

POP IDOL: David Cassidy was once one of the most famous pop stars in the world, now he's back with a new tour. He talks to **Chris Bond** about fame and his remarkable career.

Meeting David Cassidy in a rather swanky, some might say soulless hotel, near Chelsea harbour. The kind of place where the clientele don't need to check the price of rooms before they book.

The singer-songwriter, music producer and one-time teen idol is in London for a fleeting visit to promote his *Once In A Lifetime* tour, which takes in Sheffield's Motorpoint Arena in November and sees him perform alongside fellow 70s music survivors Leo Sayer, Hot Chocolate and Smokie.

Between them they have amassed a combined total of 55 Top 10 singles and sold more than 200m records over the past 40 years. Of the four, Cassidy – the Justin

Bieber of his day – is arguably the most famous.

He arrives dressed in jeans and a T-shirt and wearing his 62 years remarkably well, certainly far better than many of his peers. He's keen to point out that this isn't his last tour, perhaps aware that some people might take the "once in a lifetime" bit the wrong way. "I can't stand it when artists say 'this is my last tour, so you better come and see me', and then they're back three years later, it's disingenuous," he says, sipping his coffee.

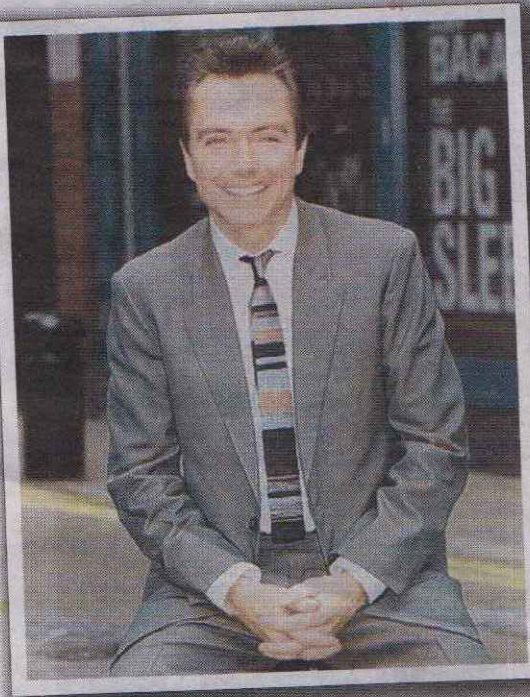
Having said that he admits he's not exactly prolific when it comes to hitting the road. "I don't really tour any more with a few rare exceptions. A few years ago I made a commitment to my son because at the time I was in Vegas and I was doing 10 shows a week, I was also producing two shows and I'd created a television series, set up a record company and produced two movies. So I made a commitment not to go away for more than two weeks," he says.

"Also my mother has dementia and I'm working with the Alzheimer's Foundation of America which takes up a lot of my time. So I'm not going to say, 'come and see me because this is my last tour', but if you look at my history I went 17 years without touring."

One of the reasons he agreed to do the tour was so he could perform for his fans in the UK. "I feel a real connection with this country, I did shows in the West End and I've spent a lot of time here over the years so it's good to be coming back," he says.

Cassidy shot to fame in 1970 through his role as eldest son Keith in *The Partridge Family*, a US TV series about a widowed mother and her five children who travel around America as musicians. The show became a TV phenomenon on both sides of the Atlantic making Cassidy a household name almost overnight.

"Without that show a music career would



ON THE ROAD: David Cassidy, now 62, is back on tour. Since teen stardom he has built a career as a producer and performer. PICTURE: PA