



# Authority Magazine

Pulse Art Director Cristina Salmastrelli:

“In order to thrive a leader needs to understand, more than ever, what makes each of her team members excited, fearful, anxious, and content”

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In order to thrive, please take the time to learn about your team. We need to understand each other, and a leader needs to understand, more than ever, what makes each of her team members excited, fearful, anxious, and content. Only then can a leader communicate in the best way in order to have the team produce the best product.

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**AS** part of my series about strong female leaders, I had the pleasure of interviewing the US Regional Managing Director of Ramsay Fairs and acting PULSE Director, Cristina Salmastrelli. Salmastrelli is dedicated to bringing her innovative and dynamic perspective to art fairs, which are her passion. Over the last 14 years, Salmastrelli she has worked on 71 fairs over three continent and amassed an extensive catalogue of fairs she has worked with including the ADAA THE ART SHOW, The Outsider Art Fair, IFPDA's The Print Fair, and PULSE. PULSE is the internationally recognized high end contemporary art fair produced by Ramsay Fairs that Salmastrelli joined in 2011. Since then she has worked go on to work on the company's lifestyle brand, Affordable Art Fair, lead the US business and has been a part of the acquisition process of VOLTA. A world traveler and international art enthusiast, Cristina believes that fairs are truly the heart of the contemporary art world, as they are the only place where galleries, collectors, professionals and visitors come together in one place to learn and exchange ideas in the most dynamic of atmospheres. Cristina completed a master's in museum studies at New York University after receiving a Bachelor of Arts in Art History and History from Colgate University. She currently resides in Brooklyn with her husband and son.

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**Thank you so much for doing this with us! Can you tell us a story about what brought you to this specific career path?**

When I first started working at art fairs, I saw the top art critic from The New York Times standing next to the founder of one of the top 100 art galleries, next to the director of a major NYC Museum alongside a contemporary art collector. Everyone was in one place, at one time. I was hooked. The art fair was the epicenter of the art world, and I must be there as well.

**Can you share the most interesting story that happened to you since you began leading your company?**

An artist gave my son the honor of naming her artwork. JJ Galloway is one of the most dynamic contemporary artists out there today. She combines technique with joy in her artworks and this resonates with me deeply. We are in a time where the world is facing some very difficult decisions, so there is no day like today for us to focus on what brings us joy. For me, that is viewing JJ Galloway's fantastical works. JJ and I previously worked together in NYC for an activation and she then suggested the brilliant idea of doing something for this PULSE in Miami. She created a sculpture of a flamingo for me and my son decided to name her Rainbow Rex. This reminds me to lead with my heart, lead to pursue your passion, lead to spread joy and lead to spread light.

**Can you share a story about the funniest mistake you made when you were first starting? Can you tell us what lesson you learned from that?**

Oh, I have made too many to count. Mistakes are usually funny way in hindsight, but never be afraid of making them. That is how we all learn!

**What do you think makes your company stand out? Can you share a story?**

PULSE's commitment to a positive and memorable experience for its exhibitors, partners and especially visitors is what sets our company apart from any other. There are too many stories to share as we are constantly focused on upgrading the Ramsay Fairs experience for our customers, but I know if you came to any one of our fairs and asked to speak with the director, we would immediately come out to say hi! You do not get that service everywhere!

**Are you working on any exciting new projects now? How do you think that will help people?**

I am looking forward to working on expansion on our lifestyle brand, Affordable Art Fair. This is such a fantastic brand that people can connect

with in order to learn more about art and hopefully fall in love with it. My next move is to spread this message of education across the states!

**What advice would you give to other female leaders to help their team to thrive?**

In order to thrive, please take the time to learn about your team. We need to understand each other, and a leader needs to understand, more than ever, what makes each of her team members excited, fearful, anxious, and content. Only then can a leader communicate in the best way in order to have the team produce the best product.

**What advice would you give to other female leaders about the best way to manage a large team?**

It is important to delegate responsibilities when working in a large team. Delegation is key, but in order to properly delegate you must invest the time to teach the work ethics and techniques you value and expect. Once the education is laid and a foundation is built, then you must trust each member to fulfill the role and responsibility.

**None of us are able to achieve success without some help along the way. Is there a particular person who you are grateful towards who helped get you to where you are? Can you share a story about that?**

I am grateful to a lovely lady named Sugar Barry. I had the privilege to work with her at Sanford L. Smith & Associates from 2006–2011. Sugar had been in the business for almost 30 years when I joined the team and she shared all her knowledge with me. She taught me to stand my ground and make sure that the mission of the fair is always put first, even though that can be difficult when there are so many type A personalities in one room. My favorite story was when Mark Jacobs walked into one of our fairs before we were open to the public and she said, “well, we must follow the rules, but it

doesn't hurt to look good while doing it." With that, she put her lipstick on and kicked him out of the fair!

## **How have you used your success to bring goodness to the world?**

With success comes one's responsibly to teach. Always teach the next generation about your experiences. Provide them with the power of knowledge.

## **What are your "5 Things I Wish Someone Told Me Before I Started" and why? (Please share a story or example for each.)**

1. Careers pathways are never in a straight line.
2. Ask for help, it's there and you will be admired for it.
3. Remember to serve yourself first. Take care of you!
4. Keep your family involved with your career, their advice is integral to your growth
5. Its ok to change your mind!

**You are a person of great influence. If you could inspire a movement that would bring the most amount of good to the most amount of people, what would that be? You never know what your idea can trigger. :-)**

The Movement of Listening. It's important to listen to each other and devote the time to try and understand each person's point of view. Listening leads to education, discovery, enlightenment and continual improvement of self.

**Can you please give us your favorite "Life Lesson Quote"? Can you share how that was relevant to you in your life?**

Nothing worthwhile comes easy. The great aunt of my childhood best friend told us that when we were children. Poppy's words have stuck with me ever since and given me strength when I have needed it.

**We are blessed that some of the biggest names in Business, VC funding, Sports, and Entertainment read this column. Is there a person in the world, or in the US with whom you would love to have a private breakfast or lunch with, and why? He or she might just see this if we tag them :-)**

Mika Brzezinski. I find her tenacity, passion, awareness, and supportive nature inspiring to me!