

KNXWLEDGE

Stones Throw producer makes gospel-tinged beats for himself as well as top-tier rappers like Kendrick Lamar and Joey Badass.

by **Alice Price-Styles**
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“I was born and raised in church,” says Glenn Boothe with a chuckle, when asked about growing up on the East Coast (in Philly and Jersey). He elaborates, and the resourceful creativity of a bona fide beatmaker shines through: “It was my grandma’s sister’s Pentecostal church, so my parents got the job of cleaning. Every single Saturday, I would have to clean, vacuum, and straighten out all the chairs, but then when I was finished, I got to go around and play with the instruments. There were old ones in the basement, the keys were missing or the strings had popped, and I was able to take those and bring them home. I eventually built my own studio that way.”

Boothe, aka Knxwledge, began building his catalog and honing his craft at an early age, perfecting his now distinct way of flipping hard rap joints and fusing them with smooth soulful sounds that quite often feels like tricked-out gospel. He sums up his unique style of heady and evocative beats beautifully when he reflects that he is, in fact, “making feelings.”

Of his moniker Knxwledge, Boothe recalls, “My dad was a really smart guy. He had a lot of books he brought over from Jamaica—Malcolm X books and stories about everyone’s different struggles. And he has this shop where he used to sell Cross



Colours clothing—African-Jamaican-style clothing. Everywhere on the gear there would be an X—it was, like, the logo. I kind of took those things and put them together. My mom calls me Knxwledge now.”

After connecting with like-minded musicians from the beat scene out West, Boothe relocated to Los Angeles in 2006 and now resides in Hollywood. He has produced tracks for rappers including Joey Badass and Kendrick Lamar, and is currently signed to Stones Throw. He released his first album with the label this year, and says the title, *Hud Dreams*, is “something that came to me in a dream. It’s strange. This passion felt like a wild dream. But things happen. These hood dreams of mine.” And for Knxwledge, the icing on the cake of having those dreams become reality is getting to see and hear his

instrumentals on vinyl: “There’s something in the way that it comes from wax and goes back onto it. It’s like a birthday to me, every time.”

Remarkably prolific in his output, Knxwledge possesses the philosophy of sharing art that is so characteristic of his generation: “I’m always going to keep sharing, because it feels good. Music I’ve shared has been rapped on now by my favorite rappers, so sharing has gotten me to this point.”

When you consider the blessings and successes that Knxwledge has enjoyed in his career so far, his karmic stance on giving the world good energy holds some serious weight. Continuing in his diligent and dreamlike way, he is sure to reap yet more musical rewards. ●