

➔ with me and one of them shouted 'go', we started running down these stairs and I started laughing hysterically thinking how insane it was. I'm sure the cops thought I was out of my mind because they'd never heard of me. They pushed me into a limo to meet the head of my record company and my manager and we flew off to the hotel with a police escort - and this was the first time I had set foot on British soil."

The "madness", as he calls it, continued wherever he went. "They closed Park Lane at 10 o'clock at night because there were about 9,000 kids wanting to see me. People were saying it was like nothing they had seen before, not even with The Beatles or Elvis."

Over the next couple of years his concerts sparked mass hysteria. His appearance on *Top of the Pops* in 1973 caused a near riot while his UK tour that same year included six sell-out concerts at Wembley Stadium over a single weekend. "Cassidymania", as the press dubbed it, wasn't confined to our shores. In Australia, several teenage girls had to be treated for shock and hysteria at one concert, while there was similar mayhem following a packed show in New York's Madison Square Garden.

Caught square in the middle of all this was Cassidy himself. "They called me everything, they called me an icon, they called me a demigod, they called me a legend, but I was just an actor and a singer and songwriter," he says. "I always wanted to be a member of a band instead of being alone in a room with security guards outside. I'm fine on my own but when



HIGH PROFILE: David Cassidy first came to fame through the TV show *The Partridge Family*.

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you're on your own for long periods of time and it's not your choice and you can't interact with others then it can be tough.

"Unless you have experienced that insane level of fame it's hard to understand. I got to meet some of my musical heroes back then, including John Lennon who became kind of my mentor. I got to play with him a number of times and we became friends.

We used to sit and talk about fame because he'd been through the same kind of thing."

Given the level of adulation that surrounded Cassidy during this period it's testament to his character that he's still here. "I've had my demons, but ultimately you have to love yourself to some degree, because if you don't you will self-destruct."

He views some of today's celebrities with suspicion. "People who become famous now often do it to become famous. At the height of my fame I would never go anywhere where they knew I was coming, but nowadays they show up at all the places they know photographers will be."

Fame is a fickle mistress and Cassidy believes the test comes when it starts to fade. "Fame is something I've experienced, but when that goes you have to think what do you want to do with the rest of your life and for me it was working, because I love playing music live and I love producing."

Since the mid-90s, he has been involved in big shows in Las Vegas as a performer and producer and has been able to distance himself from his teen idol past. "In a way I remember it all very vividly but I don't recognise myself.

"I've lived an insane life in a lot of ways, but I've been lucky to have the opportunity to do what I've been able to do. I have a motto," he says, leaning forward in his chair. "Act as if everything depends upon you and trust that everything depends upon God."

■ **The Once In A Lifetime** tour, Sheffield Motorpoint Arena on November 16. For tickets call the box office on 0114 256 5656.

