

opinion

THE BLUE BANNER'S VIEW

#TaylorSwift's new sound, album fails to hit its mark



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Editor-in-Chief

Taylor Swift smashed through album sales this week with the release of her highly-anticipated fifth studio album *1989*, but her new sound comes off a little jarring to long-time fans.

1989 packs a lot of pop punch in its short (for Swift) 13-song tracklist on the standard edition, but not much depth after a thorough listening.

While many Swift haters have long held their hatred

flags high, her talent as a savvy businesswoman can no longer be denied.

With seven Grammys under her belt before the age of 25, her previous album *Red*, held the title of record-highest album sales in a decade with 1.2 million.

The world literally exists at her feet to do whatever she likes and the release of *1989* marks a new path for her.

"Shake It Off", her first single from *1989*, debuted to many spin off videos from universities all around the United States and a virtual video campaign of behind the scenes footage from the official video.

Yet, among the Swift fever came the voices asking, but what about her more stripped down roots?

While her versatility is

Album Review

undeniable, the over-saturated nature of *1989* makes a full-length listen through difficult.

She soars high in songs tailored, (no pun intended), to this new pop-centric beat such as "Out of the Woods" and "Blank Space", but ultimately sputters on songs which could have used a softer approach.

"All You Had To Do Was Stay," feels jilted as a pop-heavy ballad and comes off a little flippant, which might have been different with a little more of the country touches found on *Red*.

The catchy nature of some of the more infectious songs on the album display other artists' influ-

ence.

"Wildest Dreams" plays like the creation of Swift's new pop sound merging with the softer shades of Lana Del Rey's discography.

Its dark, heavy-handed references to discarded clothes and being tangled up all night might come as surprising to longtime listeners of pop's newest princess.

Yet, "Wildest Dreams" comes as an interesting exploration of a now-adult Taylor Swift learning to navigate through adulthood and relationships with new layers.

It's a welcome addition to her extensive discography and succeeds in com-

binning lyrics with a fitting tone, without coming off as heavy-handed.

The biggest disappointment on *1989* appears with the first track, "Welcome to New York," which seems a little lazy for someone like Swift, who has shown previously her ability to spin lyrical metaphors with ease and grace.

Instead of becoming an instant New York anthem, it sounds more like something that would be played in an airport bathroom in New York.

Some of the best songs on the album come with the deluxe edition sold exclusively through Target.

"Wonderland" deserved the standard album treatment, with Florence + The Machine-esque lyrics, while "You Are In Love" would have benefitted the

album with a much-needed softness.

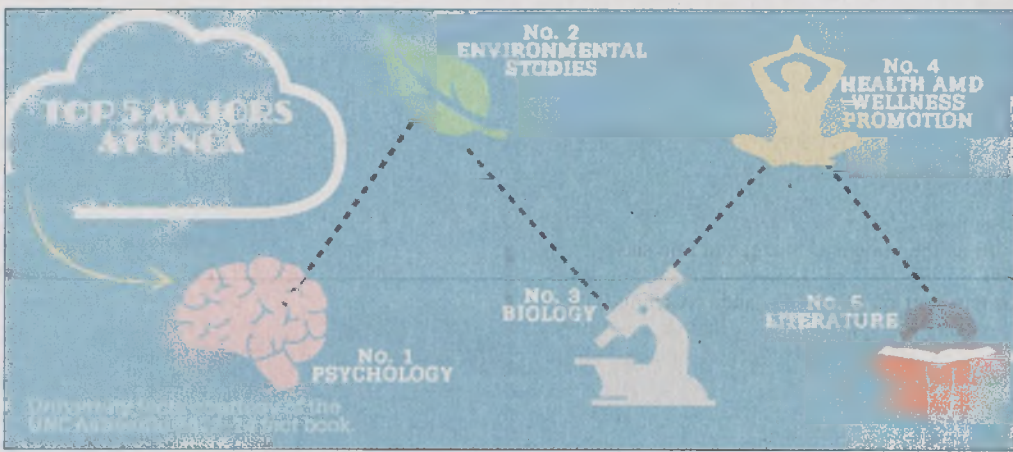
"New Romantics" is a cheerful, pop ballad found on the deluxe edition, but perhaps shows Swift's new sound at its best.

Just like "Shake it Off", "New Romantics" gives a tongue-in-cheek middle finger to her critics and haters with a fun and familiar Betty Who twist.

Taylor Swift's new sound reaches highs, but also finds itself missing its target by a wide margin on her fifth studio album.

1989 could do with a little more of her soft country rock touch to help balance out the sugar-laden pop synth found on nearly every track.

The only question that needs to be asked now is: Where can Taylor Swift go next?



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Between the Signs

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News Editor

Aries
March 21 - April 20
Your inner warrior stands ready to fight for a cause this week, but don't go into battle unprepared. Collect your facts, allies and friends. Ready yourself for those who resist change.

Taurus
April 21 - May 21
This week is a time to celebrate yourself, but also to analyze if all you do represents your greatest potential to do good. It may be time to let go of some destructive habits.

Gemini
May 22 - June 21
As your creative inspiration grows this week, consider the pragmatic approaches to put ideas into action. Treat yourself to a day of healing relaxation, but don't break the bank to do it.

Cancer
June 22 - July 22
You may look around and see your surrounding social circles polarized in the days to come. Ask yourself what character traits matters most to you and make your decisions accordingly.

Leo
July 23 - Aug. 22
You're headed toward a victory and projecting confidence is half the battle. Put the polish in your final touches and let your work speak for itself.

Virgo
Aug. 23 - Sept. 22
The time has come for you to stop making excuses for others' bad behavior and compromising your own integrity by ignoring their lack thereof. Be candid about your feelings.

Libra
Sept. 23 - Oct. 22
Romance blossoms and your natural magnetism is on point this week. Playing hard-to-get can be fun, but don't take the game too far or risk losing your object of affection.

Scorpio
Oct. 23 - Nov. 22
Commitment is not an idea to be taken lightly, and you may find yourself critically analyzing a major decision this week. It's time to do some deep research and weigh pros as well as cons.

Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Fend off sluggish tendencies with some outdoor or active fun this week. You may find it to be more fun in the company of friends.

Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
The recognition for your hard work may finally be arriving. Even your most unique ideas could become popular as your creativity shines this week.

Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You may be called on to be a homebody this week for some sprucing and decoration around the homestead. Professional opportunities abound, especially within social circles during this month.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Although your free spirit status is important to you, don't be afraid to run with the herd. It may be time to expand your friend circles and find kindred souls with whom you can connect.

**The Blue Banner
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Letters should include the writer's name, year in school and major or other relationship to UNCA. Include a telephone number to aid in verification. All articles are subject to editing.