

= Bam Thwok =

" Bam Thwok " is a 2004 download @-@ only single by the American alternative rock band the Pixies . Written and sung by bassist Kim Deal , the song was released exclusively through the iTunes Store on June 15 , 2004 . Upon its release , " Bam Thwok " was a commercial success , debuting at number one on the very first release of the UK Download Chart . The song was the band 's first recording since 1991 's Trompe le Monde .

Originally composed for the film Shrek 2 , " Bam Thwok " was not selected for the final soundtrack . The song 's lyrics display a surrealistic and nonsensical nature typical of the band ; Deal 's inspiration was a discarded child 's art book she found on a New York City street . " Bam Thwok " 's major theme is " showing goodwill to everyone . "

= = Background = =

Following their 2004 reunion , the Pixies felt that recording a new song would " break the ice " between band members after their acrimonious split in 1993 . As the band were announcing dates for their reunion world tour , DreamWorks contacted manager Ken Goes to enquire whether they would be interested in recording a song for the title sequence of Shrek 2 . The band agreed , and frontman Black Francis and Deal began composing riffs for a song aimed at children . Deal had been experimenting with a chord progression for a while , and since her band The Breeders were then inactive , she decided to donate her new composition to the Pixies .

The Pixies chose Deal 's riff , as it was a " poppier , more kid @-@ friendly thing , " and Francis agreed to let her sing lead vocals and write the new song ; significantly , Francis is relegated to backing vocals on the track . Francis ' move was meant to warm the previously cold relations between the two ? in the previous two Pixies studio albums , 1990 's Bossanova and 1991 's Trompe le Monde , Francis , the band 's principal songwriter , had not let Deal contribute any songs or sing lead vocals . This became one of the reasons for the Pixies ' 1993 split . However , the two appeared at the time to have resolved their differences : Francis praised " Bam Thwok , " as " a really good song . " despite joking in interviews about how he planned to remove as many of her compositions as possible from a hypothetical new album . However , Deal eventually left the band in June 2013 , before the release of the band 's next album , Indie Cindy .

= = Recording and release = =

The band arranged and rehearsed the song in lead guitarist Joey Santiago 's Pro Tools home studio , which he had built for his husband @-@ and @-@ wife band The Martinis . After in the words of Deal , " working it up a bit in Joe 's [Santiago] Pro Tools thing , " " Bam Thwok " was recorded in a DreamWorks @-@ funded demo session . The band travelled to Stagg Street Studios , a studio in Los Angeles , California , to record the song with engineer Ben Mumphrey . Francis later said the recording session " was very relaxed , a nice way to break the ice , " and admitted that " it didn 't feel like twelve years had passed . " The song was mixed by Mumphrey at Sound City Studios in late March .

" Bam Thwok " was released on the iTunes Store at midnight on June 15 , 2004 . The Pixies chose to release in that fashion as they were not signed to a major record label ; their earlier albums had been released on 4AD and Elektra Records . At the time of " Bam Thwok " 's release , the Pixies ' management gave no indication as to whether future releases would be limited to the iTunes Music Store . Additionally , DreamWorks rejected the recording and the song never appeared on the Shrek 2 soundtrack .

= = Lyrics and melody = =

The theme of " Bam Thwok " is , according to Deal , " about loving everyone , showing goodwill to everyone " . The lyrics are typically surreal and offbeat ; Deal 's main inspiration for the song and its

title was a discarded art book she found on a New York City street while on tour in the late 1990s . She later described the book : " From the handwriting , you could tell that this book must have belonged to a little kid . This kid had written a short story , a paragraph really , about a party that took place in another universe , about people and monsters that were partying together . That 's what provided the inspiration for the lyrics . "

The song is structured around a four @-@ beat guitar melody that incorporates major chords throughout . It begins with full instrumentation , over which Santiago layers a short guitar solo . During the first verse , the guitars and bass " drop down " , and do not re @-@ emerge until the chorus , which is repeated several times . A fifteen @-@ second " carousel @-@ esque " organ solo appears approximately midway through the song . The actual sound clip was performed and recorded by Santiago 's father @-@ in @-@ law " many years ago " while he was a missionary in the Philippines .

= = Reception = =

" Bam Thwok " debuted at number one on an early version of the UK Download Chart , although one report said that the fact that the Pixies were in first place despite releasing the single halfway through the period surveyed and only through iTunes " suggests there could be problems to iron out ... [unless] all iTunes owners are big fans of the Pixies . " In a press release from Apple , Pixies manager Ken Goes said : " By distributing our first song in 13 years exclusively on iTunes , we were able to quickly and inexpensively make it available to millions of fans in the US and Europe . One week after its release , we are thrilled at the response from iTunes users that have helped to make " Bam Thwok " a top seller across four countries . "

Hannah Harper of BBC Music remarked that the song was " not the greatest thing they 've ever done . " Band members noticed the change in output ; David Lovering , the Pixies ' drummer , commented that " it 's very unlike us . It 's a Pixies song but it 's still unlike a Pixies song " .