

Media Release
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Auckland rappers credit success to youth mentoring charity.

From the likes of Savage and Kings, Church and AP are the next kiwi rap duo to watch, with their hit single 'Ready Or Not' the most Shazamed song in New Zealand before its official release in 2018.

Church and AP comprise of Aucklanders, Elijah Manu, 17 (Church) and Albert Purcell, 18 (AP). The duo recorded their first album, *Thorough Bread*, through The Crescendo Trust of Aotearoa (CTOA) in the Te Atatu community centre. CTOA is a local community outreach programme and non-for-profit charity that mentors youth. Elijah and Albert thank CTOA for their constant support, experience and expertise, without the trust's help this EP would not have been possible.

"We're really a testament to the success of community outreach programmes. A lot of people think they are for troubled youth and that it leads nowhere, but 'Ready Or Not' was made in the CTOA studio. It was made in a room probably no bigger than your bathroom," says Elijah.

Church first collaborated with CTOA in August 2017 with AP joining in March 2018. The duo worked closely with Izak Kennedy, who started as a mentee before becoming a mentor in 2015. Over the course of the year, Church & AP recorded nine tracks for their EP. Izak is a skilled bassist and drummer, with expertise in music production, digital synths, mixing and beat making.

"We are immensely proud to have been a part of Church & AP's growth into one of NZ's premier Hip-Hop acts, none of which would have been possible without the Crescendo Trust's endless resources, skill set and patience. The process has opened doors for not only the duo but myself that I never believed would be possible," says Izak.

CTOA was created by Blindspott and City of Souls member Marcus Powell in 2012. CTOA allows mentees to work alongside industry professionals via mentoring, personal development and training in music, film, photography, media and communications. This includes song writing, beat making, arrangement, production, recording, studio time, instruments, microphone knowledge, stage presence, photography and live act. The mentees then get the opportunity to present their work in front of live audiences and earn money from their content. CTOA have helped over 2000 youth across Auckland. Marcus Powell says Church & AP have enormous talent and their story is one of the many reasons why he started CTOA.

"Church & AP are so organic, their song 'Ready Or Not' is a classic. I started CTOA because I want to inspire positive change in our youth and music is a universal language that binds us all. It's been a privilege to help Elijah and Albert on their creative journey," says Marcus.

Elijah and Albert met in year nine after expressing a shared love for Chance the Rapper. The duo started making music together at 16 and since then they've had over 756,000 streams on Spotify. This year alone they finished their NZ Community tour and released two new singles 'Loud as Hell' and 'Peños'.

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For more information, or to speak further with Marcus Powell or Church & AP, please contact Courtney Pitcher, Lasso Media and PR: courtney@lassoo.co.nz (09) 370 0425. For high res image please [click here](#)



(Left to right; Church & AP.)