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# The Cat's MIEOW

THROWING A-LIST PARTIES, DISCOVERING NEW TALENT, AND EXHIBITING CREATIVE FREEDOM IS ALL A DAY'S WORK FOR LIZ VAP

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**L**iz Vap is running late. When she finally arrives at Cipriani, she looks incredibly put-together for someone who claims to have done her makeup in the cab. With her black dress, dark hair, black nail polish and glossy black Kooba bag, she's the picture of New York downtown glam. And as the head of FeralCat Productions, the event management and entertainment consulting company she founded in 2007, she needs to look the part — because she never stops working.

“It's 24/7 really. That's the positive and the negative,” says Vap. “There's more freedom in my schedule, and I don't want a desk job, but at the same time, I'm constantly working. I can't tell you how many times I've had an event and I've been up 'til four in the morning working until it's done. When the pressure's on, you just have to deliver.”

With exceptional attention to detail and an emphasis on personalized treatment, Vap's events range from celebrity birthday parties to charity fundraisers. “The clients I attract are entertainment-driven,” she says, “whether it be music, fashion, artists, luxury brands, as well as many charities.”

Raised in Connecticut in a “very Greek family” with two older brothers, Vap was more mature than children her age, and from the sound of it, a hell of a lot cooler too. At the age of seven, her favorite band was The Ramones, and her favorite movie was *Rock 'n' Roll High School*. By the time she was 13, she was a self-described “punk-rock geek” who would join her brother Ioannis on his job-hunting trips into Manhattan, where she'd head to Bleecker Bob's and Rebel Rebel to buy British punk and new wave imports.

It was on one of these trips that legendary rock 'n' roll photographer Mick Rock gave Vap her start at the age of 14. She laughs as she tells the story, “I was sitting in an office with crazy hair and crazy makeup, waiting for my

brother, and Mick came out and asked me if I was a makeup artist, and being 14 and fearless, I said ‘yes!’ He gave me his card and said he wanted to hire me. My brother was suspicious at first of course, but when he saw the card he said, ‘My God, do you even know who this is? Let's do this!’ and Ioannis became my ‘bodyguard’ of sorts and would bring me to all my jobs.”

I did that for a while until I wanted to go in a different creative direction,” Vap continues, “but it got me accustomed to being around lots of people on photo sessions and video sets.” Vap has worked in various capacities with Mick Rock ever since. “Liz is a pro,” says Rock. “She knows her game, has her ears to the ground, and her eyes on the prize.” Over the years she has kept Rock in the spotlight, pairing him with current artists and talent such as The Killers, Yeah Yeah Yeahs, Kings of Leon, and Michael Pitt, while reintroducing his iconic '70s shots of David Bowie, Syd Barrett, and Iggy Pop to a whole new generation. While working as Rock's right-hand girl, Vap established a contact list that most PR companies would love to get their hands on. She began organizing events in New York, London, and Los Angeles for her friends, and after freelance consulting for a few years, she launched FeralCat Productions. “I decided to cross over from handling talent like Mick and director Floria Sigismondi to doing events and consulting with companies about how to properly brand themselves or their products with innovative ideas,” explains Vap. The company's unusual name gives a nod to the, naturally cool “cats” she works with.

Vap's well-known events bring together A-listers in fashion, music, art and film, such as Michael Stipe, Liv Tyler, Daisy Lowe, and Michel Gondry. There's always a friendly, laid-back vibe despite the wall-to-wall celebs. Late night talk show host Jimmy Fallon comments, “Vap knows how to throw a great party. She personally knows the right mix of people who will have fun when they hang

out.” When asked about her most memorable events, Vap mentions the book launch party she arranged for Mick Rock's *Picture This: Debbie Harry and Blondie*, during which Har Mar Superstar performed, stripped down to his underwear and tried to make out with host Kate Moss and model Frankie Ryder. “Yeah, that was pretty crazy,” she says. The event was hailed as one of the parties of the year by Style.com.

Vap also brings emerging talent, like Adam Green whom she cast as one of several artists in a new interactive advertising campaign for the K-Swiss relaunch of their classic remastered trainer, and fashion designer Sue Stemp whom she's handled the last three fashion shows and after-parties for. The extreme loyalty between Vap and her clients is something that sets FeralCat Productions apart from the average event planning and consulting company. “It becomes a personal thing,” says Vap. “Having been an artist myself, I want creative people to be treated like I would want to be treated, and I think that's what got me into this — protecting artists and making sure they get what they want and what they need and what they deserve.”

It seems that only a workaholic could manage all this at once. “I'll walk into an event, on the phone with the team I've hired to make sure everything's going as planned, I'll be texting two other brands I'm consulting for, while trying to stay on top of another event I have going on three days later...so it's a lot of multi-tasking, considering I take a lot of it on my own. I'm not the greatest delegator at this stage, because you can't be sure something's done right unless you do it yourself,” she says.

The crazy hours, hectic deadlines, and relentless workload are all worth it to Vap. “I get to be creative on all different levels and work with fascinating people,” she says. “And I get to collaborate with some of my best friends and make new friends along the way.” ■