

= Bedtime Story (Madonna song) =

" Bedtime Story " is a song recorded by American singer Madonna for her sixth studio album , Bedtime Stories (1994) . It was released as the third single from the album on February 13 , 1995 , by Maverick Records , and it also appears on Madonna 's compilation album GHV2 (2001) . " Bedtime Story " was written by Björk , Nellee Hooper and Marius De Vries ; it was the only time Björk wrote a song for a Madonna album . She re @-@ wrote a demo of the song to the current version , which was then produced by Madonna and Hooper . A mid @-@ tempo electronic and house song with acid , ambient and techno influences , " Bedtime Story " has an underlying skeletal synth melody influenced by minimal trance music . The track was a departure from Madonna 's pop @-@ R & B @-@ based outputs in favor of unconventional and electronic music . Lyrically it talks about the joys of the unconscious world .

" Bedtime Story " received favorable reviews from music critics , who praised the song 's hypnotic and electronic style , and deemed it an underrated song which could have had great potential . The song was a moderate success , reaching the top ten in the record charts of United Kingdom , Italy and Australia , but missed the top 40 in United States , while peaking at number one on the US Hot Dance Club Songs chart . The music video for " Bedtime Story " was directed by Mark Romanek and is listed as one of the most expensive music videos of all time with a cost of \$ 5 million (\$ 7 @. @ 76 million in 2016 dollars) . It features surrealistic and new age imagery , with influences from artists such as Remedios Varo , Frida Kahlo and Leonora Carrington . The video received acclaim from critics and is permanently displayed at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City .

" Bedtime Story " was performed at the 1995 Brit Awards in London with Madonna wearing a white Versace dress and long hair extensions , becoming one of the 30 best moments of the awards show history according to Marie Claire . A remixed version of the track was also used as a video interlude on her Re @-@ Invention World Tour in 2004 . Critics and scholars noted that the song foreshadowed Madonna 's move towards electronic music in her future work .

= = Background and release = =

According to Lucy O 'Brien in her book Madonna : Like an Icon , Madonna wanted to " make an impact " on the soul music scene , and started working with prominent producers from the R & B market . Madonna also wanted to explore British club music scene , where genres such as dub had been growing in popularity . She decided to work with several European producers and composers from the electronic scene , including Nellee Hooper , who pleased Madonna due to his " very European sensibility " . Inviting Hooper over to Los Angeles , writing sessions started taking place in Chappell Studios , Encino , California .

" Bedtime Story " was written by Icelandic singer @-@ songwriter Björk , Marius De Vries and Hooper , and co @-@ produced by Madonna and Hooper . According to author Mark Pytlik in his book Björk : Wow and Flutter , Madonna was inspired at that time by Björk 's second studio album , Debut (1993) . Through her connections with De Vries and Hooper , Madonna got in touch with Björk and offered her a chance to write a track for Bedtime Stories . Björk did not consider herself a fan of Madonna 's music , but she was intrigued by the offer and she accepted it . She wrote a song initially named " Let 's Get Unconscious " , with the opening lyrics " Today is the last day , That I 'm using words " ? the lines being born out of Björk 's own criticism of Madonna 's aesthetic . The singer clarified , " When I was offered to write a song for [Madonna] , I couldn 't really picture me doing a song that would suit her ... But on second thought , I decided to do this to write the things I have always wanted to hear her say that she 's never said . "

Once the song demo had been finished , De Vries and Hooper rearranged the track and the final version was called " Bedtime Story " . The song was eventually released as the third single from the parent album , Bedtime Stories , on February 13 , 1995 . Björk later confessed that Madonna had got few of the lyrics wrong , like instead of the original " learning logic and reason " Madonna included it as " leaving logic and reason " . The original demo was later re @-@ worked and released as " Sweet Intuition " , which appeared as a B @-@ side on Björk 's " Army of Me " single

and remixed on the " It 's Oh So Quiet " single .

= = Recording and composition = =

" Bedtime Story " is an electronic song , a notable departure from the other tracks on its parent album , which are more R & B and new jack swing @-@ driven . Unlike Madonna 's more up @-@ tempo , melodic work , the song is slower and has less melody but a more complex rhythmic structure . It has an ambient @-@ influenced tone , with a " pulsating " and a " deep , bubbling " house beat . There are stylistic comparisons to acid house music with its " skeletal " synth arrangement , influences of minimal trance , as well as techno . The song 's instrumentation is synthesized , consisting of drum machine loops , organs , strings , gurgles , handclaps , as well as a digitally @-@ altered " homophonic " choir . According to sheet music published by Musicnotes.com , " Bedtime Story " is written in the key of G minor and has a moderate tempo of 108 beats per minute . Madonna 's vocals span from the notes of A3 to G 4 and follow a basic sequence of Gm9 7 Dm 7 E 7 A 7 G as its chord progression . The song is linked to the ending of the previous album track , " Sanctuary " , and starts with its chords . The ending of the track has a pulsating beat and a mix of the lead synth , with Madonna 's voice whimpering and uttering " Ha @-@ ha @-@ aahs " . It ends abruptly saying " And all that you 've ever learned , try to forget , I 'll never explain again " making the listener believe that it was all the part of a dream .

According to Victor Amaro Vicente in his book *The aesthetics of motion in music for the Mevlana Celal ed @-@ Din Rumi* , the song 's music bears many resemblances to new age @-@ era music and different forms of Sufi music . Its slow atmospheric qualities have drawn comparison to " Mevlevi @-@ Sufi Relaxation " and the song 's intricate , " steady and continuous " rhythmic structure has also drawn comparison to the zikr ceremony . Björk , one of the song 's writers , has been credited for giving the song its particular style and according to De Vries , the track 's architecture is " distinctly Björkian " and she " has such a particular and idiosyncratic approach to the construction of lyrics and phrasing " . In a chapter of *Music and Technoculture* written by Charity Marsh and Melissa West , it is stated that one can hear the influence of Björk in Madonna 's vocals during the song .

Rikky Rooksby , author of *The Complete Guide to the Music of Madonna* , noted that the lyrics of " Bedtime Story " are an hymn to the joys of unconsciousness and a rejection of the supposed constraints of reason and language , hence the line " Words are useless , especially sentences , They don 't stand for anything , How could they explain how I feel ? " Lyrically , despite being a song about a trip to the unconscious , scholars have noticed subtexts within the song 's meaning . Vicente noted that postmodernism and new age themes are prevalent within the lyrics , especially with regards to their incapability of articulating the concept of the truth , as well as the song 's theme of meditation and relax . Islamic mystic and sexual themes have also been noted within the song 's lyrics . Vicente further found that the cliché references to " honey " , " longing and yearning " , and the sexual connotations of being " wet on the inside " does not relate to " secular " love , but to " ecstatic " Sufi poetry . The lyrics allude to concepts of movement which are " central " to Sufi philosophy : " It indicates achieving fana through sema (getting ' lost ' and ' leaving logic and reason to the arms of unconsciousness ') " .

= = Critical reception = =

" Bedtime Story " has received positive reviews from music critics . Stephen Thomas Erlewine of AllMusic , in a review for the parent album , wrote that " Bedtime Story " was among the " best songs on the album " and that it " slowly works [its] melodies into the subconscious as the bass pulses " . Sal Cinquemani of Slant Magazine praised the song , claiming that it had unfulfilled potential and that it " could have been the next ' Vogue ' " . In a review for her *GHV2* album , he also described the song as a " trippy follow @-@ up to the mainstream hit ' Take a Bow ' " and gave it an " A " rating . Larry Flick from Billboard noted that " It is easily among [Madonna 's] boldest and most experimental pop singles to date " with " trippy and cutting @-@ edge trance dance rhythms " . He

finished his review praising its " ingratiating " hook and " it is an affecting plea for unconscious bliss and escape , voiced with underplayed angst and resolve " . Peter Galvin from The Advocate found that the song " calls to mind the Ecstasy anthem ' Rescue Me ' " .

O'Brien wrote that " ' Bedtime Story ' was a vivid track that foreshadowed Madonna 's move towards electronica " . Author Victor Amaro Vicente wrote in his book , The Aesthetics of Motion in Musics for the Mevlana Celal Ed @-@ Din Rumi , that the song 's " complex rhythmic texture " made it a " dance hall favorite in the mid @-@ 1990s " . Rikky Rooksbywrote in The Complete Guide to the Music of Madonna , that the track was similar to the music of English alternative band Everything but the Girl , and claimed that " in contrast to most other songs of the album , this is one track that could have been longer and more trippy than it is " . Writing for Idolator , Bianca Gracie calle d " Bedtime Story " the highlight of the album , adding that " It sucks you in with its quivering drum patterns taken directly from trance music , which creates an ethereal ambiance " . Gracie commended the influence of UK dance music and Madonna 's provocative vocals , finding the song to be a direct inspiration for singer Britney Spears ' " Breathe on Me " , from her fourth studio album In the Zone (2003) .

Matthew Rettenmund wrote in his Encyclopedia Madonnica that the song was a " total curveball " because of its inclusion on the album . He also believed that releasing it as a follow @-@ up single to the commercially successful " Take a Bow " diminished its potential . However , Rettenmund praised it as one of Madonna 's most " uncharacteristic " songs , describing as a " hypnotic , almost hallucinogenic , ride through an idealized state of mind . " This was echoed by author Chris Wade , who wrote in the book The Music of Madonna that although written by Björk , Madonna made the song her own by " adding a druggy , sleepiness [to it] that makes it one of her most unusual , quirky and challenging tracks . "

= = Commercial performance = =

In the United States , the song debuted at number 72 on the US Billboard Hot 100 , on the issue dated April 22 , 1995 . One week later , the song peaked at number 42 , becoming the first Madonna single since " Burning Up " (1983) not to reach the top 40 . If " Bedtime Story " would have been able to reach the top 40 , Madonna could have become the third woman in the " rock era " with the most top 40 hits , behind Aretha Franklin and Connie Francis . She would have achieved a consecutive string of 33 top 40 hits , starting from her single " Holiday " (1983) . Fred Bronson from Billboard explained that the song 's loss of radio airplay and sales prevented it from peaking within the US top 40 . " Bedtime Story " spent a total of seven weeks on the Billboard Hot 100 . However , it was successful on the US Hot Dance Club Songs chart , where it peaked at number one and spent 16 weeks on the charts . Furthermore , it also charted on various Billboard genre charts , including the Rhythmic Top 40 at number 40 , and the Top 40 Mainstream at number 38 . On the Canadian RPM Top Singles chart , it reached a peak of number 46 .

In the United Kingdom , the song entered the charts at its peak of number four on the week of February 25 , 1995 . It left the top 20 two weeks later , eventually spending nine weeks on the charts . In other European countries , the song also found some success . It peaked at number 38 in Belgium for one week only . On the Dutch Single Top 100 chart , it entered and peaked at number 46 on April 15 , 1995 , and stayed on the same position the next week , with a total run of two weeks . " Bedtime Story " debuted at number nine in Finland , and peaked at number four the next week . In Australia , the song debuted and peaked at number five on April 9 , 1995 , where it stayed in that position for three weeks . It fell out of the top ten in the fifth week , and eventually exited the charts after a total run of nine weeks , falling to 44 on its last week in the charts . In New Zealand , it debuted at number 40 on May 7 , 1995 , moving up two positions to 38 which was its peak , and leaving the charts the next week .

= = Music video = =

== Background and development ==

The music video for " Bedtime Story " was directed by Mark Romanek over a course of six days at Universal Studios , Universal City , California . Madonna had first approached Romanek to direct the music video of her Erotica single , " Bad Girl " (1993) . Romanek recalled in the DVD , The Work of Director Mark Romanek , that " Bad Girl " was ultimately directed by David Fincher , but he got later approached by the singer 's team for " Bedtime Story " . Romanek contacted storyboard artist Grant Shaffer to create the storyboards for the video . He met with Romanek the next day , who played " Bedtime Story " for Shaffer and also showed him some photographs of Madonna , which were supposed to be used as the album cover . The surrealism inspired images portrayed a mystical looking Madonna , with white hair billowing behind her . Romanek wanted to have the music video capture the same look . Madonna called from Florida and together with Romanek they described to Shaffer every aspect of the video , including budget and their concepts . For the next few days , Shaffer sketched the storyboards and faxed them to Romanek for review . About 20 days later , Shaffer dropped the final sketches at Propaganda Films , who were producing the video .

Production started from December 5 , 1994 , at Universal Studios . When Shaffer arrived there , he found that his storyboards were glued on a giant blackboard along with the schedule for each shot . He also observed that many of his storyboard ideas had evolved , but they retained the core concepts . The preliminary shots used a Madonna body double and the singer arrived afterwards , proceeding with the shots in a water tank . Filming stopped for few hours when a minor earthquake shook the film studio . Few complications were encountered like Madonna getting dyed in blue color from sitting in the water tank , as well as technical difficulties leading to cancellation of a storyboard showing the singer opening her chest cavity . One shot involving Madonna laying in the lap of a skeleton had to be postponed since the skeleton was too small for the singer , and had to be rebuilt from scratch . The last scene filmed was the one involving the laboratory where Madonna was shown sleeping in a futuristic dress . At a reputed cost of \$ 5 million (\$ 7 @. @ 76 million in 2016 dollars) , " Bedtime Story " became one of the most expensive music videos of all time , and the most expensive at that time alongside the music video for her single " Express Yourself " (1989) , which was also reported to have cost \$ 5 million . Tom Foden was the video 's production designer and it was shot by cinematographer Harris Savides , on 35 mm film lens . Due to the vast number of digital effects required for the video , post @-@ production lasted for weeks . In an interview with Aperture magazine , Madonna revealed the inspiration for the music video :

My " Bedtime Story " video was completely inspired by all the female surrealist painters like Leonora Carrington and Remedios Varo . There 's that one shot where my hands are up in the air and stars are spinning around me . And me flying through the hallway with my hair trailing behind me , the birds flying out of my open robe ? all of those images were an homage to female surrealist painters ; there 's a little bit of Frida Kahlo in there , too .

== Release and synopsis ==

On March 10 , 1995 , the video was given a cinematic release at three different Odeon Cineplex film theaters ; in Santa Monica , California at the Broadway Cinemas , in Manhattan , New York at the Chelsea Theater , and in Chicago , Illinois at the Biograph Theater . In order to promote the video , Madonna did a special known as Madonna 's Pajama Party on March 18 , 1995 @. @ where the singer could be seen reading a bedtime story in Webster Hall in New York City . Unlike most of Madonna 's videos which debuted on either MTV or VH1 television channels , " Bedtime Story " was first put into circulation on radio station Z100 following the singer 's " pajama party " on March 18 . According to Maverick GM Abbey Konowitch , they first aligned with Odeon Cineplex so that they could assure that the music video would be viewed in an innovative way . However , Konowitch and his team were aware that such an event could not be organized for every release because it would cause problems with investments . Odeon VP Freeman Fisher explained that since it was a slow theatrical season , allowing the video 's release enabled them to sell more tickets , " for four minutes the audience sees astounding cinematic images in a first class feature @-@ like production . It 's not

just another artist lip @-@ syncing to a track . "

The music video starts off with a blue monitor screen with an eye showing the inscription " Welcome " . The video progresses inside a blue space ship @-@ style room with Madonna lying prostrate in what seems to be a scientific experiment . The imagery cast in this section of the video have drawn comparisons to hermeticism . The video progresses into a sequence of dreams , containing varied surrealistic , mystic , new age , Sufi and Egyptian imagery and symbolism . Such include a scene in which Madonna lies on a rotating sunflower , and images of a woman with long hair , an alchemist @-@ type man holding a cube with Madonna 's face on each side as well as rotating Sufi dancers . The dream sequence progresses with unusual clips , including Madonna in a pool with half @-@ visible skulls . A scene in which Madonna , dressed in a light dressing gown , gives birth to doves , can also be seen ; the image has been compared to the work of René Magritte and Kahlo 's 1932 painting My Birth . Suddenly , she floats down a corridor in a white gown and appears in a black @-@ and @-@ white projection in a cinema @-@ like room . As the music gets more dramatic , the dream grows intense , with images of skulls and scars appearing , and the singer can be seen wading through space . A scene in which Madonna 's eyes are replaced with her mouth and her mouth with an eye precedes the ending , influenced by the work of Kahlo ; the final shots show Madonna waking up and looking out .

= = = Reception and analysis = = =

The music video for " Bedtime Story " has received generally positive reviews from critics ever since its release . It was exhibited and permanently kept in different art galleries and museums , including the Museum of Modern Art as well the School of Visual Arts in New York City . O 'Brien praised the video , calling it " one of [Madonna] ' s most experimental " music videos and a " Dali @-@ esque epic " , causing it to enter " the portals of high art " . MTV News ' James Montgomery , while writing an article on the pop culture references of Britney Spears ' " Hold It Against Me " music video (2011) , claimed that " Bedtime Story " was an ultra artistic video , influencing Spears ' one . Corinna Herr wrote in the book Madonna 's Drowned Worlds that " Visual references to surreal paintings seem to be a key to Madonna 's world of images " and listed " Bedtime Story " as one of these videos . In the same book , author Santiago Fouz @-@ Hernández added that videos like Bedtime Story " included alchemical and hermeticist traditions , in particular the concepts of androgyny and masquerade . Herr also wrote regarding the video 's new age influences and concept of an idealised world , one " which she is not necessarily a part , but to which she nevertheless seems to be attracted " . Rettenmund commented that the video was rife with mystical and Sufi traditions , and described it as a " singular creation in Madonna 's oeuvre " .

The music video has also drawn comparisons to Tarsem Singh 's films , The Cell (2000) and The Fall (2006) , in the sense that they both incorporate elements of Islamic mystic imagery , such as in the scene where the Sufi dance is executed , as well as the floating cube . According to writer Brad Brevet , who observed the similarities , deduced that both the video and the films deal with tapping into the subconscious of the human mind and hence the resulting strange visuals were directly an influence from " Bedtime Story " . James Steffen , author of The Cinema of Sergei Parajanov , found that some of the imagery in the video were directly lifted from the 1969 Soviet film , The Color of Pomegranates , including the scenes showing a bare foot crushing grapes over a slab inscribed with Arabic , and a scene showing a bishop 's croziers falling into hand . Steffen also noted that Romanek 's influences for the video included the works of Russian film director Andrei Tarkovsky , including Stalker (1979) and Nostalghia (1983) . Jake Hall from Dazed declared " Bedtime story " as the blueprint for " 90s brand of futurism " , adding that the video " eschews the obvious and instead relies on undulating CGI " .

= = Live performances and legacy = =

A Junior Vasquez remix of the song was performed at the 1995 Brit Awards . Madonna wore a white Versace dress and had long hair extensions , her look being similar to the Versace

advertisement campaign she was promoting . She even invited Björk to feature in the performance ; the singer turned it down , saying " I was supposed to get [Madonna 's] personal number and call her up , but it just didn 't feel right . I 'd love to meet her accidentally , really drunk in a bar . It 's just all that formality that confuses me " . The performance was ranked number four on Marie Claire 's " 30 Best Brit Award Moments " list . It was described by the magazine as the " best opening performance " at the Brits . A writer described that " [Madonna] pulled out all the stops , treating the audience to a light show and trio of satin @-@ clad male dancers " .

Madonna has only featured the song on one of her concert tours , the 2004 Re @-@ Invention World Tour , where the Orbital remix was used as a video interlude . As the video played , three acrobatic dancers dropped from the ceiling on swings . Madonna appeared in the video wearing a white costume while singing in front of a mirror and lying down on a big scanner . A white horse can be seen with her during the video riding on a white desert and running through white sheets . As the interlude ended , Madonna appeared on stage again to sing " Nothing Fails " .

" Bedtime Story " has frequently been cited as one of the songs with the most unfulfilled potential in Madonna 's career , nonetheless , the song did enjoy some success , being a club " favorite " in the mid @-@ 1990s . It has been described as the record that foreshadowed Madonna 's usage of electronic music in her later work , especiall Ray of Light (1998) , which according to Vicente , owes " its contemplative and electronic techno rave character to ' Bedtime Story ' " . O 'Brien wrote in Madonna : Like an Icon , that the song " foreshadowed [the singer 's] move towards electronica " and labelled it an " embryonic moment that went a lot further on the next few albums " . De Vries recalled that tackling the song " seemed to set something free in Madonna . She was straining at the leash a little bit , to find some other languages to speak , and ' Bedtime Story ' was an embryonic moment that went a lot further on to the next few albums . " In a review for the Bedtime Stories album on a whole , Sal Cinquemani of Slant Magazine wrote that the song was " the germ that would later inspire Madonna to seek out and conquer electronica with the likes of William Orbit and Mirwais " .

= = Track listings and formats = =

= = Credits and personnel = =

Credits and personnel adapted from Bedtime Stories album liner notes .

= = Charts = =