Why does synthwave make us nostalgic?

Before diving in our "investigation", i wanted to tell you how this article came to life. . .

A few weeks ago I was cramming for my computer architecture exam and I wanted some kind of background music that was not too distracting, you might say the obvious pick would be some lo-fi hip-pop radio playlist but for me it's way too chill and relaxing (not ideal when you are sleep deprived), so I decided to pick this synthwave playlist that I used to listen and after a few songs a unexplicable wave of nostalgia and melanchony hit me, that's when I started to search why is this genre so nostalgic.

What is synthwave?

Despite being heavily inspired by the 80s, synthwave is a relatively new genre, it was born from the minds of artist from the French electronic scene in the late 2000s, as the name suggests the genre is centered around the heavy use analog synths and usually has a quite energetic rythm, it is also quite similar to French house music (the only good thing France created \s) and Italo disco (the great Giorgio Moroder is one of the fathers of electronic music, which synthwave is a subgenre of)

Synthwave in pop culture

One of the things that brought synthwave to the mainstream was the movie Drive (Ryan Gosling is literally me), and its soundrack that featured prominent synthwave artist like "Kavinsky" with its famous "Nightcall" and "College" with the movie's theme song "A real hero"

Another very important movie that is associated with synthwave is Blade Runner 2049, but in this case I think that people associate this movie more with the visual aesthetic of synthwave rather than the music.

Nostalgia for something I never lived

Let's now try and understand where this nostalgia stems from. . .

As I said this music is heavily inspired from the 80s but there is a problem, i was born in the 2000s, how can I feel nostalgic about it?

The thing is I have only consumed media from the 80s sporadically and I really don't know much about that time period so really there has to be another reason why this music makes me nostalgic. . .

So the only things that i think can explain this nostalgic feeling are:

- the use of warm sounding analog synths and recording equipments, along with other effects create a kind of "past memory effect", they make the

music seem like a past memory, fuzzy and not quite clear
- specific chord progressions that trigger something in me