

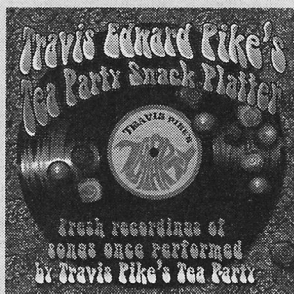
QUICK PICKS

By Lee Zimmerman

TRAVIS EDWARD PIKE OUTSIDE THE BOX Otherworld Cottage Industries (CD)

Genre: Pop

It's hardly surprising, especially given Travis Pike's wide array of endeavors – from making music to authoring books to working in film – that he's an eclectic auteur. The aptly dubbed *Outside the Box* epitomizes that scattershot diversity of direction, with a selection of songs that effectively covers a wide variety of different genres and dissimilar styles. Teamed with his younger brother Adam, it veers from the winsome to the wacky, without sacrificing the melodic intent. Suffice it to say, it only underscores the appeal.



TRAVIS EDWARD PIKE TEA PARTY SNACK PLATTER Otherworld Cottage Industries (CD)

Genre: Rock

Prior to claiming a career as a storyteller and composer, Pike began his musical journey at the helm of a Boston band modestly dubbed *Travis Pike's Tea Party*. Though they only released one single, and their tenure was brief, lasting only from 1967-68, they still sound like they could have been worthy contenders as far as that archival era was considered. Indeed, all of the songs included herein are radio worthy and hold up surprisingly well, even some 50 years past their prime. Timeless and tuneful, these re-recordings compare favorably with anything

offered up by The Monkees, the Raiders, The McCoys, The Standells and others of that ilk.



TRAVIS EDWARD PIKE FEELIN' BETTER Otherworld Cottage Industries (CD)

Genre: Pop, Rock

Another archival effort, *Feelin' Better* revisits songs written for a proposed reunion with Pike's overseas '60s back-up band, The Five Beats. Some songs made it to the score of a cult film called *Feelin' Good*, and all boast hit potential, thanks to this series of perky, punchy performances by this current combo. Here again, the songs are of a vintage variety, but the arrangements meld both classic and contemporary elements. Pike may not have gotten his due early on, but this belated return makes the wait worthwhile.

TRAVIS EDWARD PIKE MORNINGSTONE MUSIC Otherworld Cottage Industries (CD)

Genre: Pop

A story set to music, and not unlike a pop opera of sorts, *Morningstone Music* has Pike imagining an ancient world that's reimagined in the '80s, one inhabited by characters with strange, supernatural powers and the ability to seduce and distract those of the opposite sex. It's an ever-twisting tale of mysticism and magic, and though the music and melodies are skilful spectacular, intriguing and expressive, the listener is best advised to read the liner notes to fully appreciate the plot.