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Red Scarves Incorporate IWU Influences In Debut Album

Oct. 20, 2017

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. — Formed at Illinois Wesleyan University more than five years ago, the now Chicago-based indie rock-pop band Red Scarves released the quintet's IWU-influenced debut full-length album "Sort of Scarlet" on Friday, Oct. 20.

"The album is a reflection of the five different personalities in the group, with the music ranging from soulful, upbeat, to even orchestral at times," said Red Scarves lead guitarist Ayethaw Tun '15. "This record has been over a year in the making and unintentionally has also featured an all-IWU cast in terms of the people who helped put it together."

Tun is joined in the band by vocalist and guitarist Braden Poole '16, keyboard and saxophonist Eric Novak '15, bassist and guitarist Ryan Donlin '17, and drummer Robby Kuntz '18. Tun credits the quintet's shared college experience for fostering development of the Red Scarves.

"Because of IWU's relative lack of an overriding singular student culture, and its diversity of peoples, there's an emphasis on cultivating an authentic inner world rather than joining in an existing exterior culture, which I think helped each of us to feel confident in our individual contributions to the band," Tun said. "Also, because of IWU's small student body, we were able to connect across disciplines, as music, visual art, and psychology majors – and across years – as students of the classes of '15, '16, '17 and '18."

Along with a band made entirely of Titans, IWU alums were also instrumental in the production of "Sort of Scarlet." The bass, drums and vocals were recorded by Dave Rossi '07 at Bombsight Studios in Bloomington, and the album was mixed and mastered by Joseph Bakke '16. Additionally, numerous string players from the [IWU School of Music](#) are featured in "Sort of Scarlet," and Kate Ford '15 produced all of the album publicity photographs.

"IWU's liberal arts structure and its emphasis on being curious and surrounding oneself with people interested in a wide variety of things led us to an interest in free collaboration and an openness to each band member's contributions, no matter how outlandish they may seem when they're first introduced," Tun said. "In addition, the music majors in the group bring the careful performance perfectionism encouraged by their teachers, and they sometimes get inspiration from classes for musical decisions."

"Sort of Scarlet" is available to [download online](#), with CDs arriving soon at local record stores and via the band's [Facebook page](#). Red Scarves will play an album release show at the Coffee House in Normal on Saturday, Nov. 18 at 8:30 p.m.



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By John Twork