



## Moon Ruin

### *Slow Down Ego*

Moon Ruin's *Slow Down Ego* inhabits a world where gauzy vocal washes glide across sinewy melody, soulful horn charts rise from the sonic mist only to fall away as a twinkling piano runs joust playfully with syncopated electronic percussion. Palpably atmospheric and profoundly transporting, *Slow Down Ego* is the sound of persistence and sacrifice, born in that flash of a creative gap flitting between real-life obligation.

*Slow Down Ego* is the creation of Jared Bartman, but it was not formed in a vacuum. Birthed in the refuge of makeshift basement studios, and featuring co-conspirators Mike Noyce and Liam O'Brien, plus Bartman's wife and children, the record is a tribute to the potential of partnership and the strength it provides; it is a document of community, of friendship, of family.

The narrative of *Slow Down Ego* starts some years ago in rural Illinois when Bartman began writing songs. After a handful of projects and a mercenary DIY touring schedule, life caught up with Bartman in a very visceral way and forced him to clarify his priorities. Balancing full and part-time jobs and the responsibilities of a new family, Bartman managed to maintain his drive for writing and recording music. For the years in which *Slow Down Ego* was made, this meant holding down the night shift as a US postal worker, sleeping for a few hours after work, and spending the remaining waking hours with his family and working on music.

The battle to nurture his creativity in the midst of life's swirling difficulties only served to focus Bartman's vision. The clouds parted, a modicum of stability was restored, and Bartman was able to refine his process and bring in collaborators to color in the sketches. With the addition of Noyce and O'Brien creativity bloomed, and the project quickly became a series of accords with the group agreeing unanimously before moving forward with any creative decision.

Bartman, Noyce, and O'Brien convened for numerous week-long sessions every few months between 2015 and 2017, and the work gradually took shape. After over two years of recording, arranging, and mixing in Bartman's and Noyce's home studios, and extensive mixing sessions at April Base in Fall Creek, WI, the trio put the record to bed.

*Slow Down Ego* is an album of intriguing sharp angles and deceptively dense structures. Each song appears as a carefully crafted bauble, a curio who's meaning you sense at once, yet requires focused exploration to begin to fully grasp. Their shimmer captures your attention, and their warmth invites you in to sit a while with their complex arrangements, exciting more wonder with each puzzle solved. It is the sound of an artist creating exactly what he means to.

Moon Ruin is the new music project of Jared Bartman. Ephemeral yet timeless, it is the home where *Slow Down Ego* can find repose. Having released music under his namesake for ten years, the move to Moon Ruin is a throwing off of preconceived notions and the pressure of expectation. *Slow Down Ego* is a manifestation of internalized anxiety; that uneasy feeling that follows you like a melancholy ghost. It nags your decisions and creeps into idle thoughts. As a catalyst to reckon with forces, both internal and external, it influences our lives.

More than all, though, *Slow Down Ego* is a sanctuary. The love child of Bartman, Noyce, and O'Brien, it shows we are better facing uncertainty and hardship in the arms of comrades. It is a haven, but it is not a retreat. It is an album of comfort, strife, resistance, and acceptance. It is Jared Bartman's most fully-realized work yet, and a beacon that signals a path forward.