

Echo

Recorded live at a recent Forward conference, the release *Echo* finds its contagious energy from the popular event. Sponsored by Free Chapel and Pastor Jentezen Franklin, the annual conference draws tens of thousands, now spreading to two locations.

Even the design of the product, eschewing personalities for a packed arena, places the focus squarely on what it is like to worship with thousands of others.

The music is fast-paced and affective, frequently alternating rock worship with modern pop leanings. Several songs, such as the piano proclamation of “All Things New,” “Kingdom” and “Your Presence Is Heaven,” have anthem-like qualities, enhanced by the live setting and full vocals. Pastor Franklin appears midway through the release, giving a word from “Exodus 32:32” followed by a solo saxophone rendering of “Amazing Grace.” Popular worship artist Israel Houghton steers the project as producer and appears as leader on the driving “Rez Power” with Joth Hunt, the tender “Jesus At the Center” and an a capella version of the classic “There’s Something About That Name.”

The target of the recording clearly is the young worship listener who makes Hillsong United and Passion songs famous in his own church. Similarly to those best-selling releases, *Echo* provides a solid crop of new songs on a modern pop/rock landscape.