

PERSONALITIES

David Cassidy has come a long way

From his early roots in New Jersey to the superstardom he achieved through The Partridge Family, Cassidy has reinvented himself once again. He's the star of a Las Vegas show with the most sought-after ticket and also just released a new album of music called "Old Trick New Dog."

Cassidy will meet fans and sign copies of his album from 5 to 7 p.m. Aug. 8 under the covered atrium off Pier 17 at South Street Seaport in New York City.

Cassidy was born in Manhattan to struggling actors Jack Cassidy and Evelyn Ward. His parents divorced when he was just 3 1/2 and Cassidy and his mother moved to West Orange to live with his maternal grandparents. While he lived there until age 11, Cassidy says he spent a lot of time in Manhattan. As a result, the album signing is a sort of homecoming for him.

"I've always been a New Yorker in my heart and my soul and my spirit," Cassidy says via telephone from his Las Vegas home. "When you spend the first 11 years of your life in a place, all of your early memories and all of your foundation as a person comes from there. Both my mother and father's families were from there and I feel very connected to it and always will return to there."

"Old Trick New Dog" is Cassidy's first new album of music in six years. The 10-song

record features new songs like "Sheltered in Your Arms" and "You Were the One." "Ricky's Tune" is a song originally from Cassidy's 1972 solo album, and Cassidy covers the 1973 Al Wilson classic "Show and Tell." Cassidy says he is pleased with how the album turned out.

"When I'm making a record, I get a really good feeling that people are going to like it," Cassidy says of his soulful-sounding album. "In this particular case, it's the first time I've ever made a CD, and I've made 18 or 19 of them (records) now, that I knew I would want to sit down and listen to it. And I never did that before — it just really makes me feel good."

Also included on "Old Trick New Dog" are remade versions of Partridge Family hits "I Think I Love You," "I Woke Up in Love This Morning" and "I Can Feel Your Heartbeat." The songs take on a new life for themselves with a slightly hip-hop/rhythm and blues feel. With this comes the understanding for the album's title.

"These songs are remade and rethought. They all had to fit," Cassidy says. "You sing them from a different perspective and you arrange them in a new way. The old trick is a lot of the old songs and the new dog is me from this new perspective."

Cassidy has made a career out of performing for audiences. Whether it is a full-blown rock



David Cassidy

concert during the 1970s or working the stage from a singing and acting perspective, Cassidy enjoys it. He has held the lead role in the blockbuster Las Vegas musical "EFX" since 1996 but is committed through the end of this year, when his contract is up.

Also, he returned to Manhattan in 1993 to co-star in the Broadway musical "Blood

If you want to go

■ **WHO:** David Cassidy, sponsored by Sam Goody's Musicland.

■ **WHEN:** 5-7 p.m. Aug. 8.

■ **WHERE:** Covered atrium, off Pier 17 South Street Seaport, New York City.

■ **INFO:** (212) 677-1795 or visit Cassidy's website at: www.davidcassidy.com

Brothers." The musical was special for Cassidy because he got to perform with half-brother Shaun Cassidy, the son of Jack Cassidy and actress Shirley Jones. David Cassidy would love to perform again on Broadway and holds the experience close to his heart.

"I've done three Broadway shows and hope to do many more before I die," Cassidy says. "The idea of performing on that stage with my brother in that show was a highlight for both of us in our lives and careers, and I know we will tell our grandchildren some day."

For younger people not familiar with Cassidy, he played the role of Keith Partridge in The Partridge Family in the early '70s. Cassidy was caught in a tidal wave of popularity and mania as the ultimate teen idol to many girls back then. In 1975, he walked away from the fame to get his life under control.

In June, Cassidy was the subject of VH1's television special

"Behind the Music." The series documents the meteoric rise and fall of certain celebrities. In Cassidy's case, however, the program documented Cassidy's rise, to hitting rock bottom, back to his successful career today. The special was the highest rated show among 18- to 49-year-olds for VH1.

"I thought it was honest and revealing and I made a great effort so that they (VH1) could have as much of the whole picture as opposed to just pieces of the puzzle," Cassidy says. "I think the fact that it was the highest rated show that they ever did and that the reaction has been incredibly positive, I was actually quite shocked at the overwhelming reaction."

A self-admitted workaholic, Cassidy says he is passionate about all his work.

"I'm just somebody who has been blessed to have an incredibly loyal following," Cassidy says. "The work is the thing that keeps me going — not the fame, not the money. None of that stuff ever mattered to me. In fact, it threw me off course. I never expected to become famous or be a star. But I've now gotten to a place where I think people know that I'm as passionate as I am because I have such a hunger for the work, and I will continue to do it as long as I have breath in me."

— *By Lisa Ippolito Simpson*
Correspondent