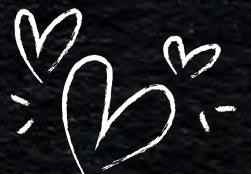
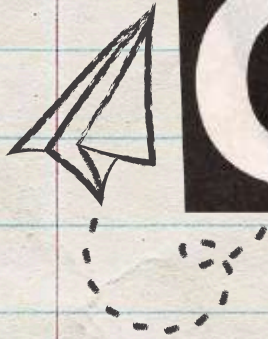


YEARBOOK
CLASS
OF
2023



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FOREWORD

**BY PROGRAM DIRECTOR,
ELIZABETH SHOBOWALE**

Another amazing year for the Music Business Academy (MBA) for Africa and our students. This year we are particularly proud of the achievements of the students and the quality of work they have released. From the singles, to the music videos and the marketing strategies. Everything has been impeccable and it has been great to be a part of their learning.

One of the most important changes we made to MBA this year was extending the programme from 6 months to 9 months. This gave the students 3 additional months to be able to extract and absorb knowledge from their peers, mentors and programme coordinators.

It is a pleasure to also announce that MBA has grown by 27% this year and student engagement is up like never before seen. We're seeing students displaying their abilities and their skills at a very high level, so we introduced the 'Masters' programme where we take the top 42 students through further mentorship and pair them directly with executives and stakeholders in the music industry for mentorship.

The impact and influence that MBA holds is immense. Its growth over the last 3 years is commendable and it is clear that the Academy is capable of educating and building a well informed music and creative industries workforce for Africa. The Programme is rigorous and practical, it gives the student first hand experience on what is required to build a successful career in the music industry. I am particularly excited to see the amazing work and businesses that will come from our set of students from this cohort.

We've built a strong collective of almost 400 resourceful students who are competent, innovative and equipped to enter the workforce and deliver nothing short of excellence. I am proud of the students, the executives, and the editorial team and what they have been able to achieve this year. We are grateful to all our partners, mentors and advisory board for the support they continue to provide us at MBA.

MBA for Africa is a beacon of light and a proof that creative education and the creative industries industries can empower and equip young people in Africa with the tools needed for socio-economic development.

YEARBOOK COMMITTEE

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT TEAM LEAD

FORMER HEAD OF YEARBOOK COMMITTEE

HEAD OF OPERATIONS, WRITER

DEPUTY, HEAD OF OPERATIONS

HEAD OF MARKETING

HEAD OF DESIGN

DESIGN ASSISTANT

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS

EDITOR, WRITER, READER

EDITOR, WRITER

EDITOR, WRITER

EDITOR, READER

EDITOR, READER

EDITOR, READER

EDITOR, READER

EDITOR, READER

EDITOR

WRITER

WRITER

WRITER

WRITER

MARKETER

MARKETER

MARKETER

INTERVIEWER

INTERVIEWER

OPERATIONS, WRITER

ADAORA NWANGWU

MICHAEL AMPONGSAH

FELICIA ELISHA

PURPLE G. AMES

ESTHER NZENWA

VENMAK AGBOOLA

FIYINFOLUWA FARONBI

FESTUS ABOAGYE

LOVE NEBO

ELEOJO MOMOH

TOLULOPE AMBALI

OMOBOLANLE ABIOLA

ISAAC OWUSU SEKYERE

OLUWAKEMI FAGBORO

CAMPBELL ISAIAH

MAKINDE AYODEJI

CHIDERA NNAMANI

CHINASA CASMIR

JANE CHIMBRUOMA AMADI

PRAISE MICHAEL

WILLIAM UMOH

ADIMCHINOBI UGOCHUKWU

TIFFANY NGIGE

MITCHELLE UZORKA

MOMANYI IAN

KAOSARAT OMOLADE YUSUF

LILIAN AKANU

IMABONG EFFIONG-AKPAN

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WE ARE ROOTING
FOR YOU

MEET THE EXECUTIVES



Anita Amangbo
Group Managing Director



Michael Amponsah
Deputy Group Managing Director



Damilola Omogbayeri
Chief Operating Officer



Adaora Nwangwu
Vice President Operations



Marlene Bett
Chief Administrative Officer



Ayomide Adetomiwa
Vice President Administration



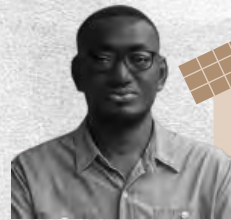
Samson Adelowo
Chief Legal Officer



Victoria Abah
Vice President Legal



Lord Jenny
Chief Technology Officer



Festus Aboagye
Vice President Technology



Oluwatobiloba Adebayo
Chief Financial Officer



Chukwuyemisi Isichei
Vice President Finance



Abisola Olaniyi
Chief Marketing Officer



Oluwakemi Fagboro
Vice President Marketing



INTERVIEW: GMD, ANITA AMANGBO ON HER BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE DURING THE MBA FOR AFRICA PROGRAMME

BY: CHINASA CASMIR



Anita Amangbo grew up around music enthusiasts and this greatly influenced her career path. With 10 years' experience in talent management and events planning, the Delta native has worked with record labels, artists such as Crayon, Runtown, Chike and Rema, and consulted with some companies. She currently works in the Nigerian music industry as a project management executive, brand strategist and creative director.

So can we call you 'Idan' in the industry?

"Not really. I don't have 'Idan' money," Anita laughs.

Like some of the students in the 2023 cohort, Anita is no stranger to the MBA for Africa programme. About four years ago, she was part of Intern with GT, a programme with a similar structure to the MBA for Africa. Last year, she joined MBA for Africa to gain new experiences and decide on her next career path. So far, Anita sees progress in her self-discovery journey and highly recommends the programme to anyone starting out in the industry.

"I think that if you can, you should not start off in the industry without enrolling in the MBA for Africa programme as it will give you the reality of what the music business really is. Last year, over three hundred and fifty people enrolled. Although I don't know everybody, I know good lawyers, financial advisors, good project managers, brand strategists, and good marketers that I can reach out to for assistance. The programme fosters that collaborative process, and helps you build in a community." I'd advise everyone to enrol because it opens your mind to different things. And it also gives you the knowledge to be able to execute whatever it is you want to do in the industry."

A few things about the program stood out for Anita:

"The programme was broken down into [simulated] companies. So it transitioned from theory to practical and we had to manage a group of companies. Every executive I worked with was hands-on. There was a synergy between everybody, where we tried to do everything possible to ensure the project was a success. Also, the fact that we're able to interact with GT and always learnt from him."

Before joining MBA for Africa, Anita was a "loner" in the industry. Her unwavering dedication to work took a toll on her personal relationships.

But over time, the programme helped her identify this flaw which she hopes to fix. Through the programme, she has also learned that community is important. Now she has a small group of people in the programme that are mutually dependent on each other, and she can trust to get things done.

Upon joining the MBA for Africa programme, Anita was placed in Tribe Orange label. After GT's first curveball, she was transferred to The Fifth Space. About a month later, she became the General Managing Director of the 2023 Cohort. For her, handling this role "wasn't rosy". It was a different experience than what she was used to.

In her words, "I have had some leadership experience, but this was quite interesting for me. One of the things that the programme helped me realize quickly is the power of teamwork. Delegating used to be difficult for me as I have always been a perfectionist. But the volume of work at MBA for Africa didn't allow my perfectionism to thrive. So, delegating, asking people for assistance and allowing them to assist helped.

"I had the most amazing and hardworking executives anybody could ask for. In general, everyone did their best to ensure Pepple Street was an amazing project. Like GT says, MBA for Africa is the best environment to make mistakes without any dire consequence because as you learn."

As a display of the community built, Anita recalls a time the executives leveraged the MBA for Africa community to achieve a goal:

"A very good example of a community working together was when we had to raise money for the end-of-the-year party. People sent outrageous amounts with no plans of showing up to the party. On the day of the party, it was basically teamwork. Everyone came together to make sure that everything worked, and we had a nice time."

One of the most popular expressions within the cohort is "curveballs" and the founder, Godwin Tom, is well-known for dishing them. Curveballs are unexpected events that are difficult to deal with. Anita sheds light on what may have been the biggest challenge she faced:



“As executives, we had a lot of curveballs thrown at us. But the biggest curveball was when we were approaching the execution phase of our tenure, and our budget got slashed two or three days prior. We were aware that an amount of money was set aside for the project, before the budget got cut. We had to sit down with the team, get behind the scenes and try to see what resources we could pull. Whilst that was going on, we were trying to pay for the photoshoot and the video shoot, carry the cohort and the label MDs along as they were also dealing with the pressure.

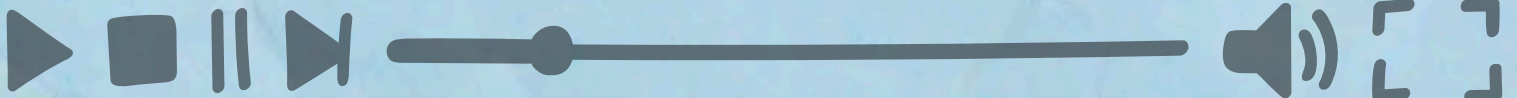
“It was interesting to watch because it helped the executives bond, but most importantly, it helped us see beyond the now, and helped us get comfortable with being uncomfortable. I guess that was the lesson GT’s curveball was trying to teach us.”

Despite these challenges, Anita took it as an opportunity to learn. According to her, one of the highlights of the programme is her ability to “work under pressure”, juggle different things and collaborate with her team. She believes the long and late night meetings and sacrifices paid off. Upon tenure completion, her team left behind a detailed handover note to help the next cohort and simplify their journey. Rating her team’s overall success, Anita notes that her team met over 80% of their targets, which counts as success to her.

Anita advises future cohort members saying,

“Take it easy with life, especially outside the programme. Understand that things are going to change. You’re not going to have access to as many friends as you did during the programme, but you will definitely have access to good people. Try to win, but also ensure that you don’t win in a fraudulent manner. Win in a way that even future students of the MBA program will look at you as a case study and be proud of you. GT is probably one of the most honest people that I’ve had the pleasure of knowing for over eight years. His yes is yes and his no is no. And in Africa, especially, we need more of that.”

This interview has been slightly cited for clarity.




THE COMMUNITY SHOW


CHAMPIONING CREATIVITY FROM THE GARDEN CITY

THE COMMUNITY SHOW, AN INNOVATIVE PLATFORM THAT EMERGED FROM THE DYNAMIC CONVERGENCE OF CREATIVE COLLECTIVES WITH A SHARED MISSION TO CHAMPION CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION IN THE VIBRANT CITY OF PORT HARCOURT.

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THE COMMUNITY SHOW



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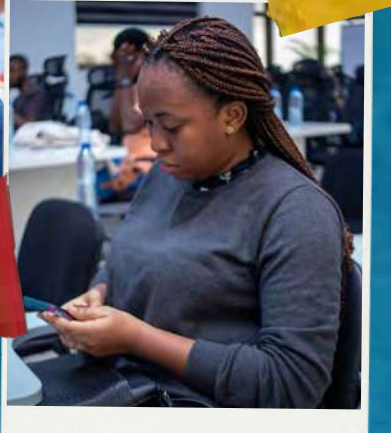
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HYBRID CLASS SESSIONS



“ MY FIRST HYBRID CLASS EXPERIENCE ”

BY JANE AMADI

Embarking on the journey to my first hybrid class, I was filled with a mix of anticipation and anxiety. After a series of virtual sessions, this class promised a new venture into the blend of online and in-person learning. The subject matter, *Entrepreneurship in the Music Industry (Module 1, Class 3)*, already piqued my interest. Also, the prospect of finally meeting my peers and esteemed faculty in person added an extra layer of excitement.

The class featured an impressive roster of guest speakers: the renowned female rapper, Sasha P, the insightful entertainment lawyer, Iredumare Opeyemi, and the knowledgeable Anthony Egwu, with Trust Roy adeptly handling the moderation duties. Given their esteemed positions in the music industry, the session promised to shed light on the complexities of navigating the music business landscape as an entrepreneur or an established company.

For those of us accustomed to the comfort of home and wary of Lagos traffic, the idea of commuting to a physical class was daunting. Yet, the stress of the rideover was quickly overshadowed by the excitement of what lay ahead. The session was not just about learning; it was an opportunity provided by VBank to build connections beyond the screen, putting faces to the names and voices we had grown familiar with in our cohort and individual study groups.

Upon arrival, the welcoming presence of CIIFA staff who had been instrumental in facilitating these smooth-running classes, marked the beginning of many lasting friendships, partnerships, and relationships. A memorable moment for many was the arrival of Godwin Tom. His presence made us light up, and he graciously answered questions and addressed concerns, embodying the essence of GT.

Some people shared heartwarming and amusing stories about their first hybrid learning class:



- Michelle Uzorka -

“Apart from being so excited to meet and connect with a couple of the students in the MBA 2023 Cohort, my experience in the first hybrid class was surreal. The class gave me more clarity on the entrepreneurship aspect of the music space and also expanded my knowledge of the different types of entrepreneurship opportunities in the music space. For me, being a part of the 2023 MBA cohort is a dream come true, and I was glad to have attended its first hybrid class, ‘*Entrepreneurship in the Music Industry*,’ as I can say I’m an entrepreneur in the music industry.”

- Samson Adelowo -

“I was anxious, happy, and timid on the day of my first hybrid class. For the first time, I was going to meet some label mates that I had been talking to in virtual meetings and on Telegram group chats. I met Tobi Adebayo, Jane Amadi, Collins Aje, Kasope Owoaje, and others outside my label. I was excited to put a face on the people behind the screen for the first time. I was timid because I did not know much about the program, cohort members or what to expect. I knew that I needed to network with my cohort members, but starting a conversation was a bit scary for me. The venue was great, and the seating arrangements made me comfortable. The faculty guests were fantastic, and I had a great time. The entire experience gave me butterflies.”

- Collins Aje -

“Our first hybrid class gave me the motivation I needed. GT addressing us after class and welcoming us as a family made MBA more special to me. I can’t forget the advice and words of encouragement GT always shares with us whenever he is around after class.”

- Victoria Abah -

“The first hybrid class was the first time since 2019 I found myself in a classroom setting. It also came with the realisation that I was finally a student of the MBA 2023 cohort, which was made possible by VBank. The first hybrid and subsequent classes exposed me to an environment and a community filled with young, vibrant, and intelligent music business executives and enthusiasts. This was the zeal I needed to carry on with the program, as I felt there was so much to learn.”

- Inioluwa Oni -

“My first hybrid class was an interesting experience. I got to physically interact with people like Jane Amadi, Nedu, and Victoria Abah, as opposed to our previous online conversations. Seeing GT one-on-one was also a surreal moment. This experience made me feel more confident about my decision to register for MBA this year.”

- Omobolanle Abiola -

“My first hybrid class was a positive learning experience for me. I went there expecting to see my group members, Adaora Nwangwu and Akinwunmi John, and I wasn’t disappointed. I also got to meet other cohort members and put names to their faces. It was also great to finally meet GT. Following the conclusion of the live session, he said: ‘Build genuine relationships within the cohort, bring value, have a plan for yourself, and do not get carried away by the industry.’ I have held onto these words of advice ever since.”

- Adeoluwa Adegoke -

“I was excited to meet cohort members for the first time. On that day, I sat beside Jane who gave me Tom Tom. GT came by, and it was nice to meet him in person for the second time. On our way back, LASTMA arrested my friends and I. We were released after a few hours. This created a bond between us. The best part for me was putting a face to the names of the people I’d been talking to in my label and the general group.”

FACULTY GUEST QUOTES

Passion alone is not enough to establish and run a successful music business. While passion is vital, it needs to be coupled with a solid business structure.

IREDUMARE OPEYEMI

To build the industry, we must decentralize artists and center systems by building pipelines for creators.

AYO SHONAIBA

As an emerging artist, it's essential to identify your unique selling points in order to effectively connect with and sell your music to your potential audience.

ADEOLA JAIYESIMI

Everything you create qualifies as an IP

OPEYEMI IREDUMARE

The value of your Intellectual Property (IP) lies in its ability to enhance associated assets

KIKEOLA OJEWALE

The value of your Intellectual Property (IP) lies in its ability to enhance associated assets

KIKEOLA OJEWALE

Checking your endurance level is one of the crucial steps in surviving an event- how far are you willing to travel?

RUDDY KWAKYE

Be smart with sponsorships; look for what the sponsors can offer beyond monetary help.

OLADOTUN OSAFIRE

Promotional strategies have to match the image of the artist

VALENTINE NGAJI

There's an audience for any idea

BLUE HAMILTON

Whatever you want to do when you are big, start it when you are small. It builds your process

GODWIN TOM

"To even work together, make sure you align on a personal level and ensure their character is aligned with yours too."

WALE DAVIES

Promotional strategies have to match the image of the artist

VALENTINE NGAJI

Your venue serves as the canvas for your event.

RUDDY KWAKYE

Social media serves as a fast pace tool for digital marketing, and emerging artists should familiarize themselves with the best

MUSIC ALLY

That you created something doesn't mean it is successful

OPEYEMI IREDUMARE

Who do you make music for? Once you find those people they become evangelists for your song.

DEOLA A. JAIYESIMI

See Publishing as creating a pension for yourself, and play the long term game.

UZOR UWABUOFU

Be intentional with your branding, build a solid fan base

GOODNESS VICTOR

Have conversations with industry shareholders, have a structure from the beginning. When opportunities come, you will be ready.

ANTHONY EGWU

It's very important to improve the quality of your festival or events overtime to build credibility for your brands which might be a form of non-monetary ROI (Return on income)

RUDDY KWAKYE

Track your audience behavior, and build an outreach tailored to your fanbase.

SIMRANK PABLA

The Curveball Story

This is a recounting of the challenges and unexpected events that we faced as the MBA for Africa 2023 Cohort. As we reflect on these experiences, we realise that it was amidst these unexpected turns of events that our teams found their rhythm, became united, honed a collaborative spirit, and built capacity, thereby becoming able to transform obstacles into opportunities.

Welcome to the Curveball Chronicles.

“...What is my, what is my crime?” - Davido

The MBA 2023 programme commenced on 8th July 2023. Upon joining, every student was assigned to one of the 11 groups that was formed. Each group would be required to act as a simulated record label/music company. These companies would have a name, a company profile and handbook, departments and a team of executives to run its affairs.

Within a couple of weeks, team members were already giving it their all to build their companies and relationships with one another. And then the first curveball struck: All group heads (MDs) were to be removed from their groups and new MDs appointed.

Naturally, we were shaken and took to the streets of Telegram to protest the injustice, but the decision was made. In a matter of hours, MDs became ex-MDs, deposited in new groups and having to start from scratch, getting to know other members of the cohort.

But what was the lesson from this plot twist? Our founder, Godwin Tom, wanted to strengthen and build capacity among the team members because, in his words, “Leaders will always rise, regardless of the situation.”

“Who’s your guy?!” - Spyro

The Music Business Academy for Africa is designed to stretch every committed participant and help them develop capacity while learning. This means the pressure and stress from the programme is undeniable.

Not too long after the first one, there was another unforeseen instruction that plunged the cohort into chaos, but the good kind this time. We were nearly one month into the programme by this time, and people were becoming overwhelmed. Some members were contemplating deferring to the next year due to the stress. So it became important to have someone in your corner for the duration of the session.

On 1st August 2023, each person was tasked with finding an accountability partner outside of their label. Someone you could trust to reach out to when you needed encouragement or a sounding board, and vice versa.

This turned out to be one of the best plot twists in all of the programme as many meaningful relationships and partnerships sprung from this task.

“...Do you want to be the last man standing?” - TuFace Idibia

The MBA Talent Project is an initiative that’s open to artists from all over Africa to submit their works for a chance to work with the cohort of the MBA for Africa programme. At the final stage in 2023, ten artists were selected and would work with the labels on an album. Each label would sign an artist and carry out all requisite activities for an artist on its roster. The essence of this is to give the cohort as much hands-on experience as possible.

On one occasion, Godwin Tom had asked if we noticed there were 11 labels but only 10 artists to pitch to. It was a puzzle indeed. No label wanted the misfortune of not getting an artist so preparation for the artist pitch was intense.

But it was inevitable, one label wouldn’t get an artist, no matter how well they prepared. And after the results of the artist pitch were announced, the last label standing was Made of Black Music (MOB). Although other labels rejoiced for having gained an artist, it was a downer for MOB for they were yet to know what would become of their group.

After a period of waiting, they were informed by Godwin Tom that MOB would now become an acquisition company. Even though it sounded ominous to the rest of the cohort, it simply meant they would be stepping in to help any labels and departments that had difficulty keeping up with tasks.

In the end, it did not turn out as badly as it seemed from the beginning, and the label eventually received a Special Status badge at the end of the first half of the programme.

“...How much is money?” - Flavour

As the talent project progressed, the unspoken questions in the minds of many students revolved around “the budget.” Who was to know that the curveball of all curveballs was just about to hit?

On one fine day, while the cohort waited to hear back from the executives on all the requisitions for the artists, the CFO, Oluwatobiloba Adebayo had a one-on-one with Godwin Tom at the CIIFA Safehouse. There, after a breakdown of all expected costs and expected income for the talent project and an honest conversation, it became clear that the budget wasn’t cutting it.

It wasn’t the easiest news to break to the executives and, eventually, the cohort and it took a few days to adjust both expectations and plans. But in spite of this major curveball, everyone rallied around to improvise and make the most of the photoshoot and the video shoot. Label reps and cohort members pitched in to augment where and when needed, leading to a successful recording and shoot in preparation for Pepple Street.

It’s really beautiful when team spirit kicks in and people step up with determination in the face of unexpected twists and turns. And if these curveballs have done nothing else for the MBA for Africa 2023 Cohort, they have helped build capacity for the next generation of industry soldiers!

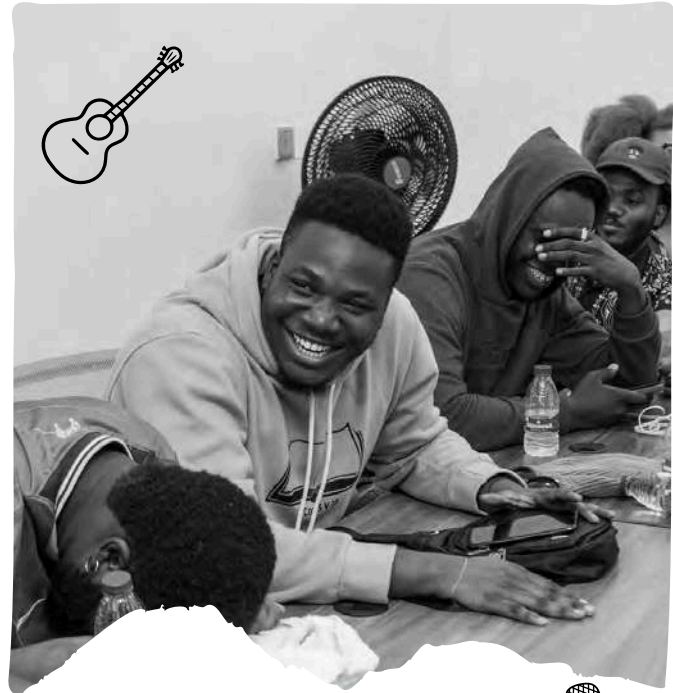


Written by: William Umoh & Praise Michael



Songwriting Camp







new
NEW YORK, TU

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scholars are given sch
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MEET THE MBA FOR AFRICA '23 ARTISTS

MBA for Africa challenged me in the best way possible, pushing me to explore new dimensions in my music.



TAMATÉ

Joining MBA for Africa is absolutely life-changing. I don't think I will ever forget it in my whole life.



WENDY KAY



MBA for Africa is a great opportunity for young artists and people who are interested in the music business to learn and know what the real world feels like.



DELA

The MBA for Africa program improved my writing style. A takeaway from my experience is the ability to work under pressure and still make magic.

MBA for Africa pushed me out of my comfort zone. I'd be walking away from the program a better person than I was when I came in.

I'll recommend the MBA for Africa program for artists so they can benefit from the privileges I enjoyed.



KVING VIDARR



WONDY



ROZZZ

I'm glad I was a part of this specific cohort. I'm grateful for the experience. Everybody has been incredible.

The MBA for Africa program has been a blessing to me. I've acquired a lot from the program and met people I want to work with in future.

At MBA for Africa, I learnt music publishing, split sheets, royalties and how to work with other creatives to achieve a goal.



DIYO MATALO



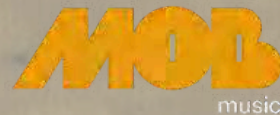
JORDANSTYLS



JENZ WILLIAMS

THE LABELS

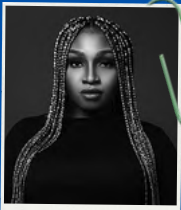
MBA for Africa is a platform dedicated to empowering the African music and entertainment industry through education, mentorships, and partnerships. Our network comprises music industry professionals from different African countries, including Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, Malawi, Tanzania, and Uganda. Last year, over 350 people from the aforementioned African countries enrolled in the program and were divided into 11 record labels. The labels were responsible for the artist development and promotion of 10 artists from different African countries, and the release of an album, *Pepple Street*.



AVANTI ENTERTAINMENT



Avanti, which is Italian for "Move Forward," is an entertainment and talent management company that envisions a dynamic and inclusive future for the African Music Industry, where the vibrant rhythms and rich diversity of cultures across Africa take centre stage. With our passion for creativity and commitment to excellence we are focused on developing and preparing young aspiring musicians for global impact.



Emmanuella Adejoh



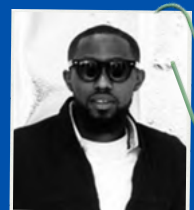
Adeola Akinsemoyin



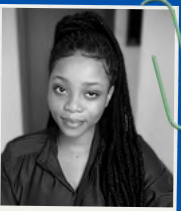
Gbenga Akinola



Glory Ekong



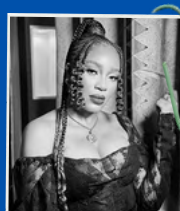
Wahab Folawiyo



Ake-Kennedy Sandra



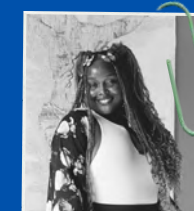
Adetunji Aramide



Nnamdi
Ugoch Melissa



Joshua Jirbo



Oyeleye Wonuola



Desmond Nwosu



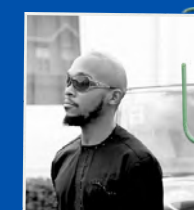
Olaniyi Balogun



Precious Udeorah



Christine Udousoro



Willin Omon



Tiffany Ngige



Oluwafijimi Adetunji



Avwersuoghene
Esosuakpo



Esther Nzenwa



Wellington Sholarin



Princess Ankomah



Emmanuel Onyekuru

EXIMIA ENTERTAINMENT



Eximia Entertainment is the exceptional label of the MBA 2023 Cohort.

Our desire as a label has been to be a pillar of stability for our artist and our community, and we work hard to make it happen.

We love learning, we're tough as nails, and we've learned to love and respect one another.

Tequila hour on us!



Felicia Elisha



Daniel Omorogbe



Akanu Lilian



Eleajo Momoh



Ibukunoluwa Ogunyemi



Yaw-Boadu Ayeboafoh



Imabong Effiong-Akpan



Ishiekwene Chris



Kachi Uba



Praise Michael



Toochukwu Igboko



William Umoh



Adedeji Ademosu



Awwal Hamza Oladimeji



Adeyemi Hastrup



Christabel Osayande



Adediran Adelekin



Giwa Emmanuela Morenikeji



Mitchelle Uzorka



Olanrewaju Kenneth



Nicole Jordan Oshilaja



Shine Amaechi



Tawose Timilehin



Wisdom Ebong



Uchenna Obi

HALO MUSIC GROUP



HALO is more than just a record label; it is a guiding light for artists, fostering a vibrant and inclusive music community. Our name, inspired by the celestial halo, represents the positive motivation we provide to artists and the symbolic connection we create among diverse talents.

We celebrate diversity, champion inclusivity, and drive positive change, making an everlasting impact on the lives of artists and the music community as a whole.



Ifiokobong Etuk



Adebolawa Abimbolu



Aiyegbeni Innocent



Chidozie Onwusoba



Christabel Uduma



Ruth Ajibodu



Chukwuma Ogbonna



David Olayiwola



Desmond Ike



Desmond Okolie



Hamid Adelabu



Nurudeen Ali Balogun



Kayode Ifeoluwakitan



Kolapo Elubipe



Rex Okiche



David Omubo



Jane Efagwu



Deji Onadeko



Tamaruakile Kelvin Amanah



Moussa Nodjina



Nora Ikemefuna



Oghenetano Oromena



Okanlawon David



Okitefre Oboho



Oluwatobi Onitimirin



Toriteseju Tuedoru



Vincent Don-Baadam



Jiire Smith



Kayode Ifeoluwakitan



KINETICS MUSIC GROUP



Kinetics is the energy of motion. Sound energy can be either kinetic energy or potential energy. An example might be that of a musical instrument. When the instrument is played, it generates sound waves, producing kinetic energy. The Kinetics Music Group is an embodiment of students from multiple walks of life, ethnicity, country and religion, who found a way to become and grow with one goal. Our collective experiences allow us to thrive differently. We leverage each other's strength and experience to develop our strategies, strengthen the brand and build on our network.



Ademola Quadri



Azikiwe Nnaemeka



Bongile Pateni



Chinomso Uduma



Chukwuemeka Yadi



Ochuko Abuwa



Collins Aje



Dorothy Otomewo



Elijah Adebajo



Edeh Promise



Ephrem Adebile



Oladosu Pamilerin



John Eradirii



Isaac
Owusu-Sekyere



Jane Amadi



Kasope Owoaje



Nduyeobong Akpan



Patrick Patrick



Akemotubo
Bulouboere Hilary



Anuoluwapo
Oyedele



Bolade Olawoye



Iyanuloluwa
John Ejioye



John Fakeye



Johnpaul Okere



Kubiati Moses



Michael Dokkey
Akpan



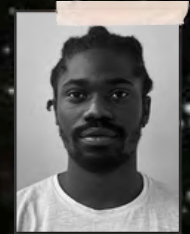
Miracle Kahuwai



Okaeme Ekene
Charles



Saaku Pev Kelvin



Tomiye Michael

MADE OF BLACK MUSIC



Founded in 2023, MOB (Made of Black) Music is a record label with a clear mission to promote and distribute African culture through music.

We embrace our core values of Innovation, Authenticity, and Unity, aiming to position African music at the forefront of the global music scene. MOB celebrates the rich heritage of Africa through innovative sounds, staying true to our roots while embracing the future. With each song, we amplify the essence of African rhythms worldwide.



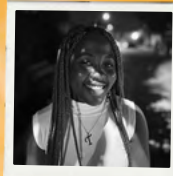
Chinedu Bright



David Mtanke



Ikuemonisan Omolola



Oluwatamilore Osho



Francis Isichei



Abiodun-Oni Oluwatobiloba



Abraham Uzoka



Adebajo Adebisi



Idorenyin Bassey



Grace Topsy John



Oyewumi Ifedayo



Inioluwa Oni



Joseph Oshiafi



Sewedo Wusa



Uthman Suleiman



Purple Goergelyn Ames



Ogoh Ogoh



Nnabuo Vincent Anthony



Kikilope Oyewumi

SIRIUS ERA



Sirius Era is an Independent Record Label built to amplify the voices of talented artists and musicians in Africa. We believe that music has the power to transcend boundaries, communicate, express emotions, touch souls, and jolt change. Our label is built on the foundation of passion, innovation, and a deep respect for artist. Through our services and we offer solutions and support to our talents to bring their dreams and vision to life.



Bolarinwa Alade



Abioye Damilare



Ella Spiffy



Funmilayo Emmanuel



Ibukun Oyinloye



Kalu IKEchukwu



Grandeur Ogbaji Pat



Isimeme Ikikhueme



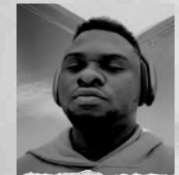
David Ashbel



Philip Osumah



Balogun Lateef



Akorede Akinmolujoye



Kelvin Ilolo



George Stephen



Abiola Adeniyi



Momanyi Ian



Chinagorom Ukachukwu



Courage Nduaguibe



Bamise Oyetayo



Dominion Osayande



Bukola Fadaini



Bege Mato



Seun Orenuga



Onah Marvel



George Eke



Alfred Obire



Abiola Adedeji



Chinedum Okerengwor



Perelade Dimanche



Kaosarat Omolade Yusuf



Gift Johnson



Adekunle Opeyemi



Michael Adebambo



Motara Thomas



Frimpong Manso



Chinedu Okafor

SOUNDWAVE RECORDS



SOUNDWAVE
RECORDS

Soundwave Records is a groundbreaking music company under MBA23 dedicated to promoting a sustainable music environment for African talents, industry professionals, and businesses.

We provide comprehensive, all-inclusive music services, spanning artist development, production, marketing, and distribution. Our mission is to empower and elevate African music to new heights, uniting cultures through the universal language of music.



Amos Timileyin Elubipe



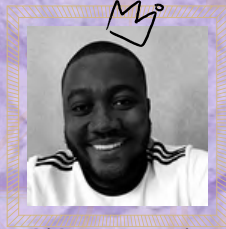
Ann Nankling Damar



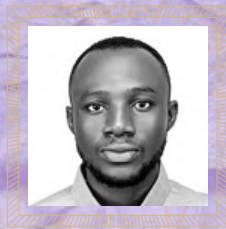
Antoinette Boama



Bamike Oba Adeyemi



Chidera Nnamani



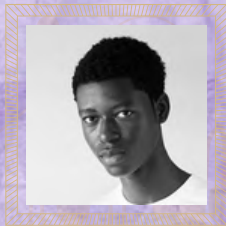
Onya Alvan
Chukwuemeka



Ginikam Igboanugo



Maryam Zaruq



Joshua Aderemi



Jesam Inah



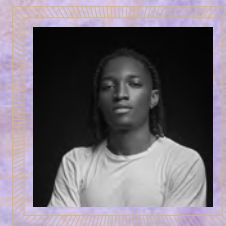
Muyiwa Adekola



Onyinye Francis



Tuebi Opukiri



Venmak Agboola



Olorunnimbe Temitope



Kema Oyih



Ekpoh Adhezo



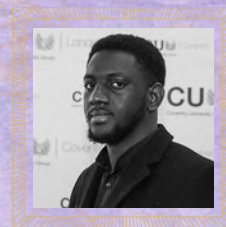
Olivia Agu



Tosin Robeck



Toluwalase Omorodion



Oladipupo Fasanya



Odohi David

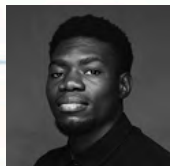


Ademola Adeyemi

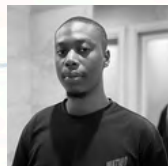


SYNERGY RECORDS

At Synergy Records, we strongly uphold the values of authenticity and uniqueness, which greatly influence our artistic direction. Our creative side is fueled by our energy and zeal to win. We are good at what we do, and we are determined to never give up!



Akinwunmi John



Enomfon Bassey



Harriet Amolo



Fortune Meremoth



Lovemore Chanza



Kelechuku Eke



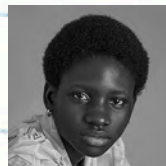
Medinat Lawal



Ndubuisi Nwaji



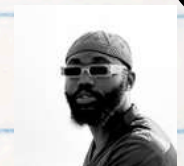
Omobolanle O. Abiola



Tejumade Akintunde



Albert Elorm Agbeshie



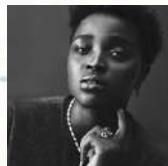
Aminu Shehu



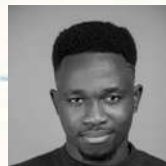
Damilare Ogunfowora



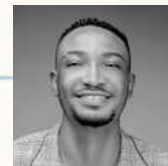
Chukwuebuka Ozomadu



Eyitemi Erewa



Durojaiye Ridwan Ademola



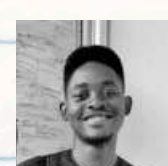
Fiyinfoluwa Faronbi



Godfred Obeng



Oluwatunmida Agunbiade



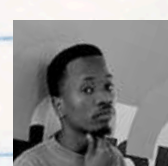
Oladunjoye Ayorinde



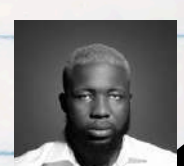
Love Nebo



Lawon Shodunke



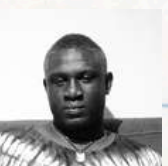
Marvellous Adesokan



Nelson Omorotionmwan



Nwuli Deborah Ofuneka



Olusegun Akinbusuyi



Oluwadamilare Odusanya

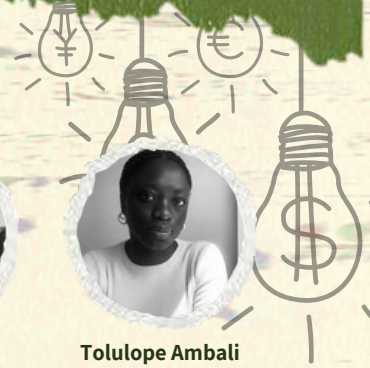
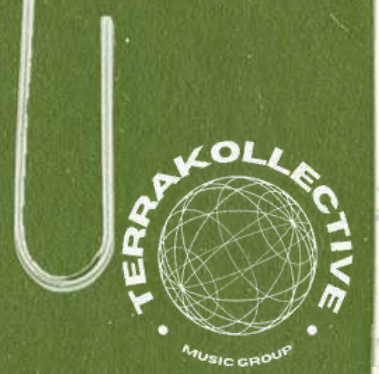


Jolly Nelson



TERRAKOLLECTIVE MUSIC GROUP

Terrakollective, at its core, thrives as a label built on the principles of collaboration, innovation and resilience. We may have taken up new functions, but our values remain the same.



Agaba Thompson



Chanda Musanya



Grace Nwaodogwu



Kelechi Azuamairo



Makinde Ayodeji



Tolulope Ambali



Olufunmilayo Ogundipe



Olumide Olaomo



Oriolowo Olumide



Reuben Iyahmah



Roni Lawson



Adeoluwa Adegoke



Andre Tcheke



Isaiah Campbell



Chanx Musa



Dike Meremoth



Isaac Nwanze



Isaiah Ogunde



Kelechi Ucheagwu



Olumide Oriolowo



Mariam Onize



Makinde Omololu



Sarah Ofonedu



Subomi Okesanya



Siena Unukogbon



Leke Adedamola



Adedoyin Odetunde

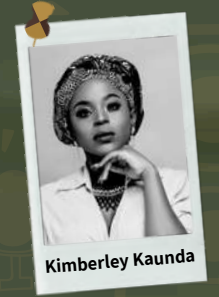
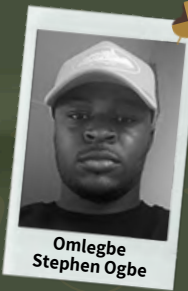


Adedoyin Farinmade

THE 5TH SPACE

With a vision to propel artists' careers through creative innovation, The 5th Street is a record label led by a dedicated team. We prioritize teamwork, embrace a student mentality, and pride ourselves in finding sustainable solutions for our artists.

Our objective is to empower underground and rising artists by assisting them in achieving breakthrough success and establishing a steady revenue stream from their music and creative endeavors.



TRIBE ORANGE



Tribe Orange is not only a record label but also an innovative and technology-driven company. We embrace the latest advancements in technology to enhance the music experience for both artists and listeners. From cutting-edge production techniques to digital distribution platforms, we strive to stay at the forefront of the ever-evolving music industry.



Abdulhafeez Muhammed



Bugo Onwuakpa



Christian Uzor



Christopher Ajieh



Dennis Annang



Rosemary Willie



Ebi Martins



Jude Osumune



Joy Wonne



Noah Okwudinfi



Queensley Okon



Stephanie Godwin



Samuel Zubair



Sandra Iviengbor



Sarah Williams Konha



Tareke Selegba



Adesuyi Olanrewaju



Taiwo Olabode



Ayodeji Ajibodu



Bem Abu



Charles Nduwuba



Chiamaka Okechukwu



Emmanuel Orilabawaye



Tochukwu Nwobodo



Eniola Banjoko



Favour Aigbe



Moyosore Ilesanmi



Olabode Noah
Osuntubo



Oluwagbemiga
Damilare Ogunlade



Sodiq Davis



Omllegbe Stephen Ogbe



JANE AMADI

MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT,
EVENTS PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT

PROJECT MANAGER



ANITA AMANGBO

MARKETING & LABEL SERVICES,
EVENTS PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT

MARKETING TEAM LEAD



DAMILOLA OMOGBAYI

MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT,
MARKETING & LABEL
SERVICES

MANAGEMENT TEAM LEAD



OLUWAKEMI FAGBORO

EVENTS PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT,
EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT

EVENTS TEAM LEAD



SAMSON ADELOWO

LEGAL DEPARTMENT,
MARKETING & LABEL
SERVICES

LEGAL TEAM LEAD



FESTUS ABOAGYE

IT & TECH DEPARTMENT,
MARKETING & LABEL
SERVICES

IT & TECH TEAM LEAD



ADAORA NWANGWU

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT,
MARKETING & LABEL
SERVICES

EDITORIAL TEAM LEAD



PRAISE MICHAEL

LEGAL DEPARTMENT,
EVENTS PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT

COMMUNICATIONS TEAM
LEAD



**OLUWATOBILOBA
ADEBAYO**

MARKETING & LABEL SERVICES,
EVENTS PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT

ASSISTANT PROJECT
MANAGER



PRECIOUS UDEORAH

MARKETING & LABEL
SERVICES, MANAGEMENT
DEPARTMENT

ASSISTANT TEAM LEAD
MARKETING



JESAM INAH

MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT,
EVENT PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT

ASSISTANT TEAM LEAD
MANAGEMENT



OWOYOMI BAMIKOLE

EVENTS PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT, MARKETING &
LABEL SERVICES

ASSISTANT TEAM LEAD EVENTS
PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT



WILLIAM UMOH

LEGAL DEPARTMENT,
EVENTS PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT

ASSISTANT TEAM LEAD
LEGAL



ADEOLA AKINSEMOYIN

MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT,
MARKETING & LABEL
SERVICES

ASSISTANT TEAM LEAD
COMMUNICATIONS



LORD JENNY

**EVENTS PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT, IT & TECH
DEPARTMENT**



FELICIA ANUOLUWAPO

**ELISHA
MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT,
EVENTS PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT**



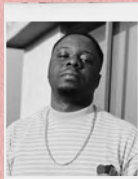
ISAAC OWUSU-SEKYERE

**MARKETING & LABEL
SERVICES, MANAGEMENT
DEPARTMENT**



MIKE AMPONSAH

**MANAGEMENT
DEPARTMENT, MARKETING &
LABEL SERVICES**



AYOMIDE ADETOMIWA

**MARKETING & LABEL
SERVICES, MANAGEMENT
DEPARTMENT**



IKUEMONISAN OMOLOLA

**EVENTS PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT, LEGAL
DEPARTMENT**



IBUKUN OYINLOYE

**MANAGEMENT
DEPARTMENT, MARKETING
& LABEL SERVICES**



TIFFANY NGIGE

**MARKETING & LABEL
SERVICES, MANAGEMENT
DEPARTMENT**



OLUMIDE OLAOMO

**MARKETING & LABEL
SERVICES, MANAGEMENT
DEPARTMENT**



SANDRA IVIENAGBOR

**MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT,
MARKETING & LABEL
SERVICES**



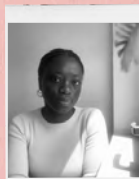
OMOBOLANLE O. ABIOLA

**LEGAL DEPARTMENT,
EDITORIAL
DEPARTMENT**



ELEOJO MOMOH

**MARKETING & LABEL
SERVICES, EDITORIAL
DEPARTMENT**



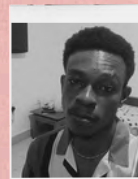
TOLULOPE AMBALI

**MANAGEMENT
DEPARTMENT, MARKETING
& LABEL SERVICES**



AKANU LILIAN

**EVENTS PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT, MARKETING &
LABEL SERVICES**



KELECHI AZUAMAIRO

**EVENTS PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT, MANAGEMENT
DEPARTMENT**



CHINASA CASMIR

**LEGAL DEPARTMENT,
EDITORIAL
DEPARTMENT**



GLORY EKONG

**EVENTS PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT, MARKETING &
LABEL SERVICES**



DEBORAH NWULI

**MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT,
EVENTS PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT**



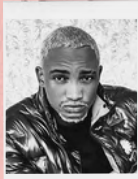
EYITEMI EREWA

**MARKETING & LABEL SERVICES,
EVENTS PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT**



ENOMFON BASSEY

**MARKETING & LABEL
SERVICES, MANAGEMENT
DEPARTMENT**



**FIYINFOLUWA
ADEDAMOLA FARONBI**

**EVENTS PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT, MARKETING &
LABEL SERVICES**



LOVEMORE CHANZA

**MARKETING & LABEL
SERVICES, MANAGEMENT
DEPARTMENT**



ADIMCHINOBI UGOCHUKWU

**MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT,
MARKETING & LABEL
SERVICES**



OSATO OSAWAYE

**MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT,
EVENTS PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT**



DESMOND NWOSU

**MANAGEMENT
DEPARTMENT, IT &
TECH DEPARTMENT**



CHRISTIAN UZOR

**MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT,
MARKETING & LABEL SERVICES**



TAREKE SELEGHA

**MANAGEMENT
DEPARTMENT, MARKETING
& LABEL SERVICES**



OLUWAFIJIMI ADETUNJI

**MARKETING & LABEL
SERVICES, MANAGEMENT
DEPARTMENT**

THE RISE OF AFROBEATS: ITS INFLUENCE ON THE GLOBAL MUSIC SCENE

In recent years, Afrobeats has emerged as a transformative force in the global music industry. Hailing from West Africa, this genre is celebrated for its captivating rhythms, rich melodies, and a unique blend of various cultural influences. Pioneered by artists from Nigeria, Ghana, and beyond, Afrobeats merges traditional African musical elements with global sounds, appealing to a diverse international audience.

The influence of Afrobeats is notably evident through its collaborations with global music icons. Nigerian sensation Burna Boy's work with British singer Jorja Smith on *Gum Body* exemplifies the genre's global resonance. Additionally, collaborations such as *One Dance* by Wizkid and Drake, and *Blow My Mind* by Davido featuring Chris Brown, further highlight the cross-continental appeal of Afrobeats. These partnerships have not only broadened the genre's audience but also showcased its versatility and adaptability to various musical styles.

Beyond music, Afrobeats has made significant inroads into fashion, dance, and popular culture. Viral dance challenges, driven by tracks like Master KG's *Jerusalema* and Zlatan Ibile's *Zanku*, have dominated social media platforms, illustrating Afrobeats' massive cultural impact. Moreover, artists such as Wizkid and Burna Boy have transcended their musical achievements to become fashion icons, blending traditional African aesthetics with contemporary global fashion trends.

Afrobeats' ascent to the global stage is a testament to the power of cultural exchange and the enduring appeal of music that transcends geographic and linguistic barriers. Its ability to continuously evolve and influence various aspects of global culture suggests that Afrobeats is not merely a passing trend but a significant, enduring phenomenon in the worldwide music landscape.

As Afrobeats continues to shape the future of music, it underscores the importance of embracing diverse cultural expressions and the potential for innovative collaborations that bridge different worlds. Its journey from West African origins to global acclaim exemplifies the unifying power of music, making Afrobeats a compelling subject of study and appreciation in the ever-evolving narrative of global music trends.



JANE AMADI



INTERVIEW: KENYAN STUDENT, MARLENE BETT ON HER EXPERIENCE DURING THE MBA FOR AFRICA PROGRAMME

BY: ADAORA NWANGWU



If Marlene could describe herself in five words, those words would be “creative problem solver” and “project manager”. Hailing from Kenya, Marlene Bett dived into the music business because she discovered her interest in artist management at a young age. While in university, she was surrounded by people in the music scene and volunteered at various events across Nairobi. This allowed her to explore many events, meet different people, and work with Kenyan musician, creative entrepreneur, and founder of Blankets and Wine Festival, Muthoni Drummer Queen, for four years. Afterwards, she slowly started to discover her passion — problem-solving. Some of the roles she uses to solve problems include project management, artist liaison, music video producer and residency producer.

Marlene discovered the MBA for Africa programme through her close friend, Jackie, one of the top 10 students of the 2022 session. She tells us about her experience enrolling for the programme and working with members from other African countries.

“My MBA experience, like everybody else's, was very complex. It was thrilling, exciting, educational, tough, and fun.”

She continues, “But I'm a huge believer in net positive experiences, and this is one of those. I don't think I knew I'd be working with people from different backgrounds. So I hadn't anticipated the cultural and language differences. I don't mean language in the sense of a specific spoken language, even though that's part of it. But like the mannerisms and the behaviours. It was fun, though. It's given me a lot of context for future endeavors. MBA for Africa is unique in the sense that it gives you access to many different people who have similar interests, passions, and goals and understand you in a way that your friends don't really do.”

Marlene recalls a moment in the MBA for Africa programme that stood out for her.

“Every time I think about MBA, I think back to the time when GT was onboarding the executives. He was laughing, telling us ‘You have problems ahead.’ And we were like, ‘Of course’. He said, ‘Choose people to help you, choose your deputies wisely because you're going to need the help.’ It seems to me like he knew what he was talking about. There was a lot of stress. Even if we had known how much was ahead, I don't think we could have prepared for that. But again, I am a big problem

solver. So it was just another set of problems for my brain to solve.”

Oftentimes, creatives trying to enter the music industry do so with no prior knowledge of how the industry works. Plus, there aren't a lot of programmes in Africa teaching emerging creatives about the African music industry and the business side of it. Marlene thinks the MBA for Africa programme is relevant in the African music business and recommends this programme to Kenyans who are trying to get into the music business.

“I'd say, be clear on the reason for joining the program. Don't just do it for the sake of doing it. I can only speak about my experience because it's the only one I've lived. Early last year, I was looking for some answers. I had gotten to this point in my career where I had done so many things. Now I want to focus, but I don't know how to figure out what to focus on. And so I had a clear set of questions that I needed to answer:; what do I want to do next? What ignites my passion? What do I want to pursue again? For me, the experience ended up being worthwhile, because they were in the context of the questions that I wanted to answer. And I'm not saying that somebody needs to come here with all these questions. But whatever reason you come into the programme for, be clear, and pursue everything within the context of MBA for Africa.”

As a music creative or executive, building a community is very important. Oftentimes, faculty guests encourage the cohort to build a community. To Marlene, having the cohort grouped into labels, the accountability partner system, and being a part of the executive team helped to provide a sense of community.

A few weeks into the program, Marlene was the Chief Executive Officer of Halo Music Group before GT's curveball pushed her to Terrakollective where she was the welfare rep. A few weeks later, she became the Chief Administrative Officer of the MBA for Africa 2023 cohort. For her, handling the role was “confusing, fun, exciting and exhausting. But in the end, there were a lot more positives than negatives.”



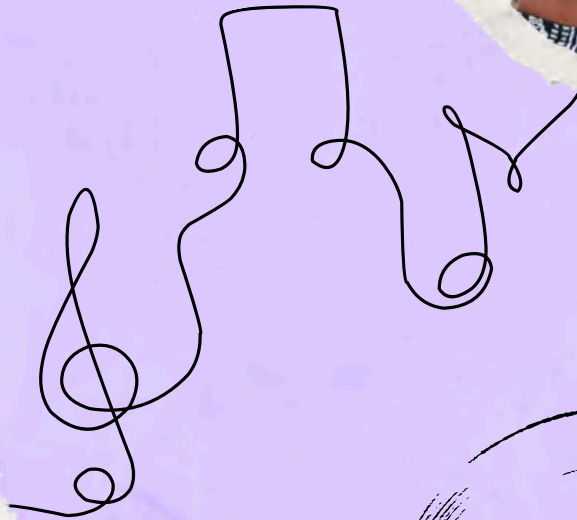
Measuring her team's success, she says:

“It depends on the metric we're talking about. On teamwork, we were hundred percent solid. We always leaned on each other. I think we did really well with the tools, resources, information and knowledge we had at the time. But in terms of boundaries, we failed. Maybe not everybody failed, but I know I definitely failed in my intention to set clear boundaries for myself on work, life and everything. We could have done better with our boundaries like, not having meetings until 2am on a consistent basis. We consistently kind of took on more than we could handle.”

Closing the interview, Marlene leaves some advice for the next cohort:

“Be intentional and clear with what you can or you can't do. That has to do in part with boundaries, and in part with knowing yourself. I absolutely believe in trying new things. But if you're trying, be clear that it's an effort you're making and if it fails, it's also okay. Set realistic expectations for yourself. Do your best with the time you have here and let that be enough. And just know you did your best.”

This interview has been slightly edited for clarity.



INTERVIEW: IREDUMARE OPEYEMI ON HIS BACKGROUND, TECHNOLOGICAL PARTNERS AND BUILDING A COMMUNITY IN THE LEGAL ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

BY: OMOLADE YUSUF



It's not every day you meet a man that's considered successful who's also down-to-earth, friendly, and...nice. But that's Iredumare Opeyemi, an Intellectual Property lawyer who is well-known in the music industry.

Iredumare spent his childhood in different parts of Lagos. From Ikeja to Ajegunle and Mushin, these different environments and the music in them - Highlife, Fuji, Gospel - influenced his taste in music.

The wealth of music knowledge he acquired growing up contributed to the growth he brought to Boomplay, an African streaming platform with the highest African catalogue. Having signed talents who specialised in Afrobeats, Gospel, Apala and Fuji, Opeyemi ventured into founding Digital Music Commerce and Exchange, a company that specialises in intellectual property products creation, management, valuation, administration, and exploitation. Thanks to his culturally and musically vast background, Opeyemi has been able to work with and represent talents from different genres and styles like Teni, Sarz, and K-1.

Iredumare loves to invest in people. This enthusiasm influenced his decision to be a faculty guest on the MBA for Africa programme. For him, it is an opportunity to exchange knowledge, teach people and tell them about the possibilities and opportunities within the continent. On what stood out about the cohort, he points out the inquisitive nature and the increase in the number of women in the programme. Iredumare views the programme as a stepping stone for emerging entertainment lawyers as it will help them “navigate the complexities of the creative industries, especially film and music.”

One of the core values at MBA for Africa is community. On the legal side of the entertainment industry, though, community building happens differently due to confidentiality agreements. As our guest says, “In recent times, lawyers are collaborating with each other...but when it comes to legal matters in the creative space, it's very dicey. Yes, you want to build a community and you want to share knowledge but there are confidentiality requirements you also have to uphold while doing that. Lawyers don't really practise in this space where they can share information with each other or discuss their experiences.”

In 2015, Iredumare co-founded Technolawgical Partners, an entertainment law firm that provides legal support to creatives and

businesses. “I started the law firm in 2015. We just wanted to be lawyers who cared and that's just the truth. We wondered, Why can't our music go to global spaces? Why can't people run record labels well? Why are artists treated this way? How can we fight piracy? We just wanted to make a difference and do things well. So we started a law firm that was focused on creative industrial tech.”

Another way Iredumare contributes to the music industry is by working with the American Music Business Community whom he encouraged to invest in local African music and its infrastructure, and he explains the results of this:

“The reason why most of you are at MBA for Africa is because you see the prospects, the companies coming into the country, the job roles that are opening, and talent they're confident enough to manage. This is the ripple effect of what I went to do four years ago... where you go out to tell people to come to your market. And as they're coming to your market, you develop your people to be able to take up the jobs, and be functional enough to be able to be competitive with their counterparts in the global space. Those investments are what gets people jobs at Empire, ONErpm, Boomplay, Audiomack, Warner Music, Spotify, Virgin Music, and United Masters.”

In September 2023, Iredumare launched his first book, ‘Music Commerce in Africa,’ to share his knowledge on wealth creation and redistribution. This is another contribution of his to community building. Iredumare is also a member of the Recording Academy where he uses his voice to influence culture and push African music.

Amongst his significant achievements, Opeyemi is especially proud of “raising \$20 million for the first Africa-focused DSP, Boomplay” and helping to fight for fair compensation for producers through Greenlight Music Publishing (GLMP).

In summary, we could agree that solving people's problems makes Iredumare happy. And he closed the interview with one word for emerging creatives and lawyers, “Read.”

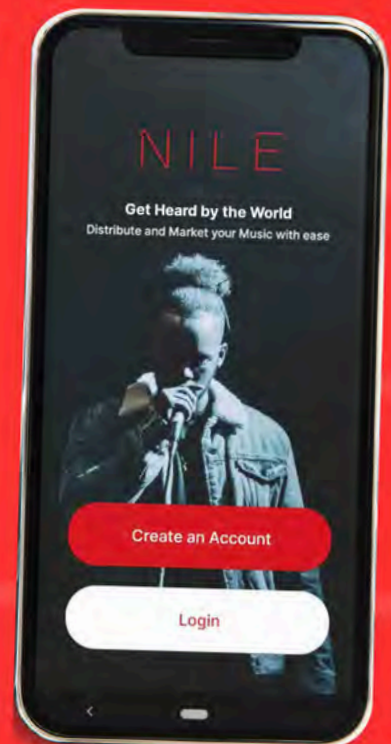


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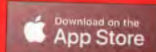
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UZOR DANIEL ON HIS JOURNEY IN THE MUSIC BUSINESS AND BUILDING A COMMUNITY IN THE PUBLISHING INDUSTRY

BY: ADAORA NWANGWU



It's no news that many people in the Nigerian music industry did not start by studying music-related courses in university. The same rings true for Delta-born Uzor Daniel, who studied Industrial Chemistry at the University of Benin. Uzor started as a drummer and guitarist in church and later delved into the music business. His experience in artiste management motivated him to transition into music publishing.

Taking his love and curiosity for the music business to the next level, Uzor joined the Music Business Academy for Africa programme in 2021. "I got into the MBA for Africa programme to improve my general knowledge of the music business and find other areas of interest. I had prior knowledge of intellectual property before joining the programme," Uzor says. "During the programme, I delved into the publishing area because while managing different artists, I set up royalty accounts with them and interacted with other artists about their intellectual property during music creation. What caught my attention the most in the program were intellectual property, management, exploitation, copyrights, publishing, and all the facets that surround it."

Uzor graduated as one of the top 50 students in his cohort. Given the programme's intensity, this is a tremendous accomplishment. He believes that being present throughout the programme, asking helpful questions, and engaging in the majority of the activities relevant to his role won him a spot in the Top 50. It's no surprise that he was invited back to mentor our cohort.

"It feels good to be called back to the same place you learned, to impact other people. It shows noticeable progress in my career. I enjoyed speaking and listening to the students. I also learnt from them."

On what he observed about the 2023 cohort, Uzor says, "Curiosity is at its peak. You guys are eager to learn, work, and improve yourselves. But I'd say that while this generation endeavours to build their skill and strength in their area of expertise, they should also build character. Skills can build a house, but a bad character can tear it down in a night. As you learn in the program, build good relationships with your friends and acquaintances. Ensure you're walking out of this programme with not only the knowledge but also good relationships, better community, and name."

In the MBA for Africa programme, the founder, Godwin Tom, frequently advises the cohort to form a community. Community is important for success, and Uzor emphasizes the need for community building in the publishing sector, as well as how the programme fosters that sense of community for its students.

"The different facets of the entertainment industry are interrelated. You deal with copyrighting, lawyers, managers, and, to some extent, marketers. You're constantly interacting with different people. It's a general music industry benefit you get when you take the MBA for Africa program. The good thing about the MBA program is it is designed for people in your active industry."

Landing the role of Manager of Admin and Sync at Sony Music Publishing, Nigeria, West Africa means Uzor has applied key lessons from the MBA for Africa programme in his career, which is evident in the way he speaks about navigating the Publishing industry and working in the Music business.

"I'm a business person today because the industry teaches you what works in different areas and how to apply what I learnt in publishing. I didn't just utilize what I learned in publishing. But I also applied the personality traits I learned from the people I met during the programme and from Godwin, who has impacted my career."

From an industry key player point of view, Uzor makes an interesting observation on the need for industry professionals to get more hands-on training on the intricacies of the music business.

"Those who create and use music need to be educated. When I say education, I'm talking about understanding the revenue process your IP generates and how to make a good forecast."



As a movie executive or an audiovisual expert, you need to understand how to license music properly. As a manager, how to negotiate, and as a lawyer, how to advocate, solicit, when to set out a motion, and properly represent the life and the assets of the talent you're working with. You need to ask yourself, how does this benefit the artists in the next five to ten years? Would this artist lose their IP rights over time? Will they be able to pay back whatever they've been paid in advance? Are all the music creatives earning from the music I'm using? Are the right parties being paid? Is it properly being cleared? As an artist, before you sign anything, get a good lawyer who'll help you read this contract. As a producer or writer, when you go into a session with someone, have your terms outlined. One of the issues we're trying to solve in several scenarios is people going into transactions with the mentality of friendliness. Godwin will always say contracts are for clarity and not out of mistrust. We need to understand the need to put pen to paper when making any transaction in the music industry. So that tomorrow, no one will misunderstand your choices."

He further highlights the importance of education as a step in the right direction and how a programme like the MBA for Africa, which offers a great headstart in the music industry, needs more support.

"I'm not quick to say every wrongdoing is from the point of bad character or personal sabotage. I'll say that if people understand what they should do, they will do better. So the first thing I think is education. Programmes like MBA for Africa that educate people should get more support from the government and investors. Especially programmes that their founders have the right vision to really impact, like the MBA for Africa founder. You see it when you interact with Godwin. Programmes like these need to get funded because when they're supported, more people can learn at cheaper rates. They can do more at subsidised fees, promote more, and include their curriculum in universities and organisations."

As a part of his contribution to the development and expansion of the West African publishing industry, Uzor is dedicated to fostering and supporting the proper education and development of songwriters and publishing stakeholders.

"As a fuller unit, we aim to tell writers the truth about the reality of the business. We've engaged in many interactive sessions where Godwin, the team, and I educate writers on the true value of their IPs and to be wary of sugar-coated deals. We're also focusing on developing writers. Over the past year, we've signed a couple of emerging writers in Ghana, Nigeria, and Tanzania. And we're increasing that number. While we are focused on onboarding the heavy catalogues, we also focus on building

the future. To build the future, you have to work with the people who are not at the top now because they are the ones who will be at the top in the future."

Explaining the need for emerging professionals in the music industry to delve into the publishing aspects of the music business, Uzor identifies IP theft as one of the most rampant problems.

"Most people have top organisations that collect royalties for them when they can do it themselves. Most writers sign away their composition when it should be treated as a separate entity from their recording and Masters. So, if more people tell the truth about IP and the publishing business, we'll have a healthier industry. Another area I think people need to put in more effort is in our CMOs. Currently, our CMOs are not properly functioning. That's why, as a Nigerian artist, you've probably not made enough money from international exploitation. In an ideal world, when your music is used on radio, TV, clubs, and the gym, you should be paid revenue. So, I think one of the areas that we need to put more effort into is IP protection, valuation, and representation. This ensures that writers and producers have the proper royalty accounts to collect their royalties on a basic level before discussing dealing with majors. You don't really have to be a lawyer to do publishing or IP. You have to study, learn, understand it to an extent, and use it as it applies to your industry."

The Music Business for Africa curriculum has an extensive alumni network. Uzor is an MBA for Africa alumnus who is making significant career progress in the music industry. He concludes this conversation with the following advice to the members of the 2023 cohort:

"Whatever you do, be true to yourself. If you engage in work you aren't good at, you frustrate the business. Do what you are interested in and put your mind to it. If after the programme music will not work, look for what works for you. If you want to be a music business lawyer, be your best and be true to your clients always. This is because you are learning the business so you can help the industry. So learn well, build long-term relationships, value friendship with dissent, be respectful, have patience, and love one another."

This interview has been slightly edited for clarity.





PEPPLE STREET LISTENING PARTY

INTERVIEW: PANJI ANOFF ON CONTRIBUTING TO THE GHANIAN ECONOMY AND COMMUNITY BUILDING IN THE AFRICAN MUSIC INDUSTRY

BY: MICHAEL AMPONSAH



For this interview, Panji dons a black and white striped 'batakari', a kind of handmade smock made in Ghana. His hair is in cornrows and there are black headphones around his head. Seated on a cream-colored couch positioned against a brick wall, he looks directly into the camera as he speaks about the 'batakari' and purchasing them as one of his contributions to alleviate poverty. He says—

"I'm very intentional about batakari because I realised we can transform African economies simply by investing in the economies. With 'batakari', the thread is woven locally. The best 'batakari' is made from tree cotton. So you spin tree cotton into thread, dye it, weave it and then you make an outfit out of it. So when I buy a 'batakari', I know that most of my money is not only going to support indigenous families and businesses, but that money is also going to remain primarily here in Ghana. So the way in which I can eradicate poverty in my own country is by buying the products that the people make."

Panji Anoff is very deliberate about boosting the Ghanaian economy. He has gone the extra mile by collaborating with King Ayisoba for Batakari Festival, an event that unites many Ghanaian batakari designers and producers to showcase their goods. In Panji's opinion, "eradication of poverty doesn't require complex formulas, it just requires us to purchase what is produced locally."

But the Ghanaian economy is not the only thing Panji is invested in. Panji is focused on fostering relationships and community growth. He lives by the code: one plus one equals infinity. At first, it may seem difficult to understand because universally and mathematically, one plus one is two. But Panji has a different perspective. He explains his ideology,

"I see it very much from a human point of view. Perhaps it is true that mathematically, one plus one is two, but mathematics is an arbitrary set of rules, which applies to certain circumstances. Let's say I generate \$1,000 a year and my friend who is running his company also generates \$1,000 a year. However, the two of us have different strengths. Perhaps my strengths are in marketing and promotion, and his strengths are in administration and accounting. If he and I form a partnership, our revenue will quickly increase to \$10,000 a year. Because we compensate for each other, and we inspire each other, we therefore grow faster as

an entity. Which means \$5,000 for each of us. So whenever human beings work together, one plus one makes you think there's no point in working with my partner or my colleague. Because at the end of the day, we will end up with two, and when we share it, we have one each."

Forging relationships and building a community is an important aspect of the journey in the music industry. At the MBA for Africa programme, mentors advise students to form relationships with their peers and build a community. Panji gives an insight on how people can achieve that.

"I think the most important thing is to start with those you already know and grow outward," Panji counsels. "Be honest, genuine, grateful, and thankful for every opportunity people give you and your network will grow."

The founder of MBA for Africa, Godwin Tom, and Panji Anoff have known each other well through a mentor-mentee relationship that has lasted many years. Reminiscing on their conversations about Godwin Tom's dreams and plans, Panji expresses that "it is incredibly rewarding to see an idea that somebody and I spoke about five, eight, ten years ago, come to life."

Panji emphasises the necessity of the MBA for Africa programme saying, "We cannot teach many people quickly enough to harness all the talent that we have in Africa, if we had to do it on a one-on-one basis. We need to find a method of trying to get knowledge and shortcuts from those who have experience from struggling to make it in the system so that the next generation can avoid our mistakes. So this is a conversation Godwin Tom and I had had on more than one occasion. We spoke about our experiences, learnt from each other and found ways to apply shortcuts or hacks. Now there is an MBA for Africa, and someone who's interested in entering the entertainment space can learn as much as they can in nine months."

Aside from mentoring GT, Panji is also a faculty guest speaker at the MBA for Africa programme.



On what motivated him to work with Godwin Tom, he tells us, “So, I learned a lot from Godwin Tom because of his management style and the way he was helping artists move their careers from point A to B to C to D in relatively short periods of time. Because really, in order for something to be successful, it's either got to be a habit or a system. So you can create good habits in yourself or put a system in place that you must abide by. If you don't have either of these two in place, it's actually quite difficult to make a success out of some.

“When I was trying to learn about management, there was no school or any one I could meet and talk to, it was difficult. I mean, I had to establish friendships with mentors in the industry. I had to find them one by one by one by one. So when Godwin Tom spoke about trying to build an academy for music professionals and putting them all in the same space, I thought, I would like to be a part of it. I've already learned quite a lot from Godwin. And, I would be happy to contribute to any space that allows people to speak with professionals in the field that they want to grow in. So that they can learn from our mistakes.”

While community building is great, Panji highlights a few challenges that could affect community growth. He believes Africans are competing with one another instead of competing against the whole world. In his words,

“We should collaborate, and not see each other as competition. We should see the world as our competition, and it takes teamwork. Competition is not healthy. Very often, there is a lot you can learn from the people around you if you don't see them as your competition or your enemies. I'm not saying you should copy them. But you can learn the essence of what they are doing that is enabling them perhaps to achieve certain things. So when you see success, celebrate it. Because success everywhere is opening doors for you. In order to be the best you have to learn from everywhere. We can learn something very useful or valuable from every musician who is successful in any genre.”

Fela is one of the biggest and most influential Afrobeat artists. A movement he started with his drummer Tony Allen has evolved into Afrobeats and gained recognition on the global stage. On the difference between Afrobeat and Afrobeats, Panji says;

“I think we shouldn't put Afrobeat and Afrobeats together because they are two very different things. What they have in common is what we call “as)kp)”. It kind of drives Afrobeats in the same way that it drove Afrobeat. I think Tony Allen deserves a lot of credit for bringing that as)kp) or kpanlogo beat into Fela's music, as his collaborator and as his drummer for so many years. Tony Allen spoke fluent Ga, because his mother was Ghanaian. Afrobeat is mostly associated with Fela, even though I feel there are also other bands like Johnny Astro, MonoMono

that were doing interesting things around the same time. However, Fela will remain, perhaps, its most well known advocate. Afrobeats for me is an umbrella term for everything, or for all the pop music that young Africans are producing today. So, in the way I understand Afrobeats, Hip life, Afropop, Amapiano is a small part of Afrobeats. So Afrobeats is a huge umbrella term that is all-embracing.”

As we wrap up our discussion, Panji addresses the divide between Africans in Africa and Africans in diaspora. For him, the Pan-African dream is a reality.

“The Pan-African dream is already a reality. When I say I'm going to watch an African movie, everybody assumes it's Nollywood. So where film is concerned, Nollywood has redefined African cinema. If I say I'm into Afrobeats, I could be referring to Tanzania, Nigeria, or Cameroon. When I talk about football, Africans and people in the diaspora will support Nigeria if they reach the semi-finals of the World Cup. So, when it comes to the things that truly matter— film, music, sports, Africans have been united for a long time. Politics doesn't really matter. We can't take the blame for our politicians being unable to truly feel the pulse of the people. As artists, creatives, athletes, sportsmen, footballers, we are doing our best to unite the African continent. So, it's up to the politicians to follow us. If they wouldn't follow us, it doesn't actually matter, because they cannot separate us. So we have done our job. It's the politicians that haven't done theirs.”

This interview has been slightly edited for clarity.



INTERVIEW: OLADOTUN OSAFILE ON HER BACKGROUND, TITANIUM PRODUCTIONS AND COMMUNITY BUILDING IN THE EVENTS INDUSTRY

BY: ADAORA NWANGWU



Although Oladotun Osafile initially set her sights on studying law or business administration at Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Destiny had other plans. After taking the JAMB exams, she was offered admission for drama and dramatic arts instead. Embracing this unexpected turn, Oladotun discovered her passion for technical theatre, a realization that led her to forsake her original plan of retaking the examination for her initially chosen courses. Her journey through the world of creative arts became more than just about accepting her course but finding her calling within it.

Many years later, Oladotun, now a seasoned Events, Projects and Production Manager, owns her production company. She has come a long way from the newly minted OAU graduate who started out as a lighting operator. Naturally, as one of our favourite faculty guests, we decided to catch up with Oladotun to talk about her journey, the events and production industry, and discuss the crucial role of community within the industry.

Oladotun Osafile met the founder of the MBA for Africa programme, Godwin Tom, over eight years ago when she worked at Eko Hotel. When he approached her to be a faculty guest at MBA, she accepted. Because aside from her relationship with him, she felt his plans were excellent, and her teachings would make a difference. Oladotun believes the MBA programme is valuable for emerging professionals in different parts of the music industry.

On her observation about the MBA 2023 cohort, she says they have a “willingness to learn.” She would be able to recognise this because she has built relationships with some of the programme alumni through consultation and collaboration, and those relationships “have become very profitable to me both personally and professionally.”

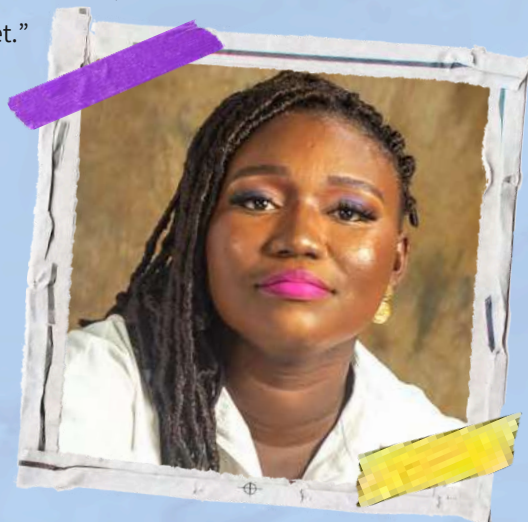
Oladotun tells us about starting her production company, Titanium Productions, after leaving Eko Hotels. The company specialises in sound, lights, screen, staging and other events-related administrative work. In the midst of all this, she uses Titanium to build a community in the events industry.

“What works for me is, I don't have anybody on my payroll. So, if I have an

event and need a sound person, based on the financial strength of that event, I know who I'm speaking to. Based on the size of the event, the financial capability of the event promoter, and the skills of all my suppliers, I know who to speak to. So, if my client needs a sound person, I know who to call. If my sound person has a client who needs a production manager, they know they can call me. It's not about a contract, though there has to be a contract. It's about personal relationships, conversations, and communities that I have been able to build. So all of the suppliers and other individuals that I work with operate on a personal level, and we leverage our relationships to build communities to help each other get businesses and work together in the industry.”

It's the people that make up a community. Oladotun emphasises the role of the audience in community building and how social media can be used to grow an audience. She says,

“Having an audience is the best way to build a community. The easiest way to build an audience right now is social media. Consistently putting out content from your events is a way to build an audience following. Another thing is ensuring you are curating quality events that don't need to be expensive. You don't need to have the best of everything. But then, what are the key things that audience members are looking for at events? They want to enjoy it, they want to be safe, comfortable and want to know that their needs are met.”



To satisfy our curiosity about the skills needed for the events industry, Oladotun tells us how important proper and thorough planning is in events management and production.

Starting a career in events management requires project management skills and having knowledge about everything within your scope.

“The first and probably the most important skill is project management,” Oladotun tells us. “Another major skill is communication because the job requires interacting with different people on different levels. For example, there are drivers, sound techs, promoters, and artists of different calibres. You have to know who you're dealing with and how to communicate with them. You also need to have good interpersonal skills.”

The events industry has been male-dominated for a long time. As a woman in this space, it can be daunting. Though Oladotun thinks that women would have to work harder to be respected, she believes that there are cultural and societal factors that contribute to this reality, and people are now becoming more open to women in the events industry.

“I agree that as a woman, you have to do a bit more for people to take you seriously and respect you. But it's more of a cultural and societal factor than the people in the industry themselves. I'll give you an example. Most of the work in the live events industry requires you to be out late. If you're preparing for a concert, 99.9% of the time, you're setting up overnight. For financial reasons, accommodation is not readily available, because the guys who are riggers and setup crew, are happy to sleep on a bail of clothes or in a truck. But as a woman doing that kind of job, your employer will want to provide you with some kind of comfort. That makes it a bit difficult to go very far because you end up being more expensive to work with than the men would be. When I started, I had to prove myself more to clients than to industry colleagues. So, it's the clients that you have to convince more that you can do your job. But these days, clients are more accepting of everybody and are starting to realise that women are here to stay. The men in the industry are quite welcoming and want you to succeed.”

As Oladotun plans to expand her clientele and explore more education and consulting, she is open to collaborations with emerging event producers who are creative and have access to audiences.

For aspiring professionals who aim to grow in events management within the music industry, Oladotun shares some final words.

Find somewhere to intern, whether it's a TV or in theatre production or conferences, and learn on the job. The money is going to be horrible if you get paid at all. But the experience and contacts that you will get will last a lifetime. Network and work with your peers because that is where your potential clientele in the future will come from. Make sure that you put yourself out there and talk about what you do. The good thing with social media is, you can use it to remind people of who you are and what you do.”

This interview has been slightly edited for clarity.



INTERVIEW: GHANAIAN STUDENT, DENNIS ANNANG SHARES HIS EXPERIENCE DURING THE MBA FOR AFRICA PROGRAMME

BY: CHINASA CASMIR



“Dennis is a result-oriented guy who likes to complete tasks. He’s also a fun and interesting guy who is often rational and works too hard.” Ghanaian student, Dennis Annang describes himself.

Like many students curious about the music business, Dennis took the MBA for Africa 2023 programme. According to him, the programme helped shed light on a few ideas he knew and allowed him to apply and practice what he had learned in real life. In addition, the programme gave him the opportunity to work with people from different backgrounds, making him realize the power of teamwork.

What was it like working with people from other African countries?

“Most of my group members were Nigerians. Perhaps the pidgin didn’t get to me because in Ghana, we also speak pidgin a lot. So it wasn't too challenging. I had to go with the flow because I realized most of them speak a lot of pidgin. They nicknamed me the pastor in the group because I wanted the conversations to be a little formal, but I eventually had to go with the flow.”

Based on your experience, would you recommend the program to Ghanaians?

“Yes, I’d definitely recommend it to anyone across the world. I've already done that. My friends have shown interest and are probably just waiting for the official announcement before they register.”

For Dennis, the MBA for Africa program is a “solution” to the African music business. His biggest takeaway from the program is the Zoom classes with faculty guests. He says that they made the learning experience exciting and helped him understand how the real world works.

MBA for Africa founder, Godwin Tom and other faculty guests often encourage the cohort members to build communities. According to Dennis, aside from the main label groups, the cohort members from Ghana also came together. He also knows a few Nigerians he can

rely on whenever he is in the country. Dennis believes his experience at Tribe Orange was fun from the moment he joined the Telegram group and everyone was ready to help. He recalls a specific moment when he joined the program late and had to read over 2000 messages. A few people reached out to him to keep him up to date with group activities he missed.

Dennis went from being a regular student in the label to becoming the Label Services Team Lead. He was happy that the CEO trusted them to do their work properly. He recalls brainstorming ideas to help other label mates and collaborating with his team to get work done. One of the challenges he faced was distance. Living in Ghana prevented him from carrying out most of the work. But he trusted his team members to get work done. Another challenge was adjusting to using Telegram to communicate with team members. He made a point of remembering to use the platform and read any messages that he missed.

Despite these challenges, the highlights during Dennis' time at Tribe Orange were the virtual game nights they had on Thursdays at 8 pm and the accountability partner system. Overall, Dennis believes his label performed excellently.

Dennis Annang’s advice to future cohort members is short and simple:

“Join now.”

This interview has been slightly edited for clarity.



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INTERVIEW: THANDO MAKHUNGA ON HER MUSIC JOURNEY AND COMMUNITY BUILDING IN THE PUBLISHING INDUSTRY

BY: ADAORA NWANGWU



Durban native, Thando Makhunga, was attending the University of Kwazulu-natal when she broke into the creative industry. Her journey began after the Managing Director of East Coast Radio, one of the biggest commercial radio stations in the region, noticed and invited her to join the station. She became its news presenter and engaged in other broadcast-related activities. However, her curiosity and determination led her to seek opportunities that would put her in a dominant position. Thando upgraded to a radio programmer, meaning she managed all radio-related affairs. After working at East Coast, she got a job at another radio station in Cape Town, where she spent three years handling music management. Then she relocated to Johannesburg and joined 947, one of the biggest commercial radio stations in South Africa, as the Managing Director and the Music Manager for Prime Media, the parent company of 947.

Life is all about taking risks and Thando took that literally when she shifted her career from broadcasting to publishing. In 2021, she joined Sheer Publishing as the Managing Director after over three years working at a radio station. Although her transition from broadcasting to publishing was seamless because the knowledge she gained in the broadcasting space was relevant in the publishing industry, she observed an issue — publishers lacked a basic understanding of publishing requirements and the role of CMOs in the publishing industry.

“The problems publishers experience are created by the ecosystem that we live in. Some creators have no idea of what a split sheet looks like or how to fill out a metadata. I know creatives don't like administrative work but if you don't do admin work, you're going to get left off the split sheet, and then you'll come back complaining 10 years later. So, whether you're an artist, composer, advertiser, or broadcaster, give credit to the music that you utilize, so that the creators can be paid correctly. If you create music, credit your work correctly. Generally, I think Africa is probably one of the worst, in terms of data. Our CMOs don't collect data correctly. Some of them are dysfunctional, which means that they're receiving money, but because they don't have the right data, they can't distribute the money to the correct rights holder,” she says.

Thando works together with her team to solve the shortage of education in the publishing industry. She says, “As a board member of CAPASSO, which is the mechanical rights organisation in South Africa, one of the initiatives that we are going to start next year is basically like a CSI

exercise which is going to address some of these issues in the industry like knowledge gaps. CAPASSO will work with small companies all across the continent and in South Africa. That is also something that the CMOs should actively be working on.”

Community and education are important to Thando. As someone who is enthusiastic about promoting community growth, she chose a firm like Sheer that is also committed to community building. She says, “One of the areas that is a particular focus for us is film and TV. So at a local level, we have a very similar symbiotic relationship with the film and TV industry. In South Africa, one of the things we did was to partner with the National Film and Video Foundation. We did a couple of master classes with them. And in that, we enable composers, and people that do film scores and sound effects, engage with directors, film producers, to explain to them how you can license music in a film or a TV show.”

Aside from her role at Sheer Publishing, Thando enjoys finding sync opportunities in TV and radio for their clients who are independent artists and label owners. She coaches people and is a consultant at a major radio station in South Africa. This desire to educate people inspired and motivated her to partner with the MBA for Africa as a faculty guest. During her sessions, she observed that the cohort is thirsty for knowledge. “They want to know everything and more. They're very inquisitive and motivated,” She says.

Thando is the Vice Chairperson of the Music Publishers Association of South Africa (MPASA). Since assuming that role, she has made efforts to enlighten regulators about copyright. However, she faces a major challenge with the new copyright amendment bill proposed by the Council of Provinces. She says, “Publishing is a space, even within the music industry, everyone doesn't fully understand. It's even worse when you take it to lawmakers and try to explain the pros and cons of some of the ideas that they've put into the bill.”



She and other industry players in South Africa are watching the Nigerian copyright scene to understand the pros and cons of the recent Nigerian Copyright Act, 2022. They are asking questions like “what does fair use look like in Africa?” She believes driving conversation in the music industry amongst publishers, CMOs, and anyone that's involved will ensure better copyright laws. Regarding educating stakeholders about copyright, she says, “We partnered with the Creative Council locally, which is all of the creative industry, including film, TV, advertising, and actors. We had a workshop in November where we unpacked the Creative Copyright Amendment Bill. So again, it's just making sure that people understand what the bill entails and what impact the bill will have. I think it's super important for creatives to start taking back control of the industry and not allowing random, parliamentary committees to decide our future.”

During our conversation, Thando addressed the disparity between men and women working in the industry. She says that there aren't a lot of women in the music industry. And where that's the case, the emerging female creatives are prone to exploitation. According to her, women are the most exploited in the music industry. She added that tour managers, label managers and publishers are usually men. So finding female artists surrounded by men isn't far-fetched. She also drew our attention to the fact that the music industry is dominated by men who are knowledgeable about copyright and the inner workings of the industry.

On her solution to the issue of lack of women in the industry, Thando is committed to creating opportunities and building a safe space and community for African women entering the music business. She discloses that Sheer Publishing's management team is internationally 80% women and members of the senior team are 50% women. She also mentioned that as the Vice Chairperson of the Music Publishers Association of South Africa (MPASA), one of the things she enabled was a partnership with women in music in South Africa.

Not only is the absence of women in the publishing space evident and alarming, it's also difficult to see women occupy top positions. For Thando, pioneering a change like this is normal due to her past experiences. In fact, as nice as it sounds to break records, Thando is not impressed that in 2023, there's never been a female publisher until she joined the company. However, she is happy to work hard to succeed and outdo her previous predecessors who are usually white men. At MPASA, Thando is focused on driving innovation. Supporting female creatives is her personal project and she wants to be remembered for it.

Due to her experience navigating the South African publishing industry as a woman, Thando is unperturbed by credibility concerns based on her gender. Her history dealing with such issues has been ongoing throughout her career. Her solution to this is to assert herself and take control of the situation.

“There is a tendency for men to defer to the man in charge. So, I don't take those things personally, because I've been dealing with it my whole career. I'm okay with men and clients who prefer to work with other men. But, I think it's also important to assert yourself and take control. That's what I always do and I somehow end up making the most out of the meeting. The reality of it is: I know for a fact that there are some conversations and meetings that I'm excluded from. There are some things that I particularly exclude myself from because I don't want to be involved. There are trade-offs to being a woman, and there are some great and positive things as well. I think I've experienced mostly the positive. I think people are inspired to see a black woman at the helm of affairs working at a big publishing organization. I know that there are some things that I probably don't get access to or benefit from just because I'm a woman. But that's life, you can't get everything you want, unfortunately,” Thando says.

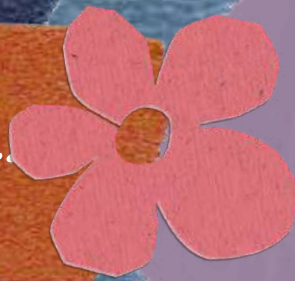
Ending the conversation, Thando advised emerging female creatives seeking a career in the music business or publishing industry. She says, “There are so many opportunities in the music industry. It is very conducive for people with an entrepreneurial mind. For example, you can start your own publishing or distribution business in the music industry, from anywhere in the world. It does take a lot of hard work and self-education though. So understand the industry, its rules and how the game is played. Then find your niche and go for it.”

This interview has been slightly edited for clarity.



Once Upon Eximia...

By: Felicia Elisha X Imabong Effiong-Akpan



Eximia Entertainment, formerly known as Group G, is *thee* exceptional label of the MBA for Africa 2023 Cohort. Quote us anywhere.

In July 2023, thirty individuals who knew nothing about each other were thrown together in a simulated label and asked to function as a team. From the organisational tasks like the company setup - profile, handbook, etc. to weekly assignments, we built the capacity to trust one another and demonstrate resilience.

Choosing the name *Eximia* was a bit hilarious because it wasn't sexy at first, but, it turned out that it didn't need to be. We made it sexy!



Curveballs, Schmurveballs

Curveballs, or better put, Godwin Tom's plot twists, became a normal occurrence for the cohort. Un-MDing your group lead? No problem. Switching your label? Let's do it.

But a simulated music business programme doesn't happen without the experience of real obstacles and stress. And Eximia met her first non-simulated challenge after the artist pitch event in September. Within a few weeks of signing a young artist from East Africa, it was unveil time. The day before the artist reveal, we realised, quite rudely, that we would have no artist to unveil. We had been ghosted! Siri, play *Last Last* by Burna Boy.

And so our dearly beloved founder, Godwin Tom offered us options: a) disband and join other labels; b) find a service you can sell to the rest of the cohort; and c) find yourself a new artist. After much deliberation during which we attempted to sell a service only to discover that none of the smart people in Eximia were built for entrepreneurship (yet), we decided to find an artist. But it had to be an East African artist. Many thanks to Marlene Bett who gave us access to her connections in the East African region, we were able to make a list and would eventually end up signing the charming and elegant Wendy Kay.

When MBA Gives You Curveballs, Swing Your Bat!

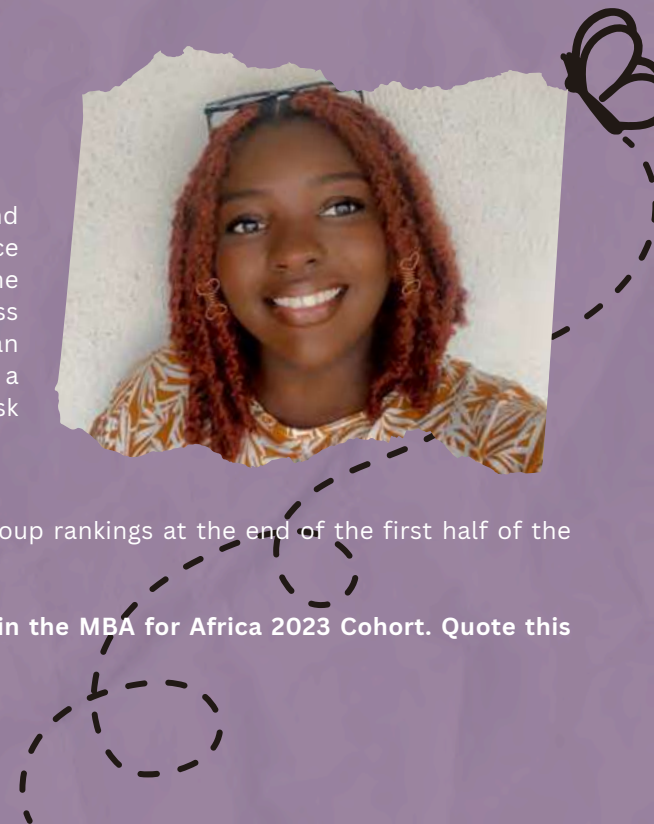
No one likes a braggart but everyone likes a success story.

It was rough, but after meeting Wendy Kay, experiencing her work ethic and contributions to the *Pepple Street* album, we wouldn't trade this experience for anything, curveballs and all. After almost a month of uncertainty, the threat of being disbanded (bye, bye Tequila hour), and a failed business proposal, Eximia Entertainment became the label with a shining star for an artist - nearly everyone wanted to collaborate with her. We received a personal commendation from Godwin Tom himself - high praise, if you ask us - for our resilience and hardwork with the artist.



And the icing on the cake: Eximia Entertainment came in first place in group rankings at the end of the first half of the 2023 programme.

Now, we'll say it again. Eximia Entertainment is *THEE* exceptional label in the MBA for Africa 2023 Cohort. Quote this anywhere!



THE M.O.B STORY

Made of Black, more commonly called M.O.B within the 2023 cohort, started out as just another group put together by the MBA for Africa. Their first attempt at naming the group came with the name Ubuntu as they wanted something significant to African culture. However, on finding out it was in use elsewhere, they searched for another one.

Made of Black was suggested by Purple Ames of Ghana, and the team took to the name like DJs to a hit song.

From the beginning, it was all love amongst the members of the team with everyone doing their best to make the label work. And then the event that would change everything for them happened - the artist pitch event.

It seemed like the artist pitch event coincided with the start of team fatigue for MOB. The programme had gotten increasingly intense, members of the team began to lose steam and, in the face of such an important stage in the programme, it affected the preparation for the artist pitch.

With the decrease in team morale, it became difficult to get the team to engage, pull their weight and centre their thoughts toward a productive pitch idea. To make a bumper bum even more, when the group MD requested volunteers who would pitch on behalf of the team, there were no responses. He had to make an appeal to a team member to represent the label at the pitch event.

So even though they weren't confident and well-prepared, the D-day arrived and they had to pitch.

It may seem that the universe was driving them to make the choices that would lead them to their eventual MBA destiny. It was too choreographed to be coincidental how everything was leading towards this outcome. From the drop in team motivation to the less than stellar preparation for the artist and a good enough pitch, Made of Black was shaping up to be something other than a regular record label, they just didn't know it.

Needless to say, Made of Black did not get an artist after the pitch event. It was certainly a downer for a lot of team members who felt despondent and wondered what would become of them from this point onward. A record label without an artist wasn't a record label, no? The result of the pitch event put even more strain on the team morale.

Enter Godwin Tom, a wise man albeit with a weird knack for curveballing his students.

Although it seems like GT's idea of an acquisition company came as an answer to the problem of what to do with the label without an artist, it was never a problem for him to start with.

Sometime before the pitch event, GT had asked the cohort group, "What do you guys think will happen to the label that doesn't get an artist?"

Putting the programme in perspective, Ayomide, who later became an executive, expresses that he believes the idea of an acquisition company had been in the works all along. There had been 11 labels and 10 artists all along. It certainly didn't come as a surprise to anyone that one label didn't get an artist, just the matter of what label.

And so the plan was unveiled: MOB would become a special team, sent into labels when they were failing to help get them back on track and do the needful. Some members of the label were also sent to the executive team to assist in cohort administration.

Although most labels didn't want MOB to "take over" their teams, the idea of a special team proved helpful. Some teams like Synergy and Soundwave benefited from the presence of Made of Black in their labels to boost their performance.

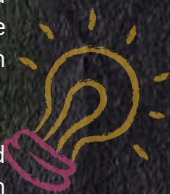
Although the label would eventually be disbanded in 2024, the team members were able to gain experience practically by helping other teams with their issues. It was also a great chance for them to become well-acquainted with many members of the 2023 cohort - something not many members of the cohort can boast of - thereby expanding their network and increasing their connections as well.

Any member of Made of Black would agree that the special status badge they earned at the end of the first half of the programme was well deserved.

Go, MOB!



ELEOJO MOMOH



PITCH AND PIVOT

THE TERRAKOLLECTIVE STORY

The Beginning

Crafting a name that showcases the essence of the group is an important part of the MBA for Africa programme narrative. Terrakollective, a fusion of terracotta — a kind of fired clay used to make vessels — and collective was the result of what resonated the most with our identity as a team. From the beginning, Terrakollective was more than just Group D. It was a convergence of talents from different backgrounds. We were a group of like-minded individuals positioned for individual success yet united by a common goal: to build and run a successful record label.

The mission was clear: empower artistic expression across borders while developing and learning the ropes of the music business within and outside Africa. Music was our unifying language and we sought to discover, nurture, and support talent from Africa, providing them with a global platform for growth. Our story unfolds for two reasons: a) to illuminate the highs and lows of our journey as a label, and b) to show the essence of getting the work done and showing up despite curveballs.

The Journey

The defining moment of the 2023 programme came in the form of the artist pitch event. The purpose of the pitch event was to assign labels an artist to represent for the duration of 6 months. And with 11 labels and only 10 artists to assign, the stakes were high! There was no telling what would happen to the label that didn't get an artist. It became paramount that we convince one of the artists that Terrakollective was the right choice for them. Thankfully, we stood out to the versatile female artist from Kenya. A singer-producer, DJ, and instrumentalist, Sisian and Terrakollective Music Group fell into perfect harmony, her vision for artistic expression aligning with our mission. As part of the Talent Project, all ten artists, including Sisian, were to converge in Lagos for the making of the Pepple Street album. However, fate threw a cruel curveball at Sisian — her passport validity jeopardized her chances of making it to Lagos in time for the recording camp.

This development derailed the momentum TerraKollective had built, forcing us to think on our feet and come up with possible solutions or risk losing our artist and label.

The Other Side of the Fire

A much-needed December break comes and goes, and a brand new year meant school was about to swing back into real action. Like a sentenced man waiting for his f we all awaited the official announcement that our label would cease to exist, each member probably wondering where the The Announcement finally came, but it took a different turn. Between the two labels that were without artists- (Terrakollective and Made of Black), Terrakollective was spared and would be commissioned to aid the marketing efforts of the new executive body. Clearly, a few people were impressed by our resilient, fighting spirit. Terrakollective, though no longer a conventional label, now supports the MBA 2023 Executives as a part of the Marketing and Sponsorships department. This resolution stands as a testament to our perseverance and drive to adapt to challenges and find new ways to support the success of the Talent Project. While the pathway evolved, the goal remained the same.

Terrakollective might not have followed the expected path, but we continued to make a mark as a group that fought for a chance at success, bending with the winds of trial and finding a new purpose. It came as no surprise that Terrakollective ranked 4th position at the end of the first half of the program. In accepting a harsh reality, we discovered resilience and a new identity, solidifying our place in the success story of the 2023 MBA for Africa Cohort.



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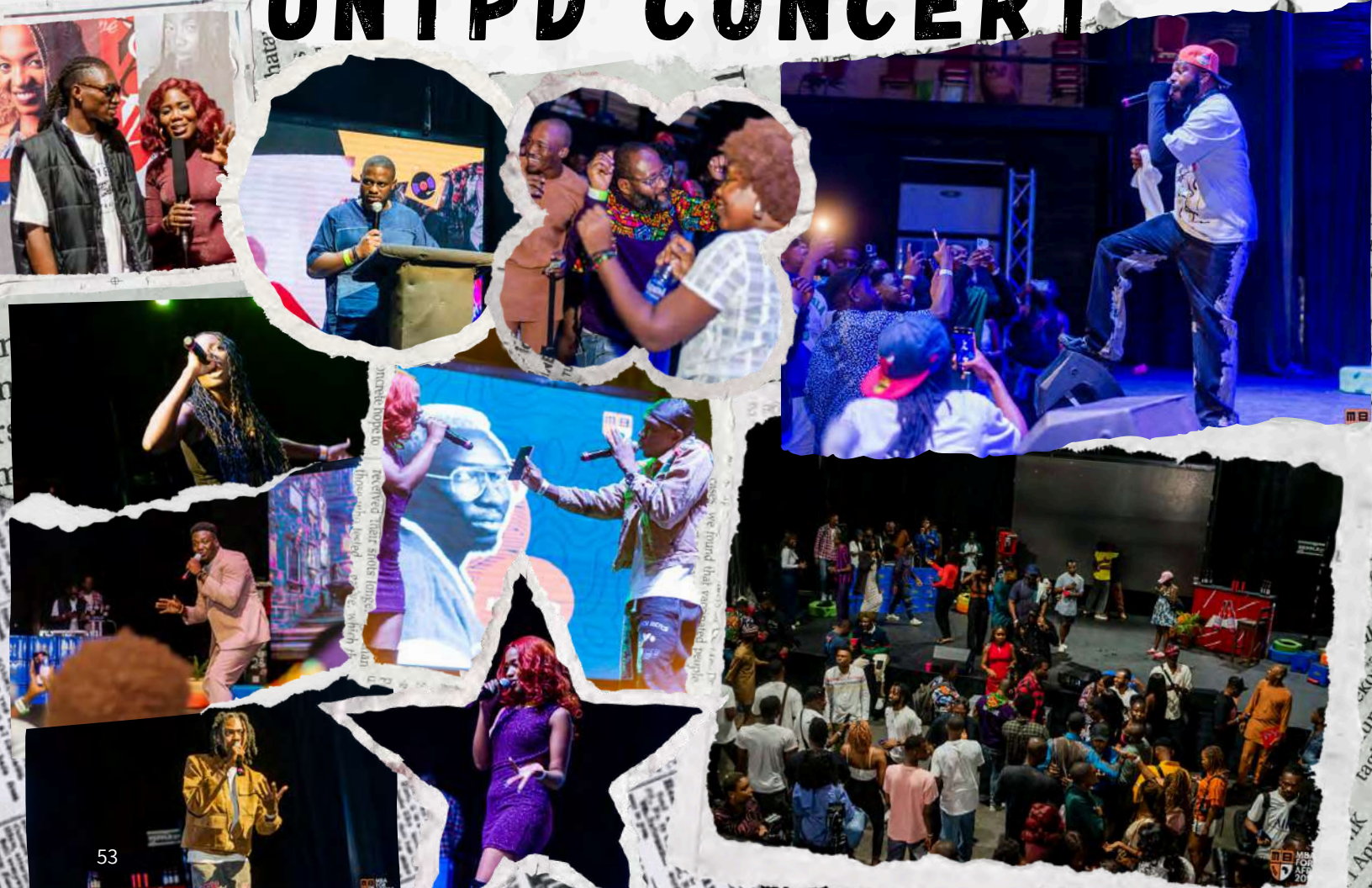


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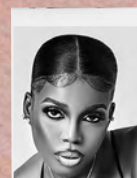
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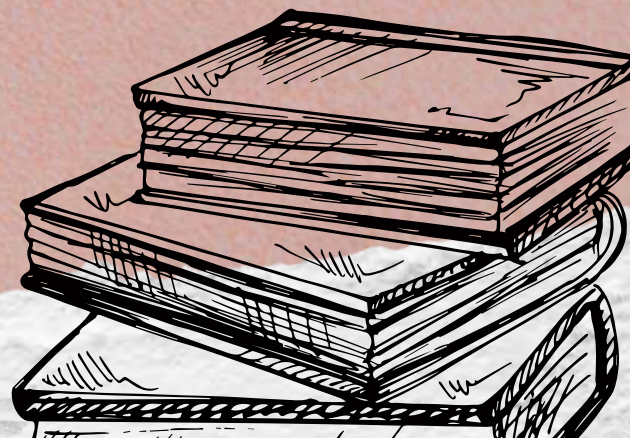
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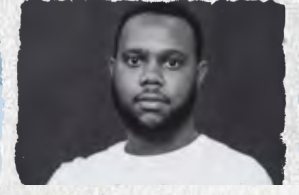
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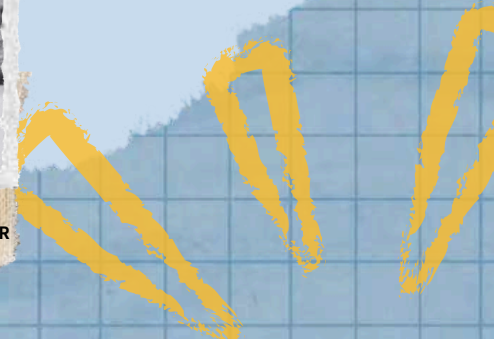
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TALENT MANAGER, AND
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ADEWALE ADEYEMI
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Isaac Owusu-Sekyere
Purple Georgelyn Ames
Dennis Annang
Antoinette Boama
Godfred Chara Obeng
Nana Sarkwah Ntiamoah Kwadwo
Andre Yvan Tcheke
Harriet Amolo
Momanyi Ian
Marlene Bett
Lovemore Chanza
Elochukwu Adumekwe
Willin Omon
Adams Bello
Ebimobowei Tuebi-Ekpekpei

Bukkie Macaulay
Desmond Nwosu
William Umoh
Wahab Folawiyo
Oluwafijimi Adetunji
Emmanuel Onyekuru
Sandra Ake-Kennedy
Adeola Akinsemoyin
Esther Nzenwa
Wellington Sholarin
Christine Udousoro
Wonuola Oyeleye
Joshua Jirbo
Avwerosuoghene Esosuakpo
Glory Ekong
Precious Udeorah
Aramide Adetunji
Samuel Adeoye
Love Nebo
Ferdinand Anumba
Fiyinfoluwa Faronbi
Chukwuebuka Samson
Fortune Meremoth
Theodore Idiahi
Enomfon Basse
Akinwunmi Abraham-John
Lawon Shodunke
Ndubuisi Nwaji
Deborah Nwuli
Oladunjoye Ayorinde
Medinat Lawal
Chisom Adaora Nwangwu
Omobolanle Abiola
Eyitemi Erewa
Durojaiye Ridwan
Damilola Omogbaji
Olusegun Akinbusuyi
Damilare Ogunfowora
Nelson Jolly
Marvellous Adesokan
Nelson Omorotionmwan
Dominion Osayande
Akorede Akinmolujoye
George Eke

Bamise Oyetayo
Chinagorom E. Ukachukwu
George Stephen
Ella Spiffy
Kelvin Ilolo
Abiola Adeniyi
Philip Osumah
Abiola Adedeji
Chinedum Okerengwor
Abioye Damilare
Lateef Balogun
Funmilayo Emmanuel
Alfred Obire
Jesam Inah
Bege Mato
Courage Nduaguibe
Grandeur Ogbaji-Pat
Bolarinwa Alade
Ikechukwu Kalu
Dike Meremoth
Adeoluwa Adegoke
Campbell Isaiah
Isaac Nwanze
Adebayo Lawal
Kelechi Ucheagwu
Adedoyin Odetunde
Omololu Makinde
Uwa Prosper Onaifo
Ayodeji Makinde
Isaiah Ogunde
David Omubo
Mojeed Kolawole
Kelechi Azuamairo
Tolulope Ambali
Sarah Ofonedu
Olumide Olaomo
Olufunmilayo Ogundipe
Reuben Iyama
Agaba Thompson
Subomi Okesanya
Grace Nwaodogwu
JudeOsumune
Christian Uzor
Favour Aigbe

THE 2023/2024 COHORT

Tochukwu Nwobodo
Ebiyokwenimo Martins
Oluwagbemiga Ogunlade
Anita Amangbo
Moyosore Ilesanmi
Chukwuyemisi Isichei
Samuel Zubair
Nduwuba Izuchukwu
Olabode Osuntubo
Okwudini Noah
Tareke Selegba
Chiamaka Okechukwu
Joy Wonne
Rosemary Willie
Eniola Banjoko
Sandra Ivienagbor
Taiwo Olabode
Emmanuel Orilabawaye
Christopher Ajieh
Sarah Williams-Konha
Jay Udemeh
Ahmed Bowcom
Jeffrey Nnadozie-Ogoke
Omlegbe Stephen Ogbe
Leo Omoji
Kelechi Okangba
Sunmimade Olubanwo
Omotayo Mohammed
David Ogu
Oluwakemi Fagboro
Osinachi Ibeh
Melody Osato-Osawaye
Lord Jenny
Chinasa Casmir
Adimchinobi Ugochukwu
Bamikole Owoyomi
Adebisi Dere
Jennifer Okoro
Joyce Osho
Wisdom Ebong
Ishiekwene Chris
Toochukwu Igboko
Dami Adenuga
Adediran Adelekun

Omorogbe Daniel
Adeyemi Haastrup
Michelle Uzorka
Obi Uchenna
Kenneth Olanrewaju
Felicia Anuoluwapo Elisha
Stephanie (Fanii) Godwin
Christabel Osayande
Praise Michael
Imabong Effiong-Akpan
Shine Amaechi
Olumide Oriolowo
Kachi Uba
Akanu Lilian
Vincent Don-Baadam
David Okanlawon
Desmond Ike
David Olayiwola
Opeyemi Adigun
Innocent Aiyegbeni
Oluwatobi Onitimirin
Deji Onadeko
Ifeoluwakitan Kayode
Ifiokobong Etuk
Okitefre Obobo
Adebolawa Abimbolu
Toritseju Tuedor
Ruth Ajibodu
Hamid Adelabu
Nurudeen Ali-Balogun
Oluwaseun Olaniyan
Christopher Ajieh
Chukwuma Ogbonna
Nora Ikemefuna
Ademola Adediji
Venmak Agboola
Olivia Agu
Tombra Asikpi
Bamike Oba Adeyemi
Olatunde Mustapha
Kema Oyih
Tuebi Opukiri
Toluwalase Omorodion
Samuel Adehoun

Temitope Olorunnimbe
Ibukun Oyinloye
Ann Damar
Onyinye Francis
Mariam Alli
Adhezo Ekpoh
Chidera Nnamani
Stephen Adeniyi
Maryam Zaruq
Boma Dokubo
Ginika Igboanugo
Onya Alvan Chukwuemeka
Adeyemi Ademola
Kikilope Oyewumi
Tosin Robeck
Inioluwa Oni
Zaheed Animashanun
Augustine Uzuhai
Princess Agoghene Okpako
Phebean Oluwadare
Anthony Balogun
Kelechuku Eke
Bright Chinedu
Ifedayo Oyewumi
Adebanjo Adebiyi
Victoria Abah
Idorenyin Bassej
Omolola Ikuemonisan
Grace Topsy John
Ogoh Ogoh
Oluwatobiloba Abiodun - Oni
Benny Ike-Echie
Ayomide Adetomiwa
Oluwatamilore Osho
Olanrewaju Awosika
Tolu Neodaniel
Abraham Uzoka
Ademola Quadri
John Eradiri
Egobi James
Oluwatobiloba Adebayo
Samson Adelowo
Nduyeobong Akpan
Johnpaul Okere

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Michael Akpan
Pamilerin Oladosu
Tomiye Michael
Miracle Kahuwai
Jane Amadi
Dorothy Otomewo
Bulouboere Akemotubo
Charles Okaeme
Chukwuemeka Yadi
Elijah Adebajo
Azikiwe Nnaemeka
Kasope Owoaje
Promise Edeh
John Fakeye
Collins Aje
Olugbenga Akinnola
Oluwadamilare Odusanya
Tara Thomas
Banjoko Anuoluwapo
Jemima Eli-Shama
Awwal Hamza
Oghenetano Oromena
Chinomso Uduma
Emmanuella Adejoh
Marvel Onah
Mariam Onize Atta
Wonu Osikoya
Folu Ogunsilu
Peace Laurels
Ochuko Abuwa
Joshua Ohia
Tejumade Akintunde
Omolade Yusuf
Amaebi Orukaria
Ibukunoluwa Ogunyemi
Chidozie Onwusoba
Akinwolemiwa Akinyemi
Amos Timileyin Elubipe
Joseph Oshiafi
Olaniyi Balogun
Aminu Shehu
Gift Johnson
Akorede Olarinde
Queensley Okon

Victor Ogunka
Elejo Momoh
Rex Okiche
Ibenye Clinton
Chiemelie Ezeasor
Francis Isichei
Peter Ekpenyong
Mogoli Olusegun Dumebi
Anuolu Oyedele
Adekunle Opeyemi
Bugu Onwuakpa
Kayode Desmond
Victory Iseghohimhen
Adedeji Ademosu
Desmond Okolie
Muyiwa Adekola
Sewedo Wusa
Opeyemi Shogbade
Emmanuel Enwenna
Oloruntobi Tele-Oduloye
Isimeme Ikikhueme
Adedoyin Farinmade
Precious Akande
Ebiere Ebitebe
Kayode Bakare
Christabel Uduma
Joshua Aderemi
Sherifatu Adeleke
Gideon Bola-Lawal
Oluwajoba Omopariola
Chinedu Okafor
Siena Unukogbon
Adesuyi Olanrewaju
Timilehin Tawose
Kolapo Elubipe
Uthman Suleiman
Patrick Patrick
Saaku Kelvin Pev
Melissa Nnamdi
Angel Adukeh
Michael Adebambo
Ikechukwu Daniel
Adeoluwa Olatunji
Giwa Morenikeji Emmanuela

Princess Mansob
Toriola Omobolawa
Justice Adigho
Amelie Ebongue
Magatte Dione
Moussa Nodjina
Seun Orenuga
David Mtanke
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Chukwuemeka Chuks-Okeke
Halimat Bodunrin
Nneka Mogbo
Emmanuel Kibukamusoke
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