

ELEVENTH DREAM DAY



NEW MOODIO



comedy minus one
47 hardy drive princeton, nj 08540
comedyminusone.com

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cmo025 "New Moodio" Lp + Digital

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In the fall of 1991 Eleventh Dream Day was at the crossroads.

Not the Robert Johnson meet-the-devil crossroads (although they may have been willing to negotiate if they could have found those crossroads), but a juncture where break-it seemed more inevitable than make-it in the dichotomy.

Eleventh Dream Day had a lot going for them. The "Lived To Tell" record had built on the success of their Atlantic Records debut "Beet," making many critical top ten lists including the New York Times and Chicago Tribune. The subsequent touring season found them at a crest, even after Wink O'Bannon replaced original guitarist Baird Figi following the initial East Coast leg. The band alternated headlining spots with Yo La Tengo in Europe during the spring of 1991 with both bands reaching their largest audiences to date.

The air, however, seemed to be escaping from the balloon. Just before the release of "Lived To Tell," the entire "Alternative" branch of Atlantic, including department head Peter Koepke and Bettina Richards (who was responsible for signing them), jumped to London Records. The band was left aboard the sinking ship, no one at the label was interested in forming a search party, and interest for the record from the Phil Collins/Debbie Gibson branch of the label was virtually nil. The band had to make their own video after being told that MTV wasn't going to show videos anymore. They asked the band to remix a single with a producer who had disco hits. The real drag was how things went down in Europe, where they had built an enthusiastic and large audience dating back to their independent years. "Lived To Tell" was released without any thought (or care) on how to market it. Fans at sold out shows complained that none of the independent record shops carried the record, only the big chains. The band wasn't even able to sell the album at shows! After getting back to the States and finishing off their most popular West Coast trip ever, Eleventh Dream Day felt they had done all they could do - ripping it up live, getting great reviews, and doing whatever the label asked. But "Lived to Tell" barely outsold "Beet."

During the early days of the fall of 1991, when things had died down and Eleventh Dream Day was in the first phase of the write/record/release/tour cycle, the band realized that things weren't just quiet, they were dead quiet. Atlantic, still in flux from the departure of Richards and company, had almost no communication with the band, and most importantly had not sent the required letter that legally bound them to release their contracted third record. Management contacted the label to point out that the band no longer was tied to their contract, which the label acknowledged. Eleventh Dream Day was free.

The material that appears on "New Moodio" was recorded on their own dime, with the intent to find a new label to put it out. Recorded at Idful Studios in Chicago with Brad Wood at the dials (Liz Phair recorded "Exile In Guyville" with Wood there just months later), these songs were being shopped around when Danny Goldberg - who now was running Atlantic - came to Chicago and made his pitch to the group over lunch. The band was impressed by what he had to say, and made the inference that if he went to this effort to get the band back, he and the label must really care. He urged Eleventh Dream Day to start over with a new producer, and the band spent the better part of 1992 working on what would become "El Moodio," their third and final major label record.

It did not work out as planned. Promotion was pulled quickly for "El Moodio" after it failed out of the gates to light up the charts. In regard to the single "Making Like a Rug" featuring lead vocals by Janet Bean, the band heard the explanation, "Women were not big that month."

Eleventh Dream Day eventually returned to the independent ranks where they continue to make records including their most recent album, 2011's superb "Riot Now" on Thrill Jockey.

The songs on "New Moodio" have stayed in the vaults for twenty years, forgotten. A comment on Facebook sparked the memory that set the gears in motion to dig them up. Three songs ("Thinking Out Loud," "Where is My Saint," "Everywhere Down Here") have never appeared anywhere previously, one ("Dakota"), found its way onto the compilation "Milk For Pussy," "Sunflower" was re-recorded as an "El Moodio" cd single extra, and the rest were re-recorded in 1992 with Jim Rondinelli in New York for the "El Moodio" cd - never released on vinyl in the U.S.

"New Moodio" is Eleventh Dream Day's "lost record," a parallel world version of "El Moodio." It is also the snapshot of a band at its peak. Recorded and mixed in just a few days, there is an urgency and excitement that courses through these songs played by a band empowered by freedom and possibility.

Comedy Minus One's vinyl pressing is limited to 500 copies, and each includes a digital download containing three additional songs.