

# Oldies Make Charts Via Rock, Pop Acts

By DAN BOTSTEIN

NEW YORK — Contemporary rock and pop artists are reviving former pop singles and making Hot 100 chart hits of them, with radio stations reflecting the trend. At WABC, for example, program director Rick Sklar reported that the station's playlist has consistently included revived oldies for the past six months.

Just two weeks ago, WABC, which has a tight playlist, was airing "The Lion Sleeps Tonight," Robert John's revival of the Tokens' hit; "Rockin' Robin," Michael Jackson's treatment of Bobby Day's success; "Walkin' in the Rain," Love Unlimited's version of the Ronettes' hit; the Jackson 5's rendition of Bobby Lewis' powerhouse, "Little Bitty Pretty One"; and "How Can I Be Sure," by David Cassidy, an updating of the Rascals' chart rider. The Love Unlimited, Jackson 5 and David Cassidy singles are also on the Hot 100 this week, as is Roberta Flack's "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face," which Mary

Travers had recorded on an early album. The Flack record had climbed to the top of the charts a week ago.

Artists whose main activity is concentrated on album product are hastening to include former pop hits in their sets. Nilsson has used Shirley & Lee's "Let the Good Times Roll" on his LP. Paul McCartney sings Mickey & Sylvia's "Love Is Strange" on his "Wings" album, and NRBQ reaches all the way back to "Accentuate the Positive" on their package. The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band features "Jambalaya" on their set; Taj Mahal dusts off "Ain't Nobody's Business But My Own," and Daddy Cool turns back to "I'll Never Smile Again."

Bob Abramson, owner of the House of Oldies in Greenwich Village, has been involved with oldies for 12 years.

He predicted that "this whole revival will be dead in about a year." His store attracts record buyers who are students of past

*(Continued on page 10)*