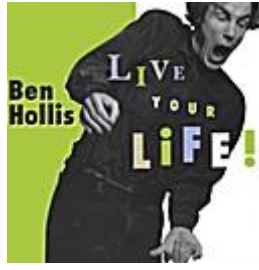


## Mp3 Ben Hollis - Live Your Life



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Irreverent humor and white man soul in the tradition of Zevon, Hiatt, and Prine -- and what's up with "Stop Me (Before I Kill Again)"??? 14 MP3 Songs ROCK: Folk Rock, FOLK: Modern Folk Details: "Terrific...I was blown away." Rick Kogan, WGN-Chicago "Sounds more like John Prine than Prine himself..."The Treasure" is a gem!" Richard Milne, WXRT-Chicago For the past two decades Ben Hollis has made a name for himself as one of Chicago's leading television funnymen, hosting several highly-acclaimed humorous and informative programs exploring the offbeat world around us. His efforts have earned him several Emmys and legions of adoring fans. But now we have something different - and quite unexpected - from Ben. Chicago's Beachaus Music has released a new CD featuring Ben as a singer, songwriter and guitarist. Tim Tobias produced. So you're probably thinking that Ben's music must be an offering of humorous bits, perhaps in the style of Weird Al Yankovic. Wrong! Imagine instead a little Todd Rundgren, Elvis Costello, Jerry Lee Lewis, Jackson Browne, Mose Allison, Peter Hammil, Pink Floyd... Ok, I'll stop there. The point is that Mr. Hollis has given us a surprisingly eclectic mix of music - all highly original - featuring himself as a very capable singer/guitarist and backed up by a superb set of musicians. Be forewarned , these songs are likely to grow on you! The CD starts out with three solid rockers that are guaranteed to get even your grandmother out onto the dance floor, including the title track "Live Your Life." There are, as one would expect from the witty Ben, a few humorous selections, most notably "Out On a First Date Again" - a country western sing-along - and the powerful "Gaining Weight" which features some exceptional violin work from Edgar Gabriel. There are also a few pop tunes, such as the feelgood "High As a Kite" and the catchy "Remember This Day." And then there are the more serious offerings, including the offbeat "You and Me Against the World" and the darkish "Stop Me Before I Kill Again" - a surprising duet which features Ben's fine vocal range and the versatile keyboard stylings of Tim Tobias.

Ben also demonstrates his fine vocal abilities with "Every Time I Sing This Song" - a thought-provoking ballad. But wait, the best is yet to come. Ben has given us a gem with a beautifully simple country western ballad called "Kathie Cut Her Hair" in which he shares a highly personal moment with lyrics you can almost see. Ben further demonstrates some nice guitar work as well as great vocals and lyrics on "The Treasure" - a duet with Tim Tobias on piano. This is a hauntingly beautiful piece about our eternal search for something, perhaps that elusive "thing." Ben Hollis has surprised us with a set of finely crafted and highly original songs, a little something for everyone. His prolific career as an on-camera television personality has now crossed over to that of a recording artist. Perhaps as a singer/songwriter Ben has found his own personal treasure? We can only hope that there will be more to come. Stay tuned!

Reviewed by MARK WAGNER MORE ABOUT BEN With seven regional EMMYS to his credit for producing and hosting excellence, Ben Hollis has been a fixture on the Chicago television scene since 1989. Best known as the original host and co-creator of WTTW's Wild Chicago, Ben is currently producing and hosting Ben Around Town for Channel 20, WYCC (PBS), a lively arts oriented program airing Fridays at 7PM and Sundays at 7:30 PM. Ben also created, produced and hosted Ben Loves Chicago on WPWR (UPN-50), and was a regular contributor to 190 North on Channel 7 (ABC). But before Ben had ever picked up a mike to interview anybody on TV he was entertaining audiences in Chicago, D.C., New York and L.A. with his original tunes, singing and accompanying himself on guitar. A BRIEF HISTORY July, 2001. Ben teams up with producer/keyboardist Tim Tobias to record a solo acoustic album. Tim is impressed with the tunes and convinces Ben to record them with some of Chicago's finest players. It happens. Eric Hochberg (bass), John Siegle and Felton Offard (electric guitar), Larry Beers (drums), Leddie Garcia (percussion), Lorraine Denham (background vocals), Edgar Gabriel (violin) and Tim Tobias (keyboards) bring Ben's original songs to life. Songs like... Second City Blues A rollicking appreciation of Chicago with a big blues shouter finish. Every Time I Sing This Song This one addresses our violent culture in much the same way Michael Moore does in Bowling For Columbine. In the end, hope -- through taking personal stock. Dead Rockers "...feed the economy, Dead Rockers, a growing industry..." Need we say more? Just plain, old rock'n'roll fun. LIVE SHOW IS MAJORLY ENTERTAINING You'd expect Ben's rapport with his audience to be special and he does not disappoint. His love of people, improv, comedy and music combine to make one wild show. And he can sing. Plus there's Tim Tobias on keyboards, Tim Jones on drums and Peter McCall on bass backing Ben's vocals

and rhythm guitar. Flute phenom Robert E. Lee sits in on a handful of tunes as well. Some Ben Background Ben is a graduate of The Latin School of Chicago, and The George Washington University (D.C.). Before lighting on his TV career he paid his dues doing stand-up comedy, improvisation, fronting a satirical rock 'n' roll band called "The Dogmatics," writing ad copy, driving a Checker Cab, slinging whiskey, and pushing a lonely hearts club in Los Angeles. In his first ever modeling job in the late 70's for a Budget Rent-a-Car poster, Ben was forced to cram his 36-inch-waist into a pair of way-too-tight 32-inch waist blue jeans, prop his left foot up on the bumper of a Lincoln Continental and smile warmly. Only his closest friends could see his pain. LIVE YOUR LIFE was produced by Tim Tobias who formerly toured with Sister Sledge, Al Stewart and Curtis Mayfield.

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