regarded by Allmusic reviewer Ned Raggett . , while other live versions of the song include the concert film Show , and on disc one of the live album Bestival Live 2011 .

In 1990 , the track was re -recorded and remixed by Mark Saunders for The Cure 's Mixed Up album . The " Tree mix " version of " A Forest " was released as a single on 6 December 1990 , while the album had been released a few weeks before on 20 November . The song was redone for the second time on the Join the Dots box set , this time remixed by Mark Plati and featuring Earl Slick on guitar . This version was described as " awful " and " instantly dated " by reviewer Chris Ott . An acoustic version was recorded and released on the bonus disc that came with some copies of the 2001 Greatest Hits CD . Robert Smith supplied vocals for a Blank & Jones cover version of the song , which appeared on their 2004 album Monument .

Finnish avant -garde metal band Waltari recorded a cover version released on their album So Fine ! , in 1994 .

French band Nouvelle Vague covered A Forest in a bossa nova style , as part of its self -titled debut album in 2004 .

Texas Band The Toadies covered A Forest for their 2008 album No Deliverance . This version was an iTunes exclusive bonus track .

Sophie Barker released a recording on her double A -side single " A Forest / Say Goodbye " which was released on 31 October 2011 .

Ror -Shak , a collaboration between DJ DB and Stakka , covered the song on their only album Deep , which was released in 2005 . The music video was used in the TV Series Fringe in 2008 . English artist Bat for Lashes covered the song for the 2008 Cure tribute album Perfect as Cats : A Tribute to the Cure . Luke Lewis of NME praised the version , noting it " teases out a crepuscular , pagan atmosphere absent in the original " .

Norwegian black metal band Carpathian Forest recorded the song for their 1998 album Black Shining Leather .

British band Creaming Jesus included a cover of this song on their 1990 EP Bark .

British musician Steven Wilson recorded a cover of the song for his solo release " Cover Version III " in 2005 , as part of his Cover Versions series .

A cover of the track appears on the album 8 : 58 , a project by Paul Hartnoll , with vocals from The Unthanks .

= = Music video = =

The promotional video for " A Forest " was the band 's first . It was created by David Hiller , who mixed footage from the band 's 24 April 1980 debut appearance on BBC 's Top of the Pops programme with a forest montage . Smith said that the group " came across looking very morose and disinterested " in the video because that is how they felt at the time ; he " hated " Top of the Pops as he was " really anti @-@ pop " during this period . He recalled that he had been in pain at the time of the shoot as he had broken his thumb trying to change a tyre a few days previously .

= = Track listing = =

7 " - Fiction / Polydor (UK)

" A Forest " - 3 @.@ 54

" Another Journey by Train " - 3 @.@ 04

7 " - Fiction (UK)

" A Forest " [Tree Mix] - 6 @.@ 55

" A Forest " [Original]

" Inbetween Days " [Shiver Mix] - 6 @.@ 24

= = Personnel = =

Robert Smith - vocals , guitar

Simon Gallup - bass

Matthieu Hartley - keyboards

Lol Tolhurst - drums

= = Chart positions = =