



AUGUST 1981

## ROCKIE ROBBINS

**R**ockie Robbins doesn't pull any punches in evaluating his third A&M album entitled *I Believe In Love*. After fourteen months of soul searching and a life of music, Rockie has an album about which he can say: "I stand by this work with my heart and soul. It says what I want to say. It's real and I believe people will relate to it." Those are strong words, but the creation of *I Believe In Love* is probably one of the best examples of an artist finally coming into his own.

If Robbins sounds like a man who knows what he wants, it is because he has taken the chances that come with the privilege. With his wife's support, Rockie left his Minneapolis job and took out a second mortgage on his home to finance a demo tape. Without assistance from managers, agents and inside connections, Robbins simply mailed his tape to several record companies, crossed his fingers and waited. It paid off. A&M Records eagerly replied, and soon Rockie was in the studio with producers Richard Evans and Johnny Pate recording his first album, *Rockie Robbins*. That introduced him to the world, but his second LP on A&M, *You and Me*, produced by Philadelphia's Bobby Martin, put Robbins on the map for good. As Rockie expertly handled the television music and talk show appearances, the LP's exciting single/title track worked its way up the national charts.

This album has definitely been a challenge, but one he met with the help of his producers, Skip Scarborough and Jerry Peters whose individual credits read like a who's who in pop music.

Rockie likes to use the word "diverse" in describing *I Believe In Love*; it is, in fact, a very refreshing approach to recording songs about love and life. For instance, "Time To Think," one of the album's key tracks, features an infectious rhythm and unusual instrumentation that adds to the drama of the song's story. Then there's "My Old Friend," an exotic, progressive tune that places Rockie into new musical surroundings. In the meantime, the title track in all its simplistic splendor, sounds like a big contender for the number one spot. The heart of the up-tempo "Look Before You Leap" is its funky horn-laced breakdown, while expressive lyrics and well-placed piano inversions mold "Give Our Love A Chance" into a dreamy love plea. Rockie breathes life into "For You, For Love," a chord-drenched ballad that works in perfect contrast to the snappy sway of "Nothing Like Love," and its "big" sing-along hook. And there's more: a revitalized version of the R&B classic "Talk To Me," the breezy, mid-tempo "I'll Turn To You" and the testifying grandeur of "An Act Of Love."

Rockie's first two albums successfully set the stage; he calls them the perfect learning experiences. "Both of those records were great for their respective periods," he says, "and I had the opportunity to work with some of the best producers in the business. I think people will view the new album as a natural progression." They will. In fact, there's a very good chance that *I Believe In Love* will make Rockie Robbins believers of the whole world.

