



TRAVIS PIKE'S TEA PARTY – If I Didn't Love You Girl / LEO SOTO con ALEX Y SU CONJUNTO – Caballo Psicodelico (Mousetrap Music) 7”

Travis Pike's Tea Party's "If I Didn't Love You Girl" slides a memorable vocal hook over a simple back-and-forth riff and a swinging beat designed to make heads bob and feet move. Originally released on the Boston-based Alma label in 1968, the single flopped at the time, but has since become sought-after by '60s garage collectors and mod DJs. With original copies now changing hands for silly money, Rob Bailey has now made it available on seven-inch vinyl again on his Mousetrap Music label.

It's paired with a top drawer Tejana boogaloo shaker by Leo Soto, originally released on the Falcon label out of McAllen, Texas.

Travis Pike's story was covered in-depth in UT#43, but we got back in touch recently for a short follow-up interview. (MS)

Interview with Travis Pike

How does it feel to know that your Travis Pike's Tea Party single is now a dance floor hit at '60s mod events around the world?

I'm delighted that it's finding fans and earning the respect I always thought it deserved.

What do you think that it is about that song that connects with listeners today?

As a dance floor hit, it has a really strong, danceable beat. The vocals by George Brox, Karl Garrett, and I present the lyrics the way I intended, and while my lyrics are genuinely psychedelic, playing with listeners' minds through assessing the risks adolescents make when they first venture into the dating arena, in this case, that a young man, knowing that he needs to make his attraction known to stand a chance with the object of his affection, against the risk he runs that his advances may be rejected or ridiculed. As the young man professes his love, singing "I

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Travis Pike's TEA PARTY



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- THE TEA PARTY IS:**
- A HISTORICAL HAPPENING
 - A REVOLUTIONARY CONCERT ORIENTED GROUP FOR MAJOR TOURS, COLLEGE WEEKENDS, ETC.
 - AVAILABLE NOW TO BRIGHTEN YOUR NEXT ENTERTAINMENT EVENT
 - FUN

wouldn't cry all night, if I didn't love you girl," the opposite is heard by the male chorus who sing, "I ... didn't love you girl," denying that he is/was ever in love with her, providing him with plausible deniability. Mind you, most dancers probably don't get that far into the hidden meaning in the lyrics, but it's there, in the form shown above and in the second verse as well, where I sing "You wouldn't do what you do, if you really loved me girl," at the same time George and Karl sing "You ... really love me girl."

Karl's fuzztone guitar solo is nice, too, and modulation always creates excitement, but I may be overanalyzing it. As far as the recording is concerned, everyone seemed to like the explosive ending, and that might be the main reason the recording is still popular today.

Was the song popular with audiences at your gigs back in the day?

Absolutely, and live, even without its explosive ending, which suggests that our sixties audiences were aware of the subtleties and plausible deniability incorporated in the lyrics I cited above, especially in coffeehouses and concert halls, where we were ear candy to our fans.

You recently made some other recordings from your past available on YouTube, a 1975 theatrical concept album by the Changeling Troupe. Please tell our readers more about this project and why you decided to make it available.



There has been a lot of interest of late in my musical history from 1964-1974, now explored in depth in my new memoir, *1964-1974: A Decade of Odd Tales and Wonders*, but *Changeling*, recorded in 1975, had evolved into *Morningstone*, recorded in 1987, and is now destined to be *Changeling's Return*, easily the most persistent and demanding of all my musical properties. In its infancy, still very much in development, I recorded it in 1975 with the Changeling Troupe, a group of musicians I formed for that specific purpose, and in honor of whom I most recently posted it on YouTube. Originally I considered writing a 20th century Faust, but by 1975, I was all about mankind and his impact, for good and ill, on the environment, sadly still a major and abiding concern for our planet and our place on it.

As for releasing the Changeling Troupe's recordings, I must give my brother Adam credit for that. When I told him I was writing the novel, he reminded me that he had transferred masters for me from that piece some thirty or forty years ago, so I went to my vault and discovered, to my surprise, that I still had a 15ips stereo master made at Conway Recording Studios in Hollywood, and asked if we could play it on his machines. It was a high quality, recording studio master, so he could, and did, and that is what I uploaded in its entirety to YouTube.

In the almost 45 years since that original recording, the story and its music evolved into the *Changeling's Return* novel I am writing now, but I was amazed at how much of that original recording had remained, little changed through all these decades.

Along with releasing music from your back catalog, you've also published a number of books, including your 1964-74 memoir and Harvey Kubernik's Doors book, *Summer's Gone*, both of which we reviewed in these pages. What other books do you have in the pipeline?

We've pretty much covered *Changeling's Return*, which I intend



to publish later this year. I wish I'd written the novel sooner. It's much more engaging than the screenplay, because in the book I can reveal much more about the action, setting, and the characters than I could in the screenplay, because screenplay format is all dialogue and action, and discourages to the point of rejection anything that can't be shown on the screen, mostly to protect the delicate egos of actors and directors who insist on imposing their interpretation on the work, even if it is way over their heads.

But, to answer your question, my greatest undertaking, still on the back burner, is *Long-Grin*, an epic fantasy adventure set in Arthur's Britain in the story revealed in a manuscript discovered in the time of the Venerable Bede, author of *The Ecclesiastical History of Britain*, a couple of hundred years later. My first screenplay in the anticipated five-part theatrical series, was generally well-received, but with budgets for each episode going over a hundred million dollars each, I was told that it was an entirely unknown property, and unless I could bring it out as a best seller the studios would never consider the monetary risk. With that in mind, I've scheduled *Long-Grin* for novelization, immediately after I finish *Changeling's Return*, in the fervent hope that I will live long enough to complete it. •