

THE C C D M M

DAVID Cassidy, super sex symbol for sub-teen screamers all over the world until he fled from his fans and went into retirement at 24 more than a year ago, is planning to break back into bigtime showbusiness — as a man.

And he's banking on the musical talents of top British rock star Mick Ronson — late of Mott The Hoople and David Bowie — to help him shatter his image as the star little girls thank heaven for and crash to the top of the worldwide concert scene as a performer with adult appeal.

He and Ronson plan to team up with three other rock musicians to create a recording and touring combo in which no single artist will be presented as the Number One star. Cassidy claims he has had enough of "ego trips" — he wants to make his own kind of music with high-calibre performers capable of attracting audiences and acclaim in their own right.

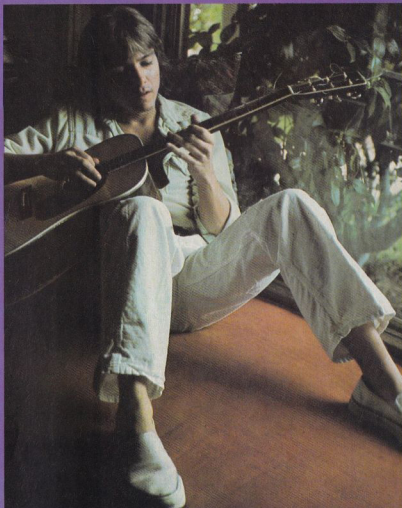
Explaining his 15-month exile from the monocy-spinning tour circuit, in an exclusive interview at his hideaway home in Encino, Calif., Cassidy told me: "I had to get away from all those screaming little girls and really get my head together.

"It wasn't me and my music those kids were hollering and fainting for — I was a plastic product created by people who cared more about making money in millions than they did about me or my integrity as a performer. I had to grab time to evolve both as a person and as a musician.

"I told everyone I would never do another live concert anywhere — I said I was leaving that scene for good, and that all I would ever do from then on was cut records and stay out of sight.

"But my head wasn't on straight. I wasn't really a human being any more — not out on stage, at least. I was a symbol. No one was listening to my music. No one really cared about David Cassidy, Person, or David Cassidy, Performer."

Cassidy went into hiding as a little boy lost, lonely and depressed in the summer of 1975, and began a process of fast ageing which included a desperate search for a new musical identity. He spent long hours com-



posing half a hundred songs, and experimenting with new vocal techniques capable of drowning out the stereotyped "Cassidy sound" and establishing his credentials as an adult singer and musician.

During his exile, Cassidy's only live audiences have been gatherings of other musicians helping him put together a coming-of-age album due for release in December, and a single, Getting It In The Street which was shipped to record stores with modest lack of fanfare. At first, he found that even they were unwilling to accept as

serious his struggle to shake off his super-cute "superpup" image.

Cassidy said: "What really bugged me at the beginning of this evolution thing, when I was trying to get my head together and work out my future as an artist, was that most people I had to work with just couldn't accept I was serious.

"I'd made my decision — that the only way for me to grow up as a musician was to get out and find myself and people thought I was just fooling around. They really believed I