

Bob Hillman – Bio

Bob Hillman was born and raised in Los Angeles, California and as a youth was much influenced by the music of The Kinks, as well as Peter Case and his pre-solo career band, The Plimsouls. According to Hillman, he sent a demo tape of some of his early songs to an address printed on the back of one of Case's solo releases. *"I received a phone call from him in response. He was enthusiastic and supportive and invited me to participate in a monthly songwriter's night at the Ash Grove in Los Angeles, which ended up as an early career highlight."*

Hillman majored in English at Stanford University, whose campus is located at the southern end of San Francisco Bay near Palo Alto. At Stanford, Bob captained the men's volleyball team and during student vacations taught skiing in Copper Mountain, Colorado. Hillman moved to New York in late 1994 and during the daytime tutored high school students preparing for SAT's test. By night the singer/songwriter performed in Manhattan's countless bars and clubs. In 1998 Hillman met Tommy West, former member of sixties duo Cashman/West [and also former member of a trio, with Cashman and Gene Pistilli], who had become a noted producer [Jim Croce, Judy Rodman etc]. In terms of honing his skill as a songwriter, soon after his arrival in the city, Hillman became a regular attendee at the Monday night song swaps at Jack Hardy's flat on Houston Street in Greenwich Village.

Hillman appeared on the final Fast Folk Musical Magazine, Issue # 809 [1997], performing "Jesus, Blood And Country Music," and in 1997 and 1999 appeared at the annual Bottom Line, Fast Folk Musical Review shows. West produced Hillman's debut album **"Playing God"** which was released in early August 1998 by the Gene Shay/Carl Apter owned label, Sliced Bread Records. According to a label press release, *"Hillman does not purport to actually be God, but rather enjoys "playing at pretending to be" God."* In 1998 and 1999 Hillman placed fifth and sixth in the annual Telluride Troubadours contest, held during the Telluride Bluegrass Festival. 1998 saw Bob receive an honourable mention in the Fast Folk Song Contest, and the following year he won the songwriting contest at the Tucson Folk Festival. In 2001 he won the songwriters contest at Oregon's, Sisters Folk Festival.

Hillman has showcased in many of the country's best-known listening rooms, including Writers In The Round at Nashville's Bluebird Café. He has opened shows for Lucy Kaplansky, Dan Bern and Freedy Johnston. During 2001, Hillman opened for Suzanne Vega on more than twenty dates during her American Midwest and East Coast tours to promote **"Songs In Red And Gray."** A couple of Hillman's songs, "Communists" and "World Trade Center," appear on the **"Vigil"** charity album that Suzanne Vega helped compile to benefit the Windows of Hope, a charity that benefits the families of restaurant workers who died at the trade centre. Jeff Hardy, a songwriter and brother of Jack [Hardy], who worked as a chef in the WTC was killed on 9/11. As well as contributions from Vega, Jack Hardy and Christine Lavin, the album features numerous members of the Greenwich Village Songwriter's Exchange.

"Welcome To My Century," Bob's sophomore release, produced West, presents further slices of Hillman's skewed take on how we live our lives these days, and was released by Brave New Records. The session support players included guitarist Dave Schramm, West on piano and organist Brian Mitchell. The album appeared in record stores on August 20th this year, almost three years to the day after Bob's debut release. Hillman recently relocated from New York to Iowa.

Discography : **"Playing God"** [1998] ; **"Welcome To My Century"** [2002] :

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