

NINE MEN'S MORRIS – IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE



"From the first note to the last, Nine Men's Morris is filled with poppy-hook-filled, sing along tunes with infectious smart tasty beats. It's A Wonderful Life is a wonderful debut!"

- **Billy Amendola, Modern Drummer Magazine**



"It's a wonderful life indeed when groups like this are keeping the power pop banner flying high, high, high! Solid musicianship and terrific vocals make this trio's appeal without having to exercise the hard sell. Tasteful guest musicians and a cover of Lonely Boy that makes you want to go out and re-assess the entire Andrew Gold back catalog put this one firmly on the year's best releases shelf." - **John Hammel, WNTI NPR Radio**



You can only name your debut CD "It's a Wonderful Life" if you really believe it *is* a wonderful life or you're one of those cynical folks who laces most every positive thought with a sarcastic/ironic subtext and nods sagely when Bob Dylan sings, "There are many here among us who feel that life is but a joke." On which side does **Nine Men's Morris**, a pop trio from New York, fall on this issue? Listening to their debut album, which is indeed called "It's a Wonderful Life," we'd have to say they embrace both. They play catchy, semi-jangled pop-rock in the Badfinger/Big Star mode (i.e.: it brims with optimism) and their lyrics are full of confusion, misunderstanding, and ache. "And there's nobody to nurse my aching soul," sings Bruce McDaniel on the bitter breakup song "Don't Say You're Sorry," which leads off the album. "Don't try to treat me like a toy up on a shelf/Don't make a promise if you have to force yourself." There's no force-feeding with Nine Men's Morris's music; it goes down smooth. They're at **Johnny D's** tonight with Bird Mancini. Starts at 9. Tickets: \$7. - **Jim Sullivan, The Boston Globe**



"It hits you from Song #1. That song, 'Don't Say You're Sorry,' sounds like an unreleased song from old-school power poppers The Producers or Hawks. A pure gem. Song #2 is a powerful ballad-styled ditty that Matthew Sweet or Neil Finn would have loved to have written. #3, 'You Crossed The Line,' brings it into the 'naughties' a la Fountains Of Wayne. You get the picture—and it's a most lovely, memorable and enjoyable one! (We also hear old faves Sun Sazed In ½ on some of this material, a huge compliment to Nine Men's Morris's pop savvy and arrangement chops.) Extremely Highly Recommended, yes, yes." - **Not Lame.com online retailer**



"A little Badfinger, a little Big Star and a few more modern bands like Fountains of Wayne and Weezer can all be heard as influences on the debut disc by New York City pop/rock trio Nine Men's Morris. The 13-song set is loaded with hooks and clever songwriting..." - **Kevin O'Hare, Newhouse News Service - The Republican**



"...to fully appreciate where Nine Men's Morris is coming from on this 2004 release, one needs to go back a generation to some of their pre-'90s and even pre-'80s influences that range from Big Star to Elvis Costello to the Beatles. Another baby boomer influence one hears on this CD is Chicago - an influence that might be considered unhip in some circles, but an influence that is creatively advantageous on It's A Wonderful Life. This album leaves a very favorable impression of Nine Men's Morris and makes listeners want to closely monitor their development."

- **Alex Henderson, Allmusic.com**



"The band's name is actually lifted from an ancient Egyptian board game, but there's nothing mummified about Nine Men's Morris. In fact, the band's Segue Records debut, *It's A Wonderful Life*, is filled with energetic, upbeat tracks including this first single, "Falling Star". Representative of the album's Poppy melodic tunes and reminiscent of late-70s/early-80s jangly guitar pop, "Falling Star" bounces along from start to finish and even has a sing-along hook to capture your listeners' attention. WRNX is the first [radio station] in but will be far from the last."

- **Friday Morning Quarterback reviewing the single "Falling Star"**



"Well stocked with unambiguously hook driven tracks." - **Phyllis Pollack, Valley Scene Magazine**



"*It's A Wonderful Life*...and it certainly is with Nine Men Morris's thought provoking and reflective lyrics, matched by superb, smooth and soothing acapella-esque harmonies and vocals by this trio. Harvey Danger meets Elvis Costello with a softer pop edge, flanked by California-style laid-back flavor, all topped by rich, uplifting and melodic backing rhythm, and overall great production. Nine Men Morris's *It's A Wonderful Life* really takes you there!"

- **Jill Morrison, Long Island Entertainment News & WUSB 90.1 Stony Brook**



The debut album by Nine Men's Morris shares its title with a classic Frank Capra film. And like the film, there is some dark subtext -- *and* humor -- beneath the sunny surface. *It's a Wonderful Life*" (Segue Records) is a collection of catchy pop songs that may remind you of Elvis Costello at his most sprightly and radio friendly. Like a one-two punch, the lyrical content hits you a bit later...

- **Mark Voger, Asbury Park Press**