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History of Rock & Roll
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I Fight Dragons

Epic History, Epic Band

I Fight Dragons (IFD, for short) is a fairly young chiptune/rock band, formed in 2008 and whose members all originate from Chicago. In total there were five starting members in the band, though within three years, two of the original members independently moved on. Since then, an occasional new band member joined, though now their current roster stands at four people: Brian Mazzaferri (guitar player and lead vocalist), Hari Rao (vocals and bass), Packy Lundholm (vocals, drums, and since mid-2009, lead guitarist), and Chad Van Dahm (replaced Packy on drums after mid-2009). Their songs have been featured by a number of television shows and commercials, and they even wrote the theme song (titled “Rewind”) for a television show called “The Goldbergs.”

Their first EP “Cool Is Just A Number” (2009) was independently published, and after signing their first major label contract with The Agency Group, went on their first national tour with a punk group named “Whole Wheat Bread” as well as MC Chris, a nerdcore-hiphop artist. For their second album “Welcome to the Breakdown” in early 2010, I Fight Dragons signed with Atlantic Records, and towards the middle of the year, opened for some more well-known artists, including 3OH!3 and Cobra Starship on MTV’s “Too Fast For Love” tour. Since signing with Atlantic Records, IFD has released one additional album under the label 2011, titled “KABOOM!”. This album’s third single “Save World Get Girl” was featured by Nintendo

towards the end of 2012. The band decided it no longer enjoyed working with Atlantic Records in 2013, and split immediately preceding an exceptionally successful Kickstarter campaign to fund their newest album “The Near Future” which was released publicly at the end of 2014.

Their most notable musical feature is the incorporation of original sounds made with Nintendo’s Entertainment System and Game Boy products. Most of their albums include various references to popular video game and nerd culture, whether it is through the use of a synonymous melody, or by incorporating well-known phrases from geek culture into lyrics or between songs during public performances.

I personally have quite the fondness for the band, in part because I am a massive nerd, but also because I grew up playing with these electronic toys. Listening to the familiar sounds of my childhood, and how they are creatively implemented into unique and catchy songs seems to really strike a chord with me. Additionally, the lyrics of any given song matter a lot to me, and I’ve yet to find a song by I Fight Dragons whose lyrics I haven’t enjoyed. There are absolutely some songs and albums I have a preference for, but I wouldn’t say that any of their songs sound like they should have been left out. The band was introduced to me in my senior year of high school, towards the end of 2009, and was instantly in love with their sounds. As I have discovered upon researching for this paper, it would seem that I have been following them since very early on in the band’s career, which only adds to my enjoyment and feeling of personal connection. I participated in their Kickstarter campaign, titled “Project Atma” and actually communicated directly with Brian, a founding member and lead vocalist, throughout the course of the campaign. He was very open, personable, and friendly in our correspondence, and that experience really only made me respect his artwork more.