

# With David Part I

## HOW DID IT HAPPEN THAT YOU WERE CHOSEN TO PRODUCE MUSIC FOR "THE PARTRIDGE FAMILY"?

The President of Bell Records was looking for someone to produce the Partridge Family's music. He asked me to attend a screening of the pilot and when I saw it, I flipped out. It was the one thing I had always wanted to do. I had seen it on screen and it really knocked me out. I saw David as an idol, which is important for the people who would concentrate on the records. Shirley fit in perfectly, I think. It was something like I had never seen. It was young, it was very good, it had a lot of depth and emotion and it came right down to being highly contemporary and conducive to a gigantic record act!

## WHEN YOU FIRST SAW THE PILOT, DID A PARTRIDGE FAMILY SOUND COME INTO YOUR MIND?

Most definitely, yes! To me sound is so visual. There are a hundred dozen colors associated with a sound. After talking with Paul Witt and Bob Claver, the show's producers, the next step was deciding what is the Partridge Family? Who is it? Where is it? So we began with David, and it was funny because he was a bit unprepared. Not knowing who or what is a Wes Farrell, we arranged to meet at Paul Witt's office. David came down with his guitar. He wasn't really sure he could describe to me what he wanted to do vocally because he was a little hung up on certain kinds of music that weren't necessarily the type I wanted to record. So we got a couple of albums and he sang along with them, which was quite ridiculous because it really didn't give me any idea of what David sounded like! So we went from that to singing with the guitar and after we did a couple of songs he was very relaxed. He played some of his ideas for me, and



I loved his sound! Then I had to find songs that fit the sound. So I went back to New York and I tried something I've never tried before. I asked Screen Gems for their viewing room and they viewed the pilot show for me four times! I invited 66 writers and told them exactly the sound I was looking for to go with the Partridge Family. There were a lot of non-believers, who didn't think the show would be any good, so they weren't interested in writing anything. But right from the first second I knew it was going to be gigantic!

## CAN YOU REMEMBER YOUR FIRST RECORDING SESSION WITH DAVID?

Because David's schedule is so involved, we usually don't have the opportunity to learn the songs completely before going into the studio. And that's how it was at our first session. It didn't worry me too much, though, because the time we did work together gave me enough time to realize that David would

catch on very quickly.

I'll never forget that first night, it was really wild. I started to play the background music, and you must remember that he has never recorded before. I asked David to get in front of a microphone and sing the lyrics, while I recorded the background music. I told him while I'm cutting the track the only way I can feel the record is if you are singing with the track.

He said, "Well, I don't know the song that well." We were doing "I Think I Love You." I said, "We'll just go through it two or three times." So we began to go through it and he was singing along with the song and in a few minutes he knew the song perfectly! I had expected a blank. I expected anything less than a good performance from him. I didn't expect him to be as aware and as "on" as he was. David has a great quality of intake that allows him to learn very quickly. He is very polite, he is fine in experimenting, using his

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