

(The interview between DAVID and GEORGE first took place over lunch at Pier 31 Restaurant, at which they both got rather inebriated... So much so that they endeavoured a second, more successful and sober meeting at DAVID's house the following week...)

GM: Have you got any plans as to what you'll do if you take off in anything like the proportions you did last time? What would you do this time round? What would you do differently, because obviously you started differently, you have control?

DC: Relative control. (Laughs)

GM: OK — We won't talk about last week...

DC: No, we won't talk about last week! Well, obviously it's important for me this time around that people get a true sense of who I am as opposed to a commercial sense, because I became successful last time from a TV series. I have no intentions of doing anything like The Partridge Family ever again.

GM: So, what you're saying is basically that the last time, the personality that you were landed with was simply The Partridge Family personality?

DC: Well, when you see somebody on the TV screen and he's playing a part as an actor of this all-American good guy, who doesn't do anything wrong or use naughty words, and he's very safe and scrubs his teeth three times a day. I did a lot of that, and I think when you see him on the back of cornflake boxes, it's difficult to get anything from that except, well this is who that person is. I think because of the kind of merchandising that was done in a blatantly commercial sense, DAVID CASSIDY was that poster that was up on the girls' walls, and he was sexually non-threatening. I don't think I was really able ever to come through that.

GM: Don't you find that if your image was one thing, if you have been created or are part of something which creates an image, that when you try to do anything which is even vaguely upsetting to that image, even though it's really you, people see it as false, which is very frustrating, obviously?

DC: I think because of the time that has lapsed — in terms of eight years not making a record and not being a basically public person, I think that people are a lot more forgiving and a lot more willing to take a look and say, "Well, who is this guy?" This album is more revealing as to who I am. There aren't a handful of poppy tunes that have nothing to do with what moves me, or where my passion is, and the songs that I've written on it are about that.

GM: Do you have any real worries of being taken as light pop again, or is it basically that you don't want to be seen as the teen thing again?

DC: Yes, the music speaks for itself. You let it go, and put it on the radio and people perceive it exactly how they want to perceive it. Some people might listen to this album and think, "Jesus it's deep, and it's heavy," and other people might listen to it and think, "Yeah, they're good songs," and they're not blatantly commercial, but commercial enough. I don't cringe when I listen to this album, I don't think "Oh no, why did I record that", which I used to do.

GM: I think the problem these days in a situation like that is that unless the music you put to those lyrics, or whatever you're singing is blatantly non-commercial, then nobody gives a fuck what you're singing about  
DC: I agree.

I first met DAVID CASSIDY in early 1984 at one of London's more prestigious (i.e. posey) restaurants. The dinner was arranged by our mutual publisher, DICK LEAHY, who told me that DAVID was seriously considering making a comeback. (It's a horrible word, but at least it has a ring of confidence, which is an ingredient sorely needed when approaching such a mountainous task.)

At the time, I was having a particularly hard time coming to terms with my own position in the public eye. Consequently, I could think of no reason why an artist who had seen the mayhem of the early '70s (which many people do not realise was a huge phenomenon in comparison to the reported scenes of 'hysteria' today), should want to strike up a new relationship with the music business. I was also keen to find out whether a man introduced to such a ridiculous business at the tender age of 18 (well, he looked tender, didn't he?) and subjected to all its distortions for a solid six years, had actually retained his SANITY...

Luckily for him, and somewhat encouragingly for me, DAVID CASSIDY appears to be a well-balanced and happy individual. The effect of those six years, though sometimes very apparent, are inoffensive, even engaging, and after all he is an American.

DAVID and I have met on several occasions between that meal and this interview, we've become friends and I think I can confidently say that, as far as the man himself is concerned, being DAVID CASSIDY is no problem at all.

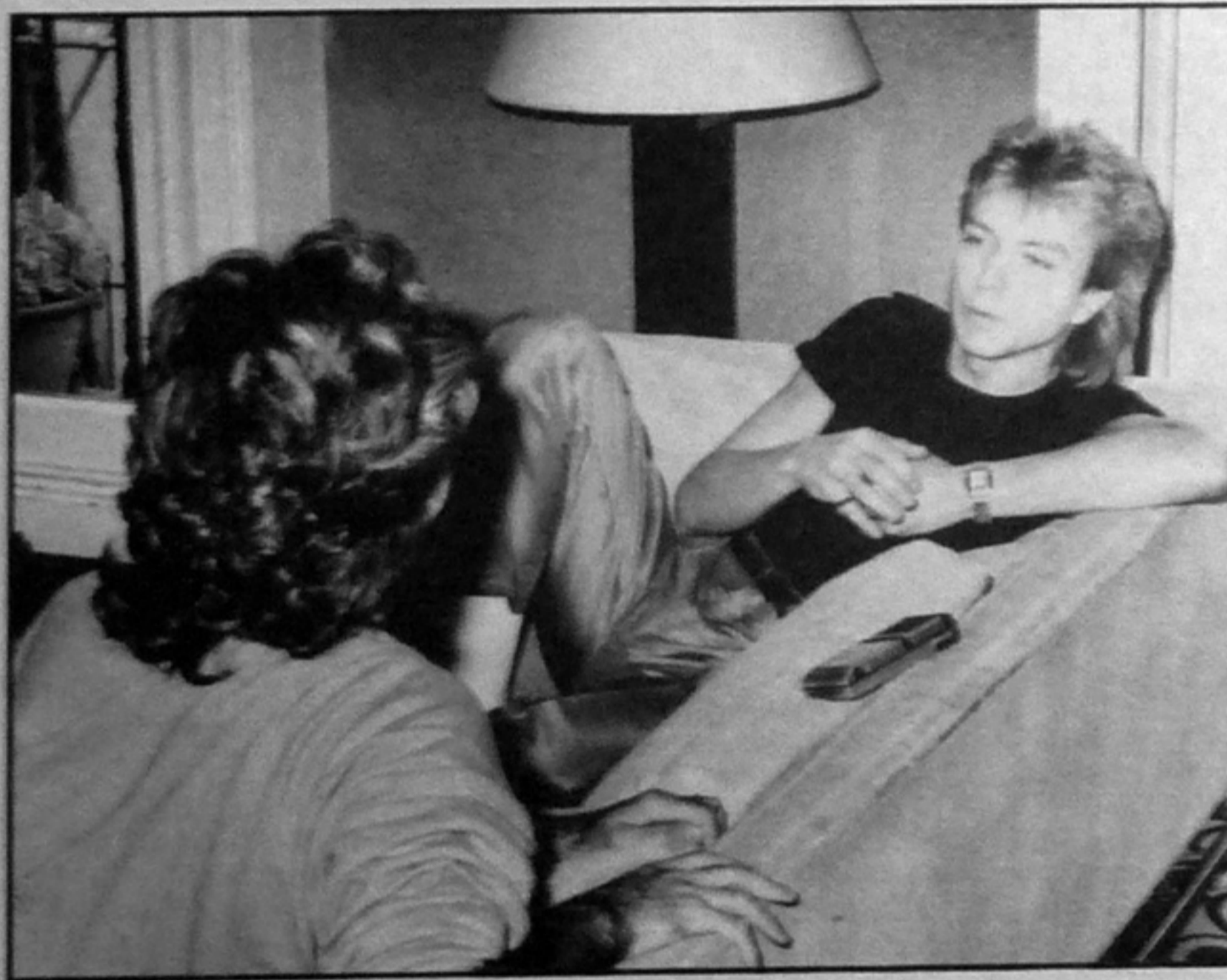


photo David Zanes

GM: I think that's probably even more the case than it was 10 years ago. I mean, you have to decide what you want.

DC: I want success again. I wouldn't be doing it otherwise. I understand the commitment to the music business. It's two words, it's the music and now it's 'the business', which is what you and I are doing.

GM: I think, having seen some reviews of the stuff, there are a lot of sympathetic ears, and there are a lot of people who would slag you off for no reason. There are also people that would give it an open ear or even a biased beneficial opinion because they have memories of you from their youth and everything, like through rose coloured glasses. I think the situation evens out in many ways, but it's got to be better than the situation you had before.

DC: Much!

GM: Which is totally created by the people. Now, let's go onto something totally non-musical. Your permanent home is in LA now?

DC: I live on a farm two hours north of LA.

GM: Two hours is just outside in America isn't it? It's like the difference between London and Manchester over here...

DC: Well it's not quite that far, but it's definitely outside; when you're there you know you're not in LA.

GM: Have you always had a passion for horses then?

DC: Yes, since the time I can remember breathing.

GM: They scare the shit out of me!

DC: They scare the shit out of me sometimes too!! They're wild buggers, but I do have a passion for it. I love the racing. We breed them, but my real passion is, well, ultimately if anyone asked me what I really wanted in the world, I would have to say the one thing that I want more than anything else, more than an Oscar or a quadruple platinum album and single, and 15 Grammys, would be to win the Kentucky Derby. (Laughs) And after I'd done that, I'd probably want to win the triple crown and then...

GM: Would that be more important to you than having a string of No. 1 singles say?

DC: Yeah. It would be, although I look at it as two different things. It's certainly, I think, easier to get a No. 1 single than to win the Kentucky Derby.

GM: (Laughing) This is true!

DC: You know, you go in the studio with a great song, or you write a great song. It's wonderful to get a No. 1 single. I'm just happy to be having success again. To be heard and listened to and accepted again, and being back in the business, it's the first step.

GM: So, it's the first time you've taken on such a large musical responsibility?

DC: Yeah, it is, and as somebody who's come from the 70s, the kind of records I used to make were made for me and I was just told to sing. I had very little control over what I recorded and how I sounded, so there

was very little creative freedom and satisfaction when they went to No. 1, coz they weren't really mine. At least this is mine, and in the case of 'The Last Kiss', when I wrote it and when I'd finished it, I felt it was the best record I'd ever written. It's about something very real and important that actually happened to me.

GM: I find it incredible that I can write something very personal, but when it becomes a hit record, I almost forget what I wrote it about. It's funny how the actual public and success of the record can take things away from you.

DC: In a way it does, because then that becomes the experience, as opposed to the experience on which you wrote it. I have to keep going back to that everytime I perform it, I have to keep getting back, in order for it to be real to me.

GM: I've found that if I actually tried on stage, as I did at a certain point, I realised I was no longer singing about the experience, but was singing a hit record. When I actually go back to the experience, I get too heavily involved, and my voice actually starts to waiver because my mind goes, and I start to lose control. You have to strike a fair balance between the two.

DC: I never thought I'd be saying this, but from the old days what I really savour is standing up on stage and being able to do that. Being the focal point, you understand this as well as anybody does, being the focal point to 10, 20, 30,000 people that love everything you're doing, they know all the songs. They can't wait for you to sing your next hit, the old ones. I have a lot of years, and a lot of hit songs that I honestly thought I'd never sing again. I'm gonna have the opportunity to be able to sing the ones I want, because I have a lot of hit songs to pick and choose from, as well as the new stuff. I'd never, for any amount of money, just go out and do that nostalgia act.

GM: I've often thought about the idea of trying to get out of the public angle of what we do, the decision you made in terms of stepping out of the limelight....

DC: Well, I did that — very drastically!

GM: ...and saying, "Right, I'm going to make records, but I'm not going to do all the shit."

DC: You can't.

GM: Well, you can — you can still make records, but you can't expect them to sell in anything like the same proportions. Was there a point when you said to yourself, "I really miss it?" That is the fascination for me. Every time I think it's getting too much for me, and I'm not enjoying being part of everybody's lives, I do have to say to myself what would my real reaction be if in two years from now I hadn't been in a paper for a year.

DC: Well, after five years, of it, maybe six, I was so fed up with it, and it got to the point where it literally did take three years before I started even thinking about missing it, and thinking what fun it would be again, but I didn't want to step back into the same situation again. I wanted to be able to have that momentary hit, and be singing and performing on stage, and having that experience again. I missed that. It becomes almost like a drug. When you go on tour, night after night, you come to expect it because it happens all the time, everywhere you go. It became the only thing I ever looked forward to, actually being on the stage. Being on the road is extremely frustrating and boring. I understand why a lot of