

One Direction – Midnight Memories (2013)

Written by bluelover

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01 – *Best Song Ever* 02 – *Story Of My Life* 03 – *Diana* 04 – *Midnight Memories* 05 – *You And I* 06 – *Don't Forget Where You Belong* 07 – *Strong* 08 – *Happily* 09 – *Right Now* 10 – *Little Black Dress* 11 – *Through The Dark* 12 – *Something Great* 13 – *Little White Lies* 14 – *Better Than Words* 15 – *Why We Don't Go There* 16 – *Does He Know* 17 – *Alive* 18 – *Half A Heart* Members: Niall Horan Zayn Malik Liam Payne Harry Styles Louis Tomlinson

Boasting a sound the group originally teased as being a bit more rock-driven, *Midnight Memories* arrives in stores this month to solidify One Direction's place as the latest greatest boy band of all time. Forget about Bieber's hijinks in Brazil, as well as any notions you may have that the other pop groups can hold a candle to 1D's popularity, because I'll tell you right off the top, this album is one of the catchiest albums of the year. It's as sugar-coated as music can be, and yes, its depth is comparable to a kiddie pool, but 1D have put together a collection of potential chart-toppers that demands your full attention and plenty of repeat listens.

It's hard to believe the latest boy band trend has been around long enough for One Direction to be on their third album, but that is exactly where we find ourselves in November 2013. The boys of 1D have sold out every venue imaginable worldwide, (not to mention having a box office-topping theatrical release, no less), and with their latest release they hope to prove they still have plenty left to offer.

Kicking things off with a dose of familiarity, *Midnight Memories* leads with the infectious one-two punch of "Best Song Ever" and "Story Of My Life." These tracks, which also doubled as the first two singles off the album, serves as a blueprint for everything listeners will encounter on the songs that follow. Each track off *Midnight Memories* either falls into the category of wall-of-sound pop hit (usually with thumping bass) or heartfelt quasi-ballad (often complete with

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thumping bass). Neither is a bad thing, especially when you have the kind of money for production and songwriting 1D can afford, and for pop fans seeking a collection of catchy tunes to sing along to in the weeks to come, there is nothing better on the market right now.

There is an impressive flow and sense of cohesion to Midnight Memories that almost boggles my mind. One Direction are in the business of singles and branding, but they've put extra effort into formulating a record that plays well from beginning to end. You could skip to your favorite if you like, but no song is so bad you'll want to pass it by on each play. Whether it's the rock influenced catchiness of "Diana" and "Little Black Dress," or the acoustic simplicity of "Through The Dark," it's all above average as far as current pop music is concerned, and it's so far removed from the world of EDM (for the most part) that it's downright refreshing.

One Direction exist in this rare niche of music making where albums fall into the category of being all good, all bad, or better as individual singles. I cannot speak to the quality of every album in their catalog, but Midnight Memories is one of those rare gifts from the pop music gods that plays great as both an album and individual tracks. It's a party in an album, but still so much more, and it showcases sides of 1D fans have yet to experience in a way that leaves you excited for the future. If you love pop music and are not ashamed to embrace the power of boy bands, there is absolutely no reason Midnight Memories should be left off your holiday wish list. ---James Shotwell, underthegunreview.net

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