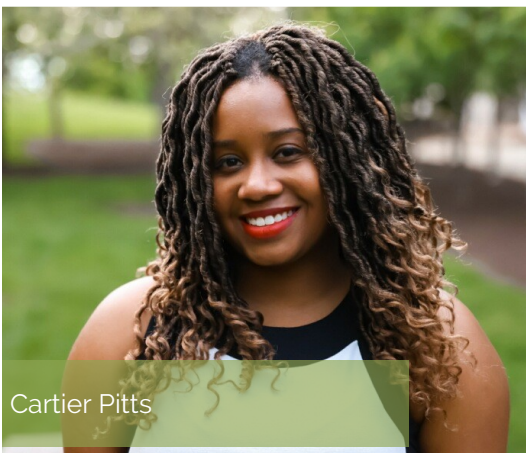


CAREER TIPS

Helping Ohio musicians create a worldwide stage in their own backyard

For this interview ENCATC spoke to Cartier Pitts a native from Cleveland, Ohio. Cartier attended The Ohio State University where she studied Arts Management with minors in Spanish, Dance and Music, Media and Enterprise (MME) minor hopes of working in the global music business as an A&R. She began getting her feet wet in the music industry in Columbus with managing other college students in the autumn of 2018. Cartier officially obtained the LLC for Carnelian Productions during her junior year in March 2019. Recently, Carnelian Productions was granted a position in the inaugural year-long Black Independent Music Accelerator (BIMA) organized by the American Association for Independent Music (A2IM).



Cartier Pitts



ENCATC: What is your project Carnelian Productions LLC? What is the story behind it and how did you get the idea?

Cartier Pitts: Carnelian Productions LLC is a music management and education company that is based in three of the biggest metropolitan areas in the Midwestern American state of Ohio. Our mission is to help create a more vibrant Midwest by giving Ohio musicians the tools they need to start their careers in their home state. Our offerings include single services for musicians, masterclasses for the general Ohio community and apprenticeship/internship opportunities for music enthusiasts who want to participate in music management. Carnelian

Productions has recently completed test runs of our new services, and we plan to officially launch our services by the end of spring 2021. The idea for the firm came from my experience participating in my collegiate and local independent music industry as a consumer and a student.

ENCATC: How have you been rethinking taking the project forward due to the impact of COVID-19?

Cartier Pitts: The firm has taken on a completely different model in part to COVID-19. The first wave pandemic hit every industry hard, but the music industry was especially damaged due to the closure of live venues. During that quiet concert-less time, I had a plethora of casual discussions with peers who



COVID-19 PANDEMIC

1. Utilize Zoom, Microsoft Teams or Google Call for **virtual meetings** with your team
2. Revamp your **online presence** & reach out to new social media platforms
3. Take advantage of panels & networking opportunities
4. Have a virtual show via Patreon or Facebook Live
5. **Schedule** time for rest & decompression
6. **Self-discipline** and a healthy, productive mindset

Let's help **#StopTheSpread** so we can safely interact at concerts ASAP

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/carnelianproductions/photos/280371390177615>

were artists. In these moments, I gained valuable information regarding what they needed in a "manager" on their team. Rather than having the person who decided every career move the artists made, the musicians I spoke to wanted someone who was more of a collaborator or team member in their creative project. Before the pandemic, I attempted to build up a roster using the traditional, all-encompassing management model where the company would gain the 15% of any revenue we secured for the artist. Since October 2020, I have been working hard to provide single services to artists such as development consultations, press release work and marketing plans. The reasoning behind this is to first off, give artists what they actually need, but also to build up the artists' trust in the company so that they feel comfortable continuing business with Carnelian Productions. Another COVID-19 related change I made to Carnelian Productions was the creation of an area manager apprenticeship, in order to help create some income for those who were affected by the pandemic while participating in their field of interest. In the apprenticeship, individuals who seeked to learn more about the ins and outs of management could get training from the company and work with local artists at the same time. I am looking to launch a collegiate internship by Autumn 2021.

ENCATC: Can you give us some background into your education and professional experience that has led you to where you are today with this project?

Cartier Pitts: From 2016- 2020, I attended The Ohio State University to pursue a Bachelor of Arts in Arts

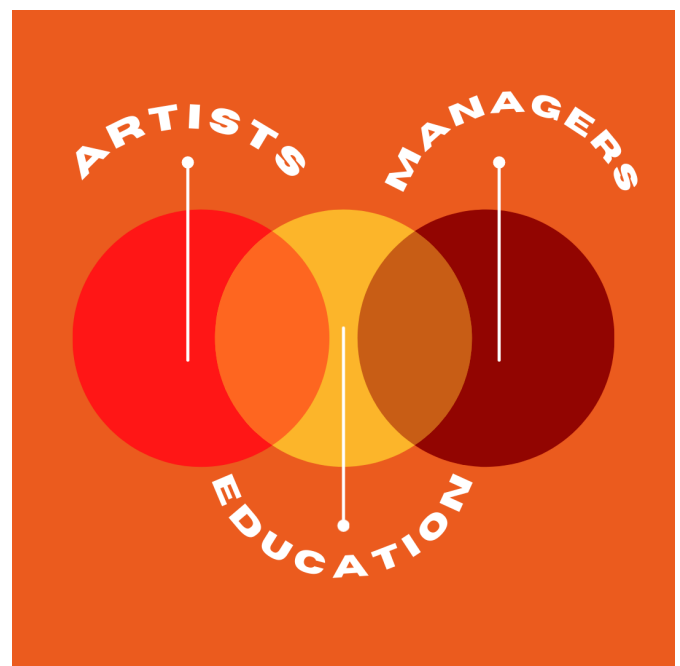
Management with minors in Spanish, Dance, and Music, Media and Enterprise. Prior to starting my work as a music manager, I worked as a marketing intern for two different Columbus, OH music organizations during my sophomore and junior years. While I did gain valuable lessons from those experiences, neither afforded me the opportunity to work on my true passion, artist management. So in fall of 2018, despite having just started the courses in my concentration, I took the initiative to begin interacting with OSU student-artists as their manager.

ENCATC: What skills or other personal attributes do you think you have that have helped you develop and grow Carnelian Productions LLC?

Cartier Pitts: I think the most prominent innate skill or personality trait that I have that helped me create Carnelian Productions is that I am a little bit of a rule breaker. Since I was in middle and high school, I've always rejected any suggestion of taking up a "conventional occupation" such as going into medicine, law or traditional business. While I very much respect the advancements of those fields, I knew that they were not for me. Since I was always used to going against the grain in regard to my professional pursuits, striking out to start my own creative venture towards the end of my college career seemed like the logical next step.

ENCATC: What do you wish you had known before starting this project?

Cartier Pitts: While I do thank my fearless nature for starting this venture as young as I did, it was a double edged sword. I wish I would have had more knowledge of all of the steps that go into creating a



Source: <https://www.facebook.com/carnelianproductions/photos/272578370956917>

stable enterprise (doing market research, creating financial models, learning how to market your business). Fortunately, I was able to connect with Jumpstart Inc, a business development firm based in Cleveland, OH that has been able to retroactively go back and do those steps. I do think, in my case, it was actually helpful to fail first because it made me appreciate the resources and help I get from Jumpstart Inc even more than I would have back in 2018.

ENCATC: What have been the most difficult challenges you have encountered?

Cartier Pitts: Adapting to the business model to the COVID-19 era has been the most difficult challenge to date.

ENCATC: How did you go about getting start-up funds and how did you use them to get the project up and running?

Cartier Pitts: My venture is still in its pre-seed phase, although I am happy to report that we are finally at the position to receive payment for the work we do. As far as receiving further start-up funding, I plan to continue to work closely with Jumpstart Inc (who also is a venture capital fund and connector) throughout the life cycle of my business.

ENCATC: What advice would you give to students or early-career professionals looking to start their own creative projects?

Cartier Pitts: First off, I would recommend to any student or young professional looking to start their own creative projects to simply do it. As cliché as it sounds, I got my foot in the music industry by just starting to do the work of an artist manager myself! I would encourage other upcoming artist managers to stay curious about their field. The music industry changes every day, as does the needs of an artist's support personnel. I would highly recommend reading articles from Music Business Worldwide or Billboard Pro to stay up to date on industry happenings, as well as the news from smaller outlets in your area. I would also recommend prospective creative entrepreneurs to reach out to their local city/state funded business development organizations for coaching. While they may have little experience in arts-specific ventures, they do know how to get a viable business off the ground and it can be a mutually beneficial relationship. Finally, I would implore any young cultural entrepreneur to keep going. I have definitely fallen victim to imposter syndrome and have been afraid to put myself out there because of the competitiveness of the field. However, I'm starting to grow into the belief that

there really is enough that me and my venture are worthy enough to take up the space.

ENCATC: What keeps you motivated and going?

Cartier Pitts: I would say my dream of creating a positive impact in my community keeps me motivated. As much as I would like to see the artists I work with garner critical and commercial acclaim, that is only a part of the dream. I would also like the company to create new opportunities for the music and night time economy in the metropolitan areas of my home state. I would hope that Carnelian Productions would be in the position to be at the forefront of creating initiatives of music education in low income, BIPOC dense areas of the state as well as workforce development opportunities that will have lasting effects on citizens of Ohio and eventually the rest of the Midwest.



Carnelian Productions aims to build a more vibrant Midwest by amplifying the voices of its citizens through its mission of helping local artists to create a worldwide stage in their own backyard.

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