

Four new bands, fourteen musicians, tour through June. All feature on a forthcoming Furtive EP. They are the Bongos: Gil (keyboards), John (guitars), Phil (drums), Brian (vocals, percussion), Dabs: Rowan (guitar), Jeff (bass), Steve (drums). Prime Movers: Ben (drums), Nick (guitar), Kevin (bass), Skeptics from Palmerston North: David (vocals), David (drums), Nick (bass), Robin (guitar).

With the EP behind them as a reference, a starting point, they're out to take the music to fresh audiences, instead of "playing the same old set to the same

old people, sitting at the same old tables, drinking the same old drink, and talking about the same old thing."

BONGOS

The addition of Brian Tipa (ex Green Eggs and Ham) has given the band more vocal strength, and energy.

"People had been coming along, and telling us we needed this, and needed that. We've had lots of plays with bassists, and saxophonists," John relates. "Then one Sunday afternoon I asked Brian if he'd come and jam. He did three songs, had a

cup of coffee and joined."

Rhythmically the band is gelling. Without a bassist, the whole group becomes a rhythm section, creating some exciting stage possibilities.

John: "We found it quite demanding when we first started because there's no bass to fall back on."

The Bongos incorporate banjo, syn drums, whistles and a piano accordion into their performances.

The band has some material left over from their Harlequin sessions for the Furtive EP, which is intended for release.

Four track recording is on the cards too, having become dubious about the costs, and ultimate benefits of 24 track.

"You can get some 24 track recordings that are weaker for having so many tracks," says Brian. "On a four track you have to decide what you want before hand, whereas with 24, you can bumble and stumble, you put more percussion in and just muddle up your sound."

DABS

The Dabs formed in June last year. They're funny, and energetic, and were so fired up when

the Furtive team



they started playing they all moved into the same house, got to know each other, and each other's filthy habits.

The Dabs will definitely remain a three-piece unit.

Jeff explains: "When we first started it was hopeless. All trying to do harmonies, all squeaking, but it's coming right now. We're all quite happy with the music we're playing. We want to get it across, and for people to listen, but you can't in Auckland. We suffered from over exposure at first. We cut right out. We've been doing stuff like Tauranga with the Meemees and occasional gigs here, but I don't like pubs."

"People can't enjoy themselves," says Jeff, "they don't like to because if you act like a loon on the dance floor you'll get a glass thrown at you."

"If you do a suburban dance or something, you take a risk. You hire out a hall and pay a bond. Most of the time it'll be a rough crowd that comes along anyway. Is it worth paying all that money just to get the place smashed up? You lose your bond, and you might come out with \$30."

After the Three Piece Pack tour the Dabs EP featuring 'Love the Army', an instrumental 'B of D' and 'Remember When' (different version from the Furtive EP, with Don McGlashan on brass) will be released on Propeller.

PRIME MOVERS

'Going Round in Circles' from the EP represents the Movers in their old form, when Chris was the drummer. In March, Ben Staples from the Newmatics joined the band. He feels since then the Prime Movers have grown more aggressive and have lost some of their popiness.

Guitarist Nick sees the band as more enthusiastic:

"Before we just used to turn up and plug in. Now a lot more thought goes into it, and that's also partly due to Mark Clare who's managing us. We have more direction."

Ben adds: "The trouble is, the more enthusiasm you have, the more you've got to lose. The stakes are high, and you pay the price for it."

After the tour the band's back in the studio. They'll record two of their newest songs 'Hard to Bear' and 'Runaway' (not the Del Shannon one, although they do that too). It's difficult to visualize

the Prime Movers as other than a three-piece, however it's likely they'll start experimenting.

Says Nick: "We've discussed bringing in brass, and we've been meaning to introduce keyboards, but we haven't got round to it. It'd be fun not having another permanent member, but just guest people. Three-pieces have their limitations, but I think it's the best way to work. You've got to give your contribution otherwise it doesn't hold together. It's certainly the best way to start."

Auckland is about to lose the band to the south. "We're in a rut" says Kevin. Nick and Ben are of the same opinion.

"We feel it's the only way out of the corner we're in," Nick contemplates. "Auckland has lost all its give. It expects everything on a plate."

SKEPTICS

Palmerston North inhabitants the Skeptics recorded 'Last Orders' three months ago on a four track TEAC in the Ross Intermediate School library. They have another EP in the early recording stages, three tracks on one side, and one on the other.

"We're right into making do with what we've got," says Nick, the band's bassist. "And seeing we've done it this way, we'll be about the only ones not in debt."

When the Skeptics checked in for Battle of the Bands, they didn't expect anything to happen, but scored a second, "had great fun, and got to see other bands like the Coloured Pencils."

The Skeptics have been described as having Killing Joke, Bauhaus influences. Nick recoils in horror:

"Getting labelled already? No comment. Being labelled is pointless. 'Last Orders' might not be a good indication of how we play live. Killing Joke and Bauhaus? That's a little far fetched."

Two Skeptics have jobs, but otherwise they support themselves by playing at small gigs out of town, like the recent Newbury Hall rage where support Palmerston band Discipline debuted.

The band plans to record as much, and as cheaply as possible. Skeptics play ninety percent original material, and are looking to Auckland as their post-tour destination.

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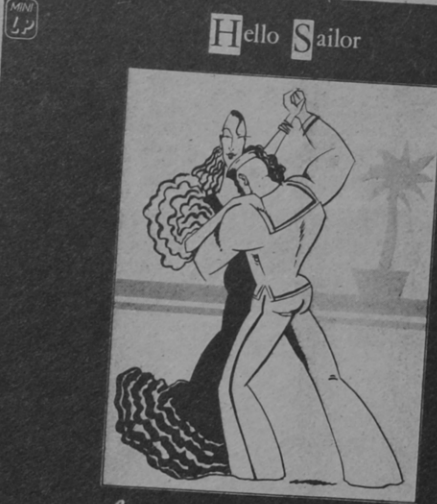
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