

EVEN on the telephone one can't help loving David Cassidy. As we talked coast-to-coast this week, David, in rain-deluged Los Angeles preparing for his upcoming European tour, and me in icy New York, the bright and sparkling voice of a totally pleasant and professional entertainer came through loud and clear. And he makes no attempt to contain his very obvious anticipation about the tour.

"I've really never been so excited about doing anything," he said. "I've really prepared myself. I'm rehearsing every day and night—trying to get my band in shape. I want to be as good as possible—I hope I can get my band as excited about it as I am."

"Some of them have been on the road with me, but some haven't. I stopped going on the road in the States about three months ago because I just got worn out. Going on the road all the time—and working, all during the week and recording at night, I became a zombie."

"I just felt it was kind of anticlimactic to play all these places three or four times . . . to go back to them . . . it seemed like I would be taking something away from it to do it again."

"This way I can always remember those moments that were so high. And this time around I'm going to places I've never been to before, and I'm really excited about it. Really excited about it."

Some of those places are Germany, Paris, Offenbach, Luxembourg, Antwerp, Rotterdam and then four concerts in Manchester, England. After Manchester, David will do some shows at Wembley, and of course—a little television . . . Top Of The Pops, and a BBC special. He's never done concerts in Europe before, just some promotion.

Screaming

These concerts, David broadly hints, will be quite different than those he has performed in the U.S. Those have tended to be high screaming pop events, with the spotlight on David—white fringe flying as he is the sole object of mass adoration.

"It's going to be a different show," he explained, "I can't really say too much about it because I haven't done it yet and I just have ideas . . . But I think it's going to be a lot more exciting and a lot more professional. I thought my show was exciting before—but it did lack a lot of what I wanted it to have, and I never really could put it together."

"I just sort of left it as it was and went from week to week. It was just me all the time with my band backing me up rather than my band participating . . . and I always found that to be a hindrance to me. I always had to be on every single second—I didn't have John, Paul or George to turn to and say 'take it, man,' and that is important. That's really important . . . just to go out and have to be the focal point the entire time is not what I want to do this time. I'm going to participate a lot more with them too. It's a whole lot tighter this time—I can even feel it the first week of rehearsal, I can feel a chemistry with the band and myself."

The band so far consists of David's "good friend-since-junior-high-school" and guitarist Steve ("Cookie") Ross, bassist Reinie Press, drummer John Reins, organist Matt Moore, and singers Kim Carnes and Dave Ellington. Three horn players will be added when they get to Europe.

Britain, in particular, is important to David. "Mainly because I speak English," he says, "and I have been there and I've seen what it is like. They're just so enthusiastic and intense. I really like the folks there; for a big city—I thought it was just fantastic."

The last time he was in London, David stayed on a boat in the Thames. Although he will remain on land this time, he doesn't really want to divulge exactly where it will be. "It's going to take an awful lot of concentration on my part to go through six shows in three days," he explains, "and I'm really going to have to do nothing else but sleep, rest and work . . . because it's going to be difficult to do what I have



Idol On Parade

DAVID CASSIDY (left) on Britain, television, records, films and the problems of being a teen-idol. From Lisa Robinson in New York

a long way there. "So even though the series hasn't enabled me to stretch much," he laughs. "because it's the same each week and you don't have to draw a lot . . . I've sort of slickened myself a little bit. Maybe that's good and maybe it's not, I'll have to put myself to the test when I do some acting that's got a little depth to it."

Reticent

As far as future recording plans are concerned, David is a bit reticent. "I have no future recording plans at all," he says, "Chances are yes, I'm leaving Wes Farrell, but I have no plans at all." What about rumours that he'll work with Mickie Most? . . . "I have not recorded at all with Mickie Most and I haven't even met with him in the past six months," he says evenly. "So I can't comment on that."

Changing the subject, I ask David if he feels closely aligned to the rock world . . . or is he in show business, or does he primarily consider himself an actor . . . "I've thought about that, but you know, I don't really know myself . . ."

"People always were saying, 'well, he's like Elvis,' about me," he continues, "then they'd say—'no, he's not like Elvis, he's like Sinatra.' The latest thing is that people are comparing me to Sinatra. Maybe because I'm singing ballads . . . I don't know. I don't really like to be compared to anyone too much. I always liked to think I was ploughing some new snow . . . Maybe I'm not . . . maybe I'm fooling myself." What kind of new snow? "New snow!" he laughs.

"I just think I'm myself, I'm not doing anybody else, I'm not trying to be anybody else, I never have." Maybe people just think that David Cassidy has a lot of talent and versatility and that insures longevity . . . "One would like to think that about oneself!" he says.

"I don't preoccupy myself with the fact that I'm a teen idol," says David, and you know he's been through this a million times. "I don't wake up in the morning and say to myself that I'm a teen idol, and that I have been for the past three years. That's a label that people put on it because a lot of younger people pick up on me . . . rather than a lot of . . . pseudo-hip people!"

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to do otherwise."

There are a few other secrets he's keeping as well as where he'll be staying; David doesn't really want anyone to know what songs he'll be singing . . . or what instruments he will play onstage (he says several) . . . and even who might show up in addition to his regular band . . . I wondered if his pal Elton (John, that is) and he had any plans . . . or if any guest appearances were included among his secrets. Laughing, he says "Yeah . . . as a matter of fact, I may play a little bit with Elton . . . maybe my concerts. I don't know, I don't really want to get into it . . . but there has been a rumour around to that effect!"

"We talked a little bit about it the last time he was here—he's a good fellow, and a good player, too. But if I did anything like that—I would really want it to be a surprise. I have been thinking of lots of ways to do all this . . . but I don't want to blow it by saying too much!"

What about The Image? Will the fans in England be expecting to see a different David Cassidy? "Well," David replies carefully—it's obvious he's thought this out—"when I go there it's today—I'm not going back to my old

records or anything like that. We're releasing things that are up to date over there."

"It was a fear of mine you know, and so I've stayed away from doing the older stuff . . . like I don't want to start out with 'I Think I Love You.' This is me today, and maybe they're going to expect to see me a year ago—but it's wrong. I have to present myself as what I'm doing today, what I'm talking about and singing about."

David admittedly isn't too thrilled about the "Partridge Family" TV show currently being aired on Saturday mornings on ITV in Britain . . . "I was kind of disappointed that they put it on," he says, "because the whole thing stems from the fact that I was becoming popular there and my records were taking off."

"And so they expect me to be David Cassidy and I'm not David Cassidy on that show. I just felt badly because I made it there without the TV show."

Phase out

Next year will be David's last on the show, he says, although he's not exactly sure just how they're planning to phase him out of it. "My suggestion was that they send me to college," he laughs. Aren't you a little old for college? "I'm nineteen years old this year . . ." That's too old for college . . . "Well . . . maybe I was a bit slow!" Often on TV soap operas here when an actor has to leave the series for a Broadway show or another film role, the script is re-written so that he dies . . . but nothing quite so morbid is being planned for Keith Partridge. "No . . . no, David, I mean Keith will just go off to college," says David Cassidy, "I guess that'll be it . . ."

There have been several sides to the public image of David Cassidy in this country. There is the obvious and predominant fan mag approach—the endless "David Loves You" literature . . . the overwhelming amount of "What to do when you are in a room with David!" stories. Then there have been the few attempts to "crack the image" the rumours of secret and mysterious trips to New York City.

But David seems to relate to none of this. If indeed, he is at all discontented as a public personality, he gives absolutely no indication of it when you talk to him. It seems as if he is so professional that even if there is something he is doing that he doesn't want to—you'll never know it.

And above all, one hears that he has been extremely well advised financially, his career is no one-shot deal, and that he is an excellent actor. Acting certainly comes into the conversation immediately when David talks about future plans.

"I'm going to do a film, but I don't know when and I can't really say what . . . but it won't be for another year," he reveals. "I do want to do films . . . my acting's sort of been curtailed—kind of sleeping for the past few years. I want to act and if I find something that I'm really enthusiastic about, then I'll do it. I've been offered one hundred and fifty thousand Beach Blanket Bingo movies, but I have absolutely no desire to do them."

"Although I did study acting for awhile, and was in a Broadway play ('The Fig Leaves Are Falling')—I really feel that I started growing when I did a lot of TV shows before the series began. Just one show was worth more than those days in class—working for real and doing it . . . I did come

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