

# The lives of David Cassidy

**Pop superstar, recording artist, TV & stage actor**

By RICHARD LAERMER

**T**HE SCENE, 1973: Pop star David Cassidy finishes his sold-out concert and leaves Madison Square Garden, followed by screaming young fans, and guarded by heavy security. The youngsters ruin nine limos and Cassidy is told that he must take refuge in an apartment in Queens to be safe. Cassidy nods agreement—he has no real choice. They take him to Queens and leave him—alone. After one and a half hours of earsplitting Garden concerting, he is left on his own. The life of a superstar, circa 1973.

The scene, 1983: New Broadway Sensation David Cassidy is trying to get his first New York telephone. Over at the Bell Center, he is asked for I.D. There is a mini-uproar as the telephone specialist looks up in

astonishment. "You're David Cassidy?" Cassidy smiles as he signs autographs and tries, politely, to get back to the theater on time. He, after all, no longer is entertaining thousands of kids every year for an hour. Today, he is On Broadway.

**THE NEWEST** of a succession of Josephs in "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat," Cassidy is a happy man. This job, he says, "is the greatest!

"'Joseph' is my chance to do what I enjoy most: entertain the hell out of people and let them have a good time," Cassidy says earnestly. At 32, he finally has settled into what could be his acting niche.

"I wasn't happy when we were doing the 'Partridge Family,'" he reminisces sadly. "I was on the set every day from 7 to 7. Then I went into the recording studio until 12. That was no life."

Cassidy explains how, in 1975, he started to feel burned out—and burned by people in the business. "I would record an album, and the record company would release a set amount and that was it. They never did any publicity so, eventually, I just hung it up."

In 1979, he was sent a script for a "special" television movie, and he returned to the limelight. That film, "Choice to Live," got him an Emmy nomination and a weekly dramatic series loosely based on the movie. "The Man Undercover" was a flop and didn't last the season.

"I WAS seduced by that movie," Cassidy admits. "I thought the series would be of the same caliber. I was wrong."

He gave up again, devoting another year or so to the horses. Then the acting bug hit again. He hit the road to Canada in Bernade Slade's "Tribute," (Slade was the writer of "Partridge Family") and received good notices for a serious portrait. In 1981, he went on the circuit with the Broadway-bound "Little Johnny Jones," in the role that eventually was given to Donny Osmond. Cassidy harbors no bad feeling about not leading "Johnny Jones" to Broadway.

"Everywhere I went, critics were picking on me for being David Cassidy," he says, and he sighs with relief at having left "Little Johnny Jones" before its disastrous New York stay. "On the road I was surprised at how many people came from all over the country just to see me. That was nice."

Cassidy hopes to stay on with "Joseph," and will



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David Cassidy with fiancée, Meryl Tanz

do so "as long as people are still interested." Wanting to be realized as a "serious actor" and not an idol by businessmen, David Cassidy is on his way.

**NEXT STEP?** "An album." What type of music is he thinking about? "My type. Ballads about love, stories about relationships. Nothing trendy." Cassidy hopes to shed the image of being a no-talent, prefabricated star. He is playing his cards strategically.

Cassidy knows that at 32 a second career is something he'll have to earn. Unlike his days of being molded into a teen idol, he is making his own choices now. Teenagers still follow Cassidy when they see him on the streets. It doesn't bother him. "I am," he says with a grin, "a real adult now."