



PHOTO BY CHAD TAYLOR

Mystery Men Loom

Crystal Zoom — "a band". From Dunedin. Now domiciled in swinging Auckland.

Founder members "Mike E. Cha Cha" (guitar) and "Bruce Prole" (vocals) are currently joined by old mate Rob Brown on bass and

sometime Idles drummer Barry Blackler.

The record — 'Uptown Sheep' has been re-recorded after first appearing on an earlier tape, with the percussive effect of a saw being pushed across a 44 gallon drum, with a chainsaw used at the climax. Paired with 'Dunedin Sound On 45', recorded on Mike Chirside's four-track and remixed at Last Laugh Studios; additional musicians in-

clude Martin Phillipps, Robin Murphy, David Kilgour. Martin Kean appears on the introduction — he also makes the band's distinctive fluorescent stickers which bear legends like: "Bruce Prole says: 'No to Quaaludes!'" and "Mike E. Cha Cha: 'I am so suurre'". The record will go out on Flying Nun.

The future — a new tape is being made on the four-track of Industrial giant, Paul Luker. It will be vastly different from the band's live act, with all new songs. Live performances will commence after the record release.

The trivia — Crystal Zoom supported Motorhead in Dunedin. Fact.

The media — aside from the stickers, the band is soon to be featured on a *Viewfinder* Flying Nun special; also have completed a clip for 'Uptown Sheep' with *Shazam*. And ... THE CRYSTAL ZOOM INTERVIEW, PAGE ...

Best Laid Plans ...

You could be forgiven for thinking that Auckland's Plans For A Building don't like playing live, given their grand total of two performances in the past year.

But they do. Very much. It's just that, as keyboardist Eric Raulston puts it: "It's the band — at the moment us three (Eric, vocalist Tom Pound and drummer Roddy Carlson) are the only ones who've been in it for over six months. Other people come and go — it's messy."

But a stable lineup came together for the recording of the band's second single, 'All Of A Life', a few months ago, with Peter Van Der Fluit (ex Mee Mees) on bass and Weston Prince (ex Danse Macabre) on guitar. Only trouble is, delays in the release of the single have meant a launching gig couldn't be fitted in before Eric went to Australia for 12 weeks. So they have to remain a studio synth band for a little longer ...

Tom: "Playing live is really the synthesis of what you're doing, that's what it comes down to in the end. It's just that with our sort of sound in New Zealand it's hard to find a market. And it's also really like putting yourself in the lion's den, because this sort of sound is so open to a slaying from the acoustic sec-



PHOTO BY CHAD TAYLOR

Plans For A Building: Eric Raulston, Tom Pound, Roddy Carlson.

tors. Which is a shame really, because we probably like the same bands. The people who would often be condemning this synthetic sort of sound, which we consider quite soulful, their tastes are normally quite in key with ours. It's strange really."

Eric: "That's what's been good about bringing in Weston. The song's generally a synthetic thing, but bringing in someone like Weston changes the feel of the whole thing."

The four tracks on the new record are quite different from the first single, 'Some Altar, Some Sacrifice' and Tom says it's part of the band's essence to avoid getting stuck in any one style:

"Even though really if we want to survive that's what we should do — get stuck in a sound that we can call our own and stay there, but we're not keen on that."

"Some Altar" was an icebreaker for us," adds Eric. "We weren't putting any 'this is it, this is what we're about' sort of thing on it. That's why it was fairly quiet when it came out, we just sort of put it out to see what would happen, get us known in a

few places. Whereas this one is more what we do."

Just what the band does should be captured perfectly by the time the next record, according to Tom: "I think we've got to the stage where we can do an EP that's conceptual, in other words there's not a flaw in it in the sense of style. We're all fiddling with sounds to get what we want and it's getting closer and closer, but I still haven't walked out of a studio and thought 'bang, that's it.'"

The sound of the new record and the composition of the new lineup has made Plans For A Building virtually a different band from that on the first record, Tom and Eric agree. They even considered changing the name and may still do so if the band is "quite a different game" by the time of the next record.

The question of nomenclature has been an odd one for Plans For A Building. Eric admits the band got more flak over the name than the music after the first single: "People seemed to go for the name and not listen to the record. It was quite horrifying."

Stephen Spencer

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