

= In Bloom =

For the 2013 film of the same name , see In Bloom (2013 film)

" In Bloom " is a song by American rock band Nirvana . Written by frontman Kurt Cobain , the song addresses people outside of the underground music community who did not understand the band 's message .

Nirvana made its first music video for an early version of " In Bloom " in 1990 ; however the song did not appear on a commercial release until the release of the group 's second album , Nevermind , in 1991 . " In Bloom " became the fourth and final single from the album in late 1992 . It was accompanied by a new music video which parodied musical performances of 1960s variety shows . The music video for " In Bloom " won Best Alternative Video at the MTV Video Music Awards in 1993 .

= = Background and recording = =

Nirvana first played the song the night before it was demoed . Bassist Krist Novoselic recalled that it " originally sounded like a Bad Brains song . Then Kurt turned it into a pop song " . Cobain went home and reworked the song , playing the revised version of it over the phone to Novoselic . The band recorded " In Bloom " with producer Butch Vig at Smart Studios in Madison , Wisconsin during April 1990 . The material recorded at Smart Studios was intended for the group 's second album for the independent record label Sub Pop . The song originally had a bridge section that Vig removed . Novoselic said that after the band recorded the song , Vig cut out the bridge from the 16 @-@ track master tape with a razor blade and threw it in the garbage . The songs from these sessions were placed on a demo tape that circulated amongst the music industry , generating interest in the group among major record labels .

After signing to DGC Records , Nirvana began recording its second album Nevermind in May 1991 . " In Bloom " was one of the first songs the band recorded during the album sessions at Sound City Studios in Van Nuys , California ; Vig thought it would be good to start recording a song previously recorded at Smart Studios . The arrangements for " In Bloom " and the other songs previously recorded with Vig in 1990 were largely unchanged ; the recently hired drummer Dave Grohl stayed mostly with what his predecessor Chad Channing had recorded , but added more power and precision to the recording . Cobain sang progressively " harder " during the recording of the song , which made it difficult for Vig to balance the volume levels between the verses and choruses . Vig recalled that he had to change the input level " on the fly " and hoped that Cobain would not " change the phrasing or do something different " while recording .

Cobain chose not to overdub a harmony vocal part during the Smart Studios sessions , possibly due to time constraints . During the Nevermind sessions , Vig had Grohl sing harmonies on the song . Grohl had difficulty hitting the proper notes , but ultimately was able to sing what Vig wanted . Vig often had to trick Cobain , who was averse to performing multiple takes , into recording additional takes for overdubs on the record . The producer convinced Cobain to double @-@ track his vocals on " In Bloom " by telling him , " John Lennon did it . " After doubling Cobain 's vocals , Vig decided he might as well double Grohl 's and had the drummer record an additional track of backing harmonies .

= = Composition = =

Like many Nirvana songs , " In Bloom " shifts back and forth between quiet verses and loud choruses . Cobain uses a Mesa Boogie guitar amplifier for the verses , and during the chorus he switches to a Fender Bassman amp (suggested by Vig) for a heavier , double @-@ tracked fuzztone sound . The rhythm section of Novoselic and Grohl kept its parts simple ; Grohl stated it was " an unspoken rule " to avoid unnecessary drum fills , while Novoselic said he felt his role was about " serving the song " . During the choruses , vocalist Cobain and drummer Grohl harmonize while singing " He 's the one / Who likes all our pretty songs / And he likes to sing along / And he

likes to shoot his gun / But he knows not what it means " . The song 's intro reappears at the end of each chorus .

Cobain 's lyrics address the people outside of the underground music scene that began showing up at Nirvana shows after the release of the group 's debut album Bleach . Nirvana biographer Michael Azerrad wrote , " But remarkably , [the song 's lyrics] translated even better to the mass popularity the band enjoyed . " Regarding the song 's chorus , Azerrad commented , " The brilliant irony is that the tune is so catchy that millions of people actually do sing along to it . " In his biography of Cobain , Heavier Than Heaven , Charles R. Cross asserted that the song was a " thinly disguised portrait " of Cobain 's friend Dylan Carlson .

= = Release and reception = =

" In Bloom " was released as the fourth single from Nevermind on November 30 , 1992 . The single was only released commercially in the United Kingdom ; promotional copies were released in the United States . The 7 @-@ inch vinyl and cassette editions of the single contained a live version of " Polly " as a B @-@ side , while the 12 @-@ inch vinyl and CD versions featured a performance of " Sliver " ; both songs were recorded at the same December 28 , 1991 concert . The single peaked at number 28 on the British singles chart . While lacking an American commercial release , the song charted at number five on the Billboard Album Rock Tracks chart .

Nirvana biographer Everett True wrote an uncharacteristically unfavorable review in Melody Maker , accusing the single of being a cash @-@ in on Nevermind 's success . " Whoop whoop bloody whoop " , he wrote , " Forgive me if I don 't sound too thrilled . This release is stretching even my credulity beyond repair . Like , milking a still @-@ breathing (sacred) cow , or what ? Badly inferior live versions of ' Polly ' and ' Sliver ' on the flip don 't help matters either . " In 2011 Rolling Stone magazine ranked the song number 415 on its list of the " 500 Greatest Songs of All Time " .

= = Music video = =

Nirvana first made a music video for " In Bloom " in 1990 for the Sub Pop Video Network Program VHS compilation (1991) . The recording of the song featured in the video is the version recorded during the Smart Studios sessions . The Sub Pop video features the band walking around various parts of lower Manhattan including the South Street Seaport , the Lower East Side , and Wall Street . While filming the video , Novoselic shaved his head as penance for a bad performance the band gave in New York City . This caused discontinuity in the final cut ; shots of the band feature the bassist with and without hair throughout the video . This video was later compiled on the Nirvana box set With the Lights Out (2004) . The audio of this version of " In Bloom " was later released on CD2 of the 20th Anniversary Deluxe Edition of the Nevermind album in 2011 .

The second video , created to accompany the 1992 single release that was recorded at Sound City Studios , was directed by Kevin Kerslake , who had previously directed the band 's videos for " Come as You Are " and " Lithium " . Cobain 's original concept for the video told the story of a young girl born into a Ku Klux Klan family who one day realizes how evil they are . His concept was too ambitious , so Cobain instead decided to parody musical performances by bands on early 1960s variety shows , such as The Ed Sullivan Show . The humorous tone of the video was a result of Cobain being " so tired for the last year of people taking us so seriously . . . I wanted to fuck off and show them that we have a humorous side to us " . Kerslake filmed the video on old Kinescope cameras , and the band improvised its performance . The video begins with an unnamed variety show host (played by Doug Llewelyn , former host of The People 's Court) introducing Nirvana to an in @-@ studio crowd of screaming teenagers ; their non @-@ stop screaming is heard throughout the duration of the song . The band members , whom the host refers to as " thoroughly all right and decent fellas " , perform dressed in Beach Boys @-@ style outfits ; Cobain wears glasses that blurred his vision , while Novoselic cut his hair short and liked it so much he kept it that way afterwards . As the video progresses , the band destroys the set and its instruments .

Three different edits of the Kerslake video were made . Cobain intended to replace the first version

of the video after a period with a new take featuring the band wearing dresses instead of suits . MTV 's alternative rock show 120 Minutes insisted on premiering the video , but Cobain felt the program would not properly convey the humor of the " pop idol " version . Instead , a new edit was produced which contained shots of the band in both suits and dresses . The original edit of the video never aired . This video won the award for Best Alternative Video at the 1993 MTV Video Music Awards , and topped the music video category in the 1992 Village Voice Pazz & Jop critics ' poll .

= = Track listing = =

All songs written by Kurt Cobain .

7 " , cassette

" In Bloom " ? 4 : 17

" Polly " (live) ? 2 : 47

12 " , CD

" In Bloom " ? 4 : 17

" Sliver " (live - Del Mar - 28 @. @ 12 @. @ 1991) ? 2 : 06

" Polly " (live - Del Mar - 28 @. @ 12 @. @ 1991) ? 2 : 47

= = Chart positions = =

= = Covers = =

Sturgill Simpson recorded a country cover in 2016 which received air play on alternative stations .