

### **Future Nostalgia: A Pop Classic!**

Dua Lipa's "Future Nostalgia" is a pioneering work in 21st century pop, seamlessly blending classic pop influences with contemporary elements, establishing itself as a visionary representation of the ever-evolving landscape of pop music.

Dua Lipa's second studio album, the 11-track "Future Nostalgia", was released on March 27, 2020. But before the album's release, its lead single, "Don't Start Now," released in 2019, has already enjoyed the spotlight, becoming an instant hit on social media.

In an interview with *Variety*, Dua Lipa mentioned that her musical influences come from the '80s and '90s. She explained that her parents exposed her to the music that was popular on British pop radio during that time (Willman, 2020). The British pop singer drew inspiration from artists such as Jamiroquai, Moloko, Blondie, and Prince.

The influence of '80s and '90s music was indeed present all throughout the album, as pointed out by a lot of the published reviews for Dua Lipa's album. According to Willman (2020), the song "Future Nostalgia" pays homage to the music style of Prince in the '80s. "Physical" incorporates a synth-pop rhythm and includes lyrics that allude to Olivia Newton John's workout anthem with the same title. The song "Levitating" creatively incorporates elements such as "funky guitars, hand-clap percussion, and talk-box vocals" (Jenkins, 2020; Baddeley, 2022). Jenkins (2020) pointed out how "Love Again" combines elements of '70s "disco strings with modern nu-disco production techniques." The song "Break My Heart" skillfully incorporated the recognizable guitar melodies from the 1980s track "Need You Tonight" by INXS, an Australian rock band formed in the 1970s (Willman, 2020; Jenkins, 2020). In general, the album was a successful example of bringing together different influences from multiple generations, focusing on its exciting take on '80s revivalism (Baddeley, 2022).

Beyond the entertaining music, Dua Lipa explores uplifting topics of confidence and feminism. In the songs, stories centered on sexual attraction, heartbreak, and fun were narrated through catchy lyricism. In her speech at Cambridge University last 2019 in which she "discussed the value and contributions of women in music" or at her Grammy acceptance speech "directed at the former Recording Academy president Neil Portnow, who said women need to "step up" if they want fairer representation at award shows," Dua Lipa has always been stern on speaking up about feminism—the song "Boys Will Be Boys" is a piece of that (Jenkins, 2020).

Despite the general applause of the audience and the majority of the critiques, some pointed out things that might have been overlooked or improved upon. Some say that "Cool"

and "Boys Will Be Boys" "lack the rest of the album's warmth and oomph" (Spanos, 2020). Others, like Levesley (2020) in an article from GQ Magazine, were disappointed with "Good in Bed." Nevertheless, all of the reviews I've read pointed out one thing that stood out to them about the album: its cohesiveness. This much-loved musical cohesion is, without a doubt, a product of the creative genius of Dua Lipa and her production collaborators: Jeff Bhasker, Ian Kirkpatrick, TMS, Stuart Price, Jason Evigan, Koz, SG Lewis, Andrew Watt, the Monsters & Strangerz, Lindgren, and Take A Daytrip (Willman, 2020).

The combination of groovy music, catchy lyrics, and an empowering message is what I believe made "Future Nostalgia" one of the most iconic songs of the decade. The album was released during the early stages of the pandemic and was referred to as a "self-isolation dance party soundtrack." It provided people with music to dance to and even exercise to. According to a study conducted by PureGym in 2020, the song "Don't Start Now" has become popular for home workouts. The study found that Dua Lipa is considered an influential artist for weight lifting workouts with the participants who listened to Lipa while working out recorded "an average increase of 37.93% in the amount of weight lifted compared to when they lifted without any music." That was such an interesting, yet unsurprising fact for me.

Overall, I think that the album continues to be enjoyed by people today, whether at bars, parties, or in the comfort of their own homes. It is one of the few timeless fragments of today's pop music.

## References

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