

= Sidewalk Talk =

" Sidewalk Talk " is a song by American record producer John " Jellybean " Benitez from his first extended play , Wotupski ! ? ! (1984) . It was released on October 21 , 1984 , by EMI Records as the first single from the EP . The song was written by Madonna and produced by Benitez . They had initially met in 1983 and Benitez worked as a producer on Madonna 's self @-@ titled debut album . When he started work on his debut EP , Wotupski ! ? ! , Madonna wrote " Sidewalk Talk " for him . The song features bass and electric guitars , synthesizers , piano as well drums . Lead vocals are sung by singer Catherine Buchanan , and background vocals by Madonna .

" Sidewalk Talk " received mixed review from critics , with David Nick Ybarra questioning crediting Buchanan as lead vocalist , instead of a better known singer like Madonna . The song was released initially in 12 @-@ inch promotional CD in remix formats to the DJs and the clubs , and reached the top of the Billboard Hot Dance Club Songs chart . It was later released commercially in 7 @-@ inch and 12 @-@ inch formats , and charted on the Billboard Hot 100 . The song also had minor chart placements in the Netherlands , New Zealand as well as the United Kingdom .

= = Background and composition = =

In 1983 , Madonna met John " Jellybean " Benitez , who worked as a DJ at the Funhouse club in lower Manhattan . Soon after , they started dating each other and worked on Madonna 's self @-@ titled debut album , released in 1983 . When Benitez started work on his debut EP , Wotupski ! ? ! , he asked Madonna to write a song for him . Within two days Madonna wrote " Sidewalk Talk " , whose idea she had initially thought of using on her debut album . According to Benitez , Wotupski ! ? ! was a concept album , " It 's a street slang in the Bronx . It means ' what 's up , what 's new ' ? " The artist credit of the song was simply Jellybean , with lead vocals credited to Catherine Buchanan . Madonna provided background vocals for the track with Audrey Wheeler and Cindy Mizelle . Benitez produced the track as well as arranged and mixed it . Michael Hutchinson assisted on engineering , recording and mixing the track . Producer Stephen Bray also arranged " Sidewalk Talk " with Benitez . Instrumentation featured in the track included bass guitar by Marcus Miller , synthesizer by Boyd Jarvis , Fred Zarr and Bray , electric guitar by Ira Siegel , percussion by Bashiri Johnson and Trevor Gale , and lastly drum programming by Benitez and Bray .

= = Release and reception = =

" Sidewalk Talk " was first released as a 12 @-@ inch promotional single to US DJs and clubs on October 21 , 1984 . Rikky Rooksby , author of The Complete Guide to the Music of Madonna , said that the synthpop song " sounded like it was a leftover from [Madonna 's] debut album " because of its sonic similarity . Chuck Eddy , author of The Accidental Evolution of Rock 'n'roll : A Misguided Tour Through Popular Music , compared the track to the sound of American new wave band , Tom Tom Club . Billboard magazine 's dance music reviewer Brian Chin said that the song " touched base " with the Top @-@ 40 mainstream radio audience . For author Ira Robins , " Sidewalk Talk " was the " best track " on the EP , because of its " lucidness " . In 2011 , the EP was re @-@ released by Gold Legion Records , where four remixes of " Sidewalk Talk " was included . The CD booklet consisted of an essay by David Nick Ybarra , editor and founder of Daeida magazine . In the essay , Ybarra noted that " Sidewalk Talk " was never promoted in the press kits for the release of Wotupski ! ? ! Instead another song , " The Mexican " , was noted in the album cover 's advertising sticker . Nevertheless , Ybarra said that it was the inclusion of " Sidewalk Talk " which became the most critical aspect of the public 's interest in the release . In September 2014 , Rolling Stone ranked the song at number 71 on their list of the " 100 Best Singles of 1984 " . Maura Johnston from the magazine noted that the song was similar in composition to other production work of Benitez , like Madonna 's " Holiday " (1984) , and described it as distilling " the essence of New York ? full of fast @-@ moving possibility and flash , but to be handled with caution in order to be survived . "

Regarding the song 's credits , Ybarra also found it mysterious that a relatively unknown singer like

Buchanan received lead vocal billing , while Madonna was relegated as a backing vocalist . Wheeler , one of the backing vocalists , confirmed to Ybarra that she did not remember Buchanan being present in the recording studio . Ybarra theorized that Benitez might have intended " Sidewalk Talk " for Madonna 's first album , but since it was not included , he replaced Madonna 's vocals on the track with Buchanan since she was unknown . Thereby Benitez could use the track for his EP and it would not be mistaken as a vehicle for another artist other than Jellybean . In 1986 , Alvin and the Chipmunks covered the song for their TV series episode " Chipmunk Vice " . " Sidewalk Talk " appeared in the 1999 film Flawless and on its soundtrack album .

= = Chart performance = =

" Sidewalk Talk " debuted at number 36 on the Billboard Hot Dance Club Songs chart for the issue dated January 5 , 1985 . After five weeks , it reached the top of the chart , replacing Nuance 's song , " Loveride " . In an article published in Billboard , Chin noted that " Sidewalk Talk " was an unusual song to reach the top of the dance chart , since it was not released till then in commercially available 7 @-@ inch or 12 @-@ inch forms . The song was only serviced as remix forms to the clubs . Chin added that the song 's " emergence without a hard copy , so to speak , is highly uncharacteristic of a market , in which the ' commercial twelve ' is a given for a long @-@ show pop record . " The song harkened back to the time when remix forms were not available except for club promotions . " Sidewalk Talk " ranked at number 20 on the year end tabulation of the Top Dance Club Songs for 1985 . The song was released in 7 @-@ inch and 12 @-@ inch formats after eight months and entered the Billboard Hot 100 chart at number 80 on the issue dated November 16 , 1985 . After twelve weeks , it reached a peak of number 18 on the chart . Its final appearance on the chart was on the week ending March 15 , 1986 . On the Hot R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Songs chart , " Sidewalk Talk " reached a peak of number 51 , and was present for a total of nine weeks .

" Sidewalk Talk " also charted in the United Kingdom , where it was credited as " Jellybean featuring Catherine Buchanan " . It reached a peak of number 41 on the UK Singles Chart on the issue dated February 1 , 1986 , and was present for a total of four weeks . On the Netherlands Single Top 100 , it reached a peak of No. 31 , while on the Top 40 comprehensive chart , it peaked inside the top @-@ ten at number six . " Sidewalk Talk " also debuted at peaked at number 34 on the Official New Zealand Music Chart .

= = Track listings and formats = =

= = Credits and personnel = =

John " Jellybean " Benitez ? producer , arrangement , mixing , drum programming

Madonna ? songwriter , background vocals

Catherine Buchanan ? lead vocals

Stephen Bray ? arrangement , synthesizer , drum programming

Michael Hutchinson ? audio engineering , recording , mixing

Marcus Miller ? bass guitar

Boyd Jarvis ? synthesizer

Fred Zarr ? synthesizer

Ira Siegel ? electric guitar

Bashiri Johnson ? percussion instrument

Trevor Gale ? percussion instrument

Audrey Wheeler ? background vocals

Cindy Mizelle ? background vocals

Credits and personnel adapted from US 7 @-@ inch single liner notes .

= = Charts = =

