

GARY FRENCH

www.garyfrenchmusic.com

Gary French is a talented new artist from Goose Bay, Canada. His rich vocal tone and well crafted songs are garnering attention in Canada as well as south of the border. The songs on his first record "Beautiful Grace" cover a broad range of styles from intimate acoustic worship to guitar driven rock. As a worship leader, Gary has spent years refining his musical gifts and his quiet and thoughtful worship style reflect his spiritual depth and intimate walk with God.

Born in St. Anthony, Newfoundland and spending his formative years in Ontario, Gary's family settled in Goose Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador in 1998. It was this time that Gary began to take his music more seriously and started to write songs and began playing in a local Christian punk band. "This gave me the opportunity to get up in front of people and express myself musically" says Gary. After playing several festivals and "battle of the bands" with the punk group, Gary's talent began to show.

At sixteen Gary was encouraged by a supportive family and youth pastor to develop his musical gifting further and it was at this time that Gary began to explore worship music. Rather than push Gary in front of a church right away, Gary's youth pastor wisely eased him into it by getting him to play with the youth band and eventually leading for a couple of songs during prayer services. "That's when I really knew that worship was going to play a large role in my music, in my life. I really started getting a heart for leading worship." As Gary began to lead worship more often, the songs he was writing began to reflect the time he spent with God.

The journey has not been without its trials, and as Gary began to press in and really explore what it means to be a worshipper of God he began to receive opposition. "So many times I've been discouraged and thought I should do something else ...but God kept me going, kept fighting and fighting". The doors began to open. An opportunity for Gary to attend Hillsong's worship ministry school in Australia appeared out of the blue. While everyone around him thought it was a crazy idea, his older brother encouraged him to go. Hillsong stretched Gary in ways he can't even describe, and he returned to Canada inspired to continue to worship God and lead others. "It's not a performance; it's a special connection with people – leading them into God's presence. It's not about you – it's about God. And when God shows up – wow!"

In 2008 Gary won the YC Newfoundland Talent Search contest and began to record his first album, Beautiful Grace. Once again God was stretching him, getting him ready for the next set of challenges. "Winning the contest was very cool. After YC when I arrived home, my whole church was waiting for me at the airport like on Canadian Idol. I was blown away at the support." Over the summer of 2009 Gary flew to St. John's, Canada to work on the songs with the producer and then to lay down the tracks. "When I first heard the finished tracks, I thought they were just amazing! You know how you hear a song in your head - but this was way better than what I had in my head (laughs)."

Gary's plans for the future are firmly in God's hands. While he is excited about the opportunities that winning the YC Talent Search contest have presented, he is also quick to give the glory to God and to make it clear that this is still about what God wants. "In the short term – I intend to walk through whatever door God opens for me. I'm not going to sit back and let things pass me by. Whatever ministry opportunities God gives, I am willing to do it."

When asked about his relationship with God, Gary's eyes go straight to the floor as he considers the awe of his Creator. "I always feel really humbled that He took all my shame and I did nothing for it. I live a

free life, no condemnation. Wow – how do you like that? He did it because He loves me. How much He has done for me, it just amazes me. Oh man...I explain stuff better in songs than in words (laughs)”.

Gary is currently one of the worship leaders at Bethel Pentecostal church in Goose Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador Canada. He sits under the leadership of Pastors Terry Snow and Steve Jenkins. His new record “Beautiful Grace” is available through his website www.garyfrenchmusic.com, or through www.ycnewfoundland.org. To book Gary for an event call +1 709 896 7279.