

David Who?

Teen idol David Cassidy, fed up with his Partridge Family image, is coming out of a year and a half of self-imposed isolation to resume his singing career in a new, non-bubblegum style.

By **JERRY PARKER**
Newsday Service

NEW YORK — In the early 1970s, millions of American girls put away their Barbie dolls and took up David Cassidy.

They watched him on "The Partridge Family," bought his records, attended his concerts, read David Cassidy comic books, chewed David Cassidy bubble gum, put David Cassidy posters on their bedroom walls and took their peanut butter sandwiches to school in David Cassidy lunch boxes.

Thanks largely to his sometimes hysterical pre-pubescent following, David Cassidy, at the age of 21, was earning more money in a single night than most people make in years. He sold 5.5 million copies of his biggest single, "I Think I Love You." One afternoon in Houston, he filled 56,000 seats in the Astrodome twice.

HIS CAREER brought him a Corvette, a mansion in Encino, Calif., and an income in excess of \$250,000 a year.

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Of course, he hated it. A year and a half ago, he decided that he could not stand it another minute.

"I walked away from it," he said. "I stopped touring, stopped doing concerts, stopped doing the merchandising. Stopped doing the television show, stopped doing interviews, stopped recording."

"What I really stopped doing," he says, "was feeding a machine that was creating an image that was manufactured, fabricated, false."

CASSIDY is a mellower 25 years old now, and though he says that he is rich enough not to have to work again, he has recently emerged from self-imposed oblivion to resume his musical career. RCA has just released his album, the first that Cassidy has made in two years, and he has embarked on an international tour to plug it.

As he sprawled in a corner of his suite at the Plaza Hotel the other day, Cassidy's choirboy looks seemed to have taken on a touch more strength, a little maturity; though he still retains the essential delicate prettiness that young girls might envy as much as lust after.

He looked very much the kid mogul, with his white Keds propped up on the coffee table and his dark glasses firmly in place while he talked business into a telephone cradled against his cheek.

A photographer was present, and Cassidy's dark glasses stayed in place as long as the shutter clicked. "I woke up late and my eyes are swollen," he said, adding that he had got 15 hours' sleep the previous night and none the night before. "And you didn't tell me I was supposed to have my picture taken," he said, wagging a finger at his publicity woman. "Naughty, naughty, naughty."

CASSIDY HAS occupied himself with a number of things since he dropped from public view. There are the horses that he keeps on a ranch two and a half hours out of Los Angeles, his new house in Hawaii, his music, and, he says,



David Cassidy, from the cover of his new album, 'The Higher They Climb (the Harder They Fall.)'

"a couple of nervous breakdowns."

Defining his terms, he says that, no, he was not hospitalized for emotional problems and never sank into an alcoholic or drug-induced quagmire. He did seek psychotherapy and he did, he swears, take to his bedroom and refuse to come out for three months.

"I took a long time re-evaluating what I wanted to do as an artist," he says. "I took a long time reassessing my relationship with friends I had lost because of devoting so much time to a career that was . . . fabricated."

ALTHOUGH he once told a reporter, "Listen, if they're going to buy lunch boxes, they might as well buy David Cassidy lunch boxes," he came to hate the thought of himself as a commodity being peddled to children. And he came to hate the music that he was singing to them.

"My record company didn't care about me as an artist," he said. "They didn't understand my saying, 'I don't want to record this any more. It's all the same.' They said, 'You're making money,

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