

Anthem Song

Aaron Gillespie | Tooth & Nail Records

Though Aaron Gillespie's debut solo album just released, his name may already sound familiar. He has founded two successful Christian rock bands, but left the bands behind on his intimate worship CD, *Anthem Song*.

"I have this desire to see our generation worshipping God. But a lot of people I get to meet through music—kids with tattoos and swoop-over haircuts—don't think of worship as 'cool.' I want them to find a home and a vocabulary to experience this kind of music," Gillespie said.

In 1997, Gillespie started his professional music career at the young age of 14 when he co-founded Underoath, a popular Christian metalcore band, in which he played drums. Two of the band's records, *They're Only Chasing Safety* (2004) and *Define the Great Line* (2006), went gold, selling more than a million records combined. Gillespie left the band in 2010 to pursue new projects.

While still in Underoath, Gillespie formed alternative band The Almost, which has a softer sound. The Almost has gained 21 million plays on MySpace and recently toured with Switchfoot. Despite his new band's success, Gillespie decided to release his worship CD without the band.

"I've always wanted to make a straight-up worship record like this. The Almost is a rock band, and we didn't want to mix the two styles. Of course, it's all worship; your shift at Starbucks should be worship. But this just seemed to be the way to do it," Gillespie explained.

Anthem Song is a personal album about adoring God and worshipping Him. Gillespie recorded it with producer Aaron Sprinkle (Jeremy Camp, Kutless). Other than a few piano parts

played by worship leader Shane Anderson, the duo played everything on the album. Gillespie had some help writing from co-writers Paul Baloché, Aaron and Sarah Hart, Phillip LaRue and a few others.

The first thing I noticed about *Anthem Song* was Gillespie's vocals, which are right on. The album is worth listening to just to hear his beautiful voice, but that is not the only redeeming quality about *Anthem Song*. Although most of us can appreciate good worship music in a church setting, it does not always translate well outside that environment. However, Gillespie accomplished a feat I find quite impressive. The songs on this album would work great in a large or intimate worship setting, but are also pleasant to listen to in private. I love being able to enjoy music on my own time that encourages me to glorify and worship our God, something that often gets put to the side when life gets busy. While God's song should always be the anthem of our lives, Gillespie's album is a good reminder that we all need.

"I've learned that God's goodness is an anthem that will play forever," Gillespie said. "Our job is to grab a piece of that song while we are here."

Gillespie's goal was to make worship music "cool" and accessible, which I think he did a great job of doing. These catchy tunes will have listeners—even those who do not typically like worship music—singing along well after the music has stopped. This is a great album and I am confident that it will not disappoint the fans that have been anticipating the release of *Anthem Song* or those who have never heard of Underoath or The Almost.

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