

**Erasmus Mundus Master's**  
*Journalism and Media within Globalisation:  
The European Perspective*

***Blue Book***  
***2007-2009***



*Photo: Inger Munk*

**The 2007-09 Masters group includes 41 participants from all over the world: Australia, Belarus, Bhutan, Canada, China, Denmark, El Salvador, Germany, India, Italy, Kenya, Lebanon, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Norway, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine, USA, and Zimbabwe.**

## Participants Mundus Masters Journalism and Media 2007/09

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# INTRODUCTION

## Stories from a world tour

This Blue Book covers the short stories of the third group of participants in the *Erasmus Mundus Masters Journalism and Media within Globalization: The European Perspective*. The consortium that offers this master's degree is very proud to present a group of students who is truly global as to professional interests and with representation from all over the world. This group of 41 covers 20 different nationalities and has been carefully selected from more than 200 applicants, so much is expected of the class process and in anticipation of their graduation in summer 2009.

Before graduating, the group will explore different professional and cultural environments in Europe together, also drawing on the internal pool of great experience represented within the group.

The first semester takes place at the Danish School of Journalism / University of Aarhus in Denmark. Just after Christmas the group will go on to the University of Amsterdam in the Netherlands.

For the second year, the group is divided into three small groups to study their choice of specialization:

University of Wales, Swansea, United Kingdom: *War and Conflict*

City University, London, United Kingdom: *Business and Finance*

University of Hamburg, Germany: *Media Systems, Journalism and Public Spheres in a Comparative Perspective*

For the Blue Book the participants have interviewed each other with the aim to get a picture of each participant as to their area of journalism experience, as well as their expectations and future plans with this Mundus Masters.

The first article is adapted from the last lecture of visiting professor and Erasmus Mundus scholar Sandy Tolán during the first module of the fall 2007 semester, Reporting Global Change. As Sandy writes, "We're going to take a world tour." The second article, by Erasmus Mundus student Daniel Nielson, explains how to practice globalism with top football team Global United, who play every Thursday in the Bellevue Hall of Aarhus.

Each of the 41 interviews shares a unique exciting story from a global world. Enjoy!

*Inger Munk*

*Danish School of Journalism*

*Coordinator of the Mundus Masters*

*Journalism and Media within Globalization: The European Perspective*

*September 2007*

## ‘Why I don't feel so bad anymore’

Despite all the evidence - the ‘war on terror,’ war in the Middle East, a growing danger of global climate change, scores of other problems, and an increasingly weakened press worldwide, there’s new evidence: Talented, committed journalists with vision, entering the field

*Adapted from a lecture by Sandy Tolan, September 26, 2007*



Sandy Tolan during class at the Danish School of Journalism

*Photo: Jesper Voldgaard*

We’re going to take a world tour. A tour through this very room in Aarhus. A tour through the aspirations, dreams of the people in it – 41 people from 20 countries.

Let's start with the aspirations for a free press, for freedom of expression. In some places people fight for a free press. In some places people die for it. I’ve met many, including many years ago, a Colombian journalist named Maria Jimene who had risked her life to tell the truth, and then had to leave. But it isn’t always a matter of life and death. In some places people are too intimidated by power, or simply too lazy, to exercise the freedoms they do have. They take them for granted. I would say there aren't many people here who do that.

For example, not **Alexey**. In Belarus, he joined the New Europe Internet Journal team, the goal of which is to "build a network of young experts in the fields of politics, economics, arts, education who share the European values of open society and public discussion."

Or, not **Jigme**, who is concerned about balancing "an independent and responsible media" as guaranteed under the new constitution with preservation of Bhutan's "rich

cultural, spiritual and environmental heritage...in the age of rapid globalization," and in a society where people talk openly about something called a "gross national happiness."

We certainly couldn't call **Kseniya** someone who takes a free press for granted, coming as she does from a country with a "dismal record of free speech violations," as she puts it, and who writes, "I firmly believe that media practitioners shall defend their right to put their message across," and who believes in "active citizenship...through persistent action by committed individuals."

Or, consider **Zijing**, who told her colleague Ulla, "I don't believe absolute freedom of the press exists anywhere in the world, but I certainly would like more of it in China. That is what I wish for in the future."

Those are some of the reasons I don't feel so bad anymore. Here are some more:

**Sakshi** wants to "put my humanitarian feelings into action, toward better journalism," as she told her colleague Helena, or as she wrote in her application to this program, "to contribute to the development of society," which is the "very purpose of journalism."

**Naveen** holds similar beliefs, and he knows that sometimes when you put yourself to the task, your stories are spiked, but he says you have to keep going, "awake, wide awake...an attentive citizen, to keep an eye over very episode..."

**Fuchun** wants "pool the knowledge of Chinese journalists by establishing an [internet-based] news network to ensure a free flow of information and social justice." Here, in our program, he wants to sharpen the passion he developed for online journalism in Beijing, where there's more freedom. Fuchun writes about the importance of *courage* for the Chinese journalist.

I'm so struck by what brought you here. The values of this group. Maybe you didn't come here with a burning desire to expand free speech at home. Maybe it was a little voice that was telling you, this is what you've wanted.

*Some of us know early in life where we want to go:*

**Dali Su** has "never doubted that my best advantage is expressing myself in written words." And yet there was something missing, she told her colleague Neeltje, that brought her here.

**Larissa**, as Sulakshana wrote, "knew very early in life that her destiny lay at the other end of the pen." She couldn't imagine a job just at a desk, because "I want to interact with people."

Others like **Srinivasan** have known their calling and worked in it for a long time, but needed a break, to get away from that desk, to recharge, to get perspective, to keep learning.

So too for **Aditi**, who sees journalism as "history on the run," but now she too can slow down and "explore new areas of journalism," and the ways these days of "dispensing and grappling with news."

For herself, **Neeltje** sees this as a way to build and deepen what she already knows: "I may be able to link specific fields of knowledge," she writes. That's a great notion. She wants "to pass my academic knowledge (as a biologist) to a wider audience. I am extremely eager to use both my journalistic and academic skills to expand the public's understanding..."

*Yes, and that is what can be so good about journalism. In the right circumstances, it is the greatest continuing education in the world.*

**Giulia** wants to learn how to do "the only thing I can really do in my life." Reporting, especially of conflict. She wants to travel to the West Bank.

"News is my life," **Scott** wrote, describing a voracious appetite to "absorb as much as I could...I want to avoid getting complacent; I never want this to seem easy. I want a challenge each time I get an assignment." He wants "a better foundation, a more rounded perspective, a better skill set, and a wider world experience."

Others come after a long struggle with another career choice; or at least a dabbling. (Not that many people here have had the time for a long professional struggle yet.)

**Katrin** quit marine biology, for it lacked sufficient human contact, and began to explore those human stories through literature and now seeks the storytelling of narrative nonfiction.

**Amanda**, the Olympian among us, left her gifts as a cross-country skier, and now plans to combine war and conflict studies with the human rights work she's already done in developing countries.

**Ines** wants to do "purposeful journalism"; a picture of an "intense journalist in the making," as her colleague Chetna wrote about her; PR was not her calling.

I can relate to that. I did some early in my career, and I knew right away I want to be asking questions, not just asking journalists to come to press conferences.

**Laura** thought she'd be a doctor; it was a "blinding desire"; that is, until she went to Nicaragua, to a part where, she wrote, "the drinking water gives you parasites and children are born by candlelight"; that's when she realized what she really wanted to do was communicate, create awareness.

And accounting wasn't **Chetna's** calling. "I couldn't see the world through the narrow medium of a balance sheet," she says now; she wants to bring awareness to readers. Awareness.

And **Elco** told Chetna, he turned away from one career, because "I don't like marketing because I don't want to sell people things they actually don't need." And so when he learned he was accepted to the Mundus program, what did you do, Elco? (He jumped up and down and started yelling, "I'm going to Denmark! I'm going to Denmark!")

**Sabrina** told Brigitta that she too realized PR was not her calling, and now she'll focus in part on the ethics and self-conception of the journalist. Awareness.

And **Brigitta** told Sabrina, the law was too dry; in this profession she wants to tap into her own curiosity, open-mindedness, and critical mind.

*Curiosity.*

"I'm not afraid of the unknown," **Sandra** wrote in her application. She, too, describes and insatiable curiosity and relishes the challenge to live outside of her comfort zone. Those are such key attributes for the global journalist. "I'm not afraid of the unknown."

And there is so much unknown, among us. The journeys we've all taken here would fill up many books.

Consider **Kinuthia's**: His own path here, and into war and conflict reporting, comes from his own life, his own family's displacement in 1992, when he witnessed "journalists cowering, afraid to penetrate the war zone after ethnic fighting" had erupted in his village, hundreds killed, and he was "immediately convinced that I could make a better journalist." So now he wants to understand it.

Or **Helena's**, in a country that's known more war and displacement than any country should know in a millennium; who's experienced war as a human being, where there was "little space and energy to do anything but to survive," as she told Sakshi, and as a professional – working on project called "The state of the Iraqi Children during the last three decades."

Helena remembers her first delightful foray into journalism, in Brazil, observing her grandfather's old printing press – just like **Ricardo**, in El Salvador, learned a lot from his grandfather's magazines; he, a child who needed to dream, was enchanted by chronicles from distant lands, while growing up in the midst of civil war, in a country where "the essence of war impregnates itself into daily living."

Or consider **Caroline's** journey, it's a deep one, and the one to Aarhus, "not an easy one at all," as Sandra wrote. Here is someone who so often has found herself in the middle, of "a lot of suspicion and mistrust," as she says; but the good thing about being in the middle here is that you're in the middle of a great group of friends and colleagues. You belong here, Caroline. We're with you as you sort out your journey. We're totally behind you. We've got your back.

*And then there is the pure lure of the story:*

There's **Danielle**, and her "great passion for people's stories," and "desire to raise awareness through journalism" as she told Fuchun.

**Sulakshana** too; she too dabbled in PR, then she "got to see the other side of the fence," the fence where you can walk the fields and find the stories, and she was hooked. And that realization came from "holding the charred window bar of a train," 7.11, (July 7, 2006, the bomb attacks in India) and subsequently, came a desire to get away from journalism by numbers; to *understand*.

And now, consider the lovely, modest way that **Iselin** describes her dreams: "Ever since I was little, I've been fond of writing," she wrote, echoing the sentiments of so many people from so many cultures in this room. "I've always been of the curious kind, therefore I think that I could become a talented journalist." Humility is a great trait for a journalist. Not to say that personal goals should not also play in: "I very much like...getting to know different cultures and languages, and I would now very much like to study abroad again." Well here you are, Iselin. And I am guessing that Iselin knows, from what I can tell most of you know, you can be serious and have fun.

It's important to remember not to be too serious, to play, to enjoy this life we have. It took me quite a while, too long, to realize that. Some are more of a live to work, some more work to live. Either way works. Or as **Arundhuti** says, do what makes you happy but not at the cost of others.

Or, be with your family and your work at the same time. **Daniel**, here with your wife and infant son, I had no idea. Wow. Globalization and nappies. And no cricket at the moment. "I want balance," you wrote. Yeah. Work hard, and play hard, think hard, and with luck, from this station, you will find that balance.

A lot of you are focused on the ethics of the work we all do, the systems, how they work, how they could be better.

**Paul**, for example, who has written thoughtfully here about how one group is described as the Other or the familiar, depending on the media's affiliation with the government or the opposition. He told Arush, "absolute objectivity does not exist; you can only strive hard to bring out as many sides as possible."

**Ulla**, for her part, wants to work on making Danish media more global, and more globally aware. "Globalization is more and more important in all types of journalism," she says.

*And then there is the very globalized nature of this enterprise; the possibilities it suggests; the promises the lie beneath the surface, around the corner.*

**Jessica** sensed this when she applied: "I crave the excitement and intensity of learning and experiencing in a culture different than my own. This time," she wrote, after describing trips to other lands, "I am ready to be more than a visitor."

I understand. There's nothing like seeing a culture, a country, a place, from the inside, rather than on the tourist surface level.

**Susan**, from a different corner of the world, Kerala by way of Kenya, writes of India as "a country in the throes of a new global modernity." She herself is "rapt with the sense of community...among her fellow Mundusians," as Daniel puts it. *Mundusians*.

And then some people understand themselves as a kind of human outcome of globalization. "I am a product of old world globalization," **Robin** wrote in her application; for a long time, she's reflected on that, questioning "the notion of a singular identity, and whether it can still exist in a rapidly changing world."

Here's a chance, **Jillian** wrote, to examine and observe, learn from, and affect "media trends, social thought, political culture, and cultural practices, and how they are all connected."

And to explore with each other, as **Arush** wrote, how the globalized world is "moving in two directions – we have more and more 'connections' in the internet and airplanes but fewer and fewer in the classic human sense. Our ads sing of 'Planet Reebok' and 'Planet Hollywood' but none of us feel united at a deeper level.' "

Here, of course there is the possibility, perhaps ironically, to transcend that disconnection, and to form, as Zijing wrote, "a real international network."

"Hey, this is me," **Duygu** said when she learned about the program. For a person like her, from Istanbul, who can live in Asia and work in Europe – and all the same time, in the same town – a crossroads place like this is perfect. "I don't need to Google anything," she told Robin. "Just call a person. Everyone [in the program] is just a walking encyclopedia."

"A great opportunity for mind-broadening," is how **Ljubica** put it, and for "changing of perspective, which is something essential for every journalist, especially for the journalist who belongs to the generation which I belong to, who will live their professional lives in such a turbulent time as ours."

Whatever the field, it's good to get out of your comfort zone, your skin, and your surroundings.

And so we're all here. "I believe one should move out of home," **Arundhuti**, the self-described "urban nomad," wrote on her application, "at least for a time...as it makes one self-reliant, and yet helps in appreciating the warmth and value of having a home and family." And maybe creating your own family of sorts, from these pieces of fabric.

And that is the most amazing thing. That's why I'm here. I wanted to be part of this, too.

We have here the chance, as **Arush** wrote, "interacting with new cultures...where you meet a stranger and both of you cast about to find a common connection, a common friend...The Erasmus Mundus program is that common friend that shall bring me to the table with even more strangers from all over the world, and turn us into friends for life."

So – that's my evidence. You *are* the new evidence. You have so much to learn from each other. We all do. *And so, my fellow Mundusians...* Stay on the ground. And stay in touch.

*Sandy Tolan*

*University of Southern California, Los Angeles, USA*

*Erasmus Mundus Scholar and visiting professor Danish School of Journalism teaching module 1: Reporting Global Change of the Mundus Journalism Masters*

*September 2007*

# A Globalized Unit

by goalkeeper Daniel Peter Skriver Nielsen



Global United players from left to right: Jigme, Robin, Elco, Ricardo, Daniel and Scott, with Patron Saint Sandy Tolan crouching in front *Photo: Inger Munk*

Forget Chelsea, forget Real Madrid – the truly supraterritorial, transplanetary, global football team these days is Global United.

A solid El Salvadoran defender, a Kenyan playmaker, a couple of confident Yanks, a flying Dutchie, Bhutanese speedster, Ukrainian striker and Kiwi goalkeeper converged on Aarhus, Denmark, in August this year. They were part of the Erasmus Mundus global journalism program but coupled with their collective academic prowess, was a desire to play the beautiful game.

The group started an indoor football team – Global United. The team had high aspirations on the back of daily training sessions led by coach Helena “I’m Brazilian” Nassif, who would keep a track of the score and point out each player’s strengths and weaknesses.

“I think we have a good team,” the team’s El Salvadoran, Ricardo, would state confidently after each training session.

Global United's Dutch player Elco, whipped up a frenzy of support and a fan club was established. On the first match day, the team had vociferous support from 15 lovely ladies, the team's Patron Saint Sandy Tolan and even an infant boy named Felix, there to watch daddy.

What should have been a spectacle turned into a debacle as Global United lost 3-0, 7-1 and finally by double figures.

The team was in turmoil, players shaking their heads and casting accusing glances. What happened? Too many styles in one team, was the answer. We needed to be more like American foreign policy – unilateral, belligerent, uncompromising.

There was one positive from the first pool of matches. Bhutanese super striker Jigme scored a terrific goal. Something to build on.

It was a humble Global United outfit that turned up a Bellevuehallen the next week. No fan club, no Patron Saint, not even the coach turned up.

The first game was lost 6-0 but the team had improved markedly, even managing to have a few shots at goal. Things were looking up.

United lost the next game 7-5 but celebrated as if it had won the World Cup. Scoring goals was actually possible! Two more losses followed but the team again managed to score goals.

The ultimate goal now is to win a game. Go Global United!



## SANDRA BANJAC

### In search of a true sense of globalisation

NAVEEN MISHRA

Born on June 17, 1982, in Croatia, Sandra Banjac moved to New Zealand with her parents in 1995 and then to Australia 3 years later – where she has been living for the past 10 years. “I can’t really say who I am by nationality or where I belong and for this reason, I don’t like being defined by it. I like to think of myself as a child of the world with a global passport,” said Sandra.

Sandra graduated with a bachelor’s degree in broadcasting from Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, one of the most sought after media schools in the country. Sandra’s professional stint began with an internship at a German Radio station named Deutsche Welle Radio, where she worked for the English programming department for about three months. On her return to Australia, she worked for different radio and television stations, in various positions, which helped her to hone her skills and acquire knowledge to work her way up in the broadcast industry.

With an inquisitive mind and immense passion for knowledge, culture and languages, Sandra loves interacting with people and listening to their stories, which landed her in the field of journalism. She says, “I like the creativity and freedom in creating a radio, TV or print report; choosing the right words, sounds or images to evoke a reaction in an audience. I also think journalists have a certain responsibility and power to inform. I like this.”

Today, she is extremely happy to be part of this program because of its global nature and hopes to gain the maximum she can, not only on the knowledge front, but also on the social front. She wishes to gain an understanding of globalisation, its true purpose, potential and effect on the society and world. “Not only this, I expect to learn as much as I can about each individual fellow class mate. I want to know them as people and as journalists. I wish to make lifelong friends,” adds Sandra.

With no place for ‘never’ in her dictionary along with high aspirations and respect for human kind, she thinks these are the three treasured traits which would take her to the top, in the field of journalism. As a journalist, given the opportunity to change one thing in the world, Sandra says, “It would be to make people realise that humanity is far more important and rewarding than the economic and political power status of a country achieved through war and suffering. If there was no war, but instead, a collective understanding of peace and its value, this world would be a much nicer place to live.”

Besides journalism, Sandra also has a strong desire to work in the human rights and humanitarian sector. “Ideally I would like to be able to combine the two mediums together. I also love documentary production. I’m almost certain that my career path will go down one of these two roads if not both simultaneously,” explains Sandra.

Sandra on choosing her specialism, “Hamburg was a natural choice, because it will look at different global media systems and public spheres, and this is something I’m curious about.”



## ALEXEY MEDVETSKY

### Philosophic inspiration from Minsk and for Europe

JILLIAN PRANGER

The first thing that set Aarhus apart from his native Belarus for Alexey Medvetsky was what he calls its “bike culture.” Once well-loved bicycles discarded along roadways are the norm in the youth-driven educational center of Denmark, but they are a rarity in Alexey’s hometown. Alexey arrived in the city only one day prior to beginning his new masters program in journalism and media. He turned up in the middle of the night to a dark, quiet town – his luggage lost in the voyage and unable to access his delegated student accommodations. Still, he was greeted by true Danish warmth; his welcoming mentor put him up for the night in her humble, cozy abode before ensuring he arrived punctually at the start of the welcoming reception early the next morning. The pace of newness and discovery has not stopped since for this modest Belarusian, and he hopes it stays that way well into his second-year specialism in Hamburg, Germany.

Nine hours away in Minsk, Alexey is an editor, writer and production manager at Belarus’ New Europe Journal – an Internet project focused on political, social and cultural debate and issues. At the journal, Alexey contributes to everything from coordinating submissions, to analytical essays and discussions into current issues facing Belarus’ public. His work exists in an atmosphere that he says has room for interpretation, but little for original thought. Alexey wishes the country as a whole had additional means and capability for professional foreign correspondence coverage of issues facing both Belarus and its global counterparts. It was these hopes that led Alexey to apply to the Erasmus Mundus program in Journalism and Media within Globalization. With further education in the area, Alexey hopes to take back home “what is hot and what is not in debate of the global media context.”

However, Alexey was not always focused on media systems and journalistic standards. He has an expansive academic background in philosophy building up to his PhD studies in social philosophy at the European Humanities University in Minsk. This may be why understanding and speaking on global terms and challenges comes seemingly effortlessly to Alexey. With a paper topic of Nationalism and the Work of Social Imagination in the Context of Globalization, it is easy for one to see how Alexey’s placement in this program is a natural progression in his continuing academic journey. With quiet reserve he also shares that he is fluent in German, so his hopes to sharpen his journalist skills further in Hamburg are also well placed.

When pressed as to a personal historic moment in his life, Alexey shares that in hindsight the greatest gift he could have ever received was on his eleventh birthday, December 25, 1991, when then-President Gorbachev announced his resignation and the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Hesitant to chose now exactly where his path made lead, Alexey explains it is not in his cultural nature to try to guess what the future might hold as exterior influences have usually had greater personal consequences in the past than individual hopes and dreams; still, he remains optimistic for himself and for his country. “For one of the first times I can see the world as very open, and not closed,” says Alexey, nonchalantly admiring the lines of bicycles haphazardly parked outside the Danish School of Journalism.



## JIGME THINLEY

### Changing lanes

**From the land of the Thunder Dragon to the Jutland of vikings and warships, Jigme Thinley embraces the cultural differences**

AMANDA FORTIER

If the world's economy were graded on gross national happiness, Bhutan would be the reigning leader.

“Bhutan has nothing to offer other than the wonderful memories,” explains Jigme Thinley, a native of this tiny kingdom cradled in the Hymalayas between neighboring giants India and China. “It's a very peaceful country. It's unique and exotic and a land where GNH prevails.”

Growing up in an impoverished village in the far east of Bhutan, called Tashigang, Jigme remembers playing in the rugged fields, looking after the cows in the jungle and helping his sisters milk the cows and do other domestic chores.

“There were no modern amenities, like television. Even radios were a rare commodity,” explains the quick-smiling journalist. “I went to school far away from our village, so from an early age I went to boarding school.”

After completing what he describes as a very bad life in boarding school, with barely enough food to fill his stomach, Jigme started working as an associate radio producer. After a couple years dabbling in both television and radio, he set off for India to do a post-graduate diploma in online journalism. A year later, Jigme returned to Thimphu, Bhutan's capital city, to be sub-editor for the state-run Bhutan Broadcasting Service.

When not sitting at his desk editing, Jigme likes to hang out with his friends, play soccer and archery – the national sport and one Jigme assures every Bhutanese man plays! The biggest concern facing his people right now is how to maintain their distinct culture and tradition. Since the Internet and television were introduced in Bhutan, only eight years ago, the country has undergone many changes. The King is on a path to modernization and next year Bhutanese will go to the polls in their first-ever democratic election – an event most, including Jigme, is reluctant of.

The Erasmus program is something Jigme has wanted to do for a very long time. He is eager to upgrade his qualifications and get exposed to other people and other cultures. In his second year, Jigme heads to London to specialize in Business and Finance. This is a new concept in Bhutan, and he hopes the training will allow him to contribute in a more meaningful way once he returns home. Jigme wants to focus specifically on rural journalism. He would like to travel the remote corners of Bhutan covering issues otherwise left unheard.

Here in Denmark, Jigme is adjusting to the “food and mechanical lifestyle.” Though he admits to have mentally-prepared himself for the culture shock, he's still trying to stay out of the bike lanes! “This is not Bhutan,” jokes Jigme. “I can't walk everywhere I like!”



## **JILLIAN PRANGER**

### **A cosmopolitan Canadian**

**Studying in her first masters program in journalism, Jillian already has a resume long and impressive enough for any headhunter to chase her on both sides of the Atlantic**

ALEXEY MEDVETSKY

#### **Why Erasmus Mundus**

Jillian Pranger is not a typical journalist for her background is in research and production management for documentary broadcasting in Canada. In addition, her professional experience in both media and public relations also counts over six years. Her bachelor's degree was in arts with a concentration in communication and media studies, and her particular interest was in documentary and broadcast production. She also enjoys knowledge and experience in issues facing social justice and Canadian governmental communications policies.

All these were the reasons why she has decided to have a two year break to join the political science focused Erasmus Mundus program Journalism and Media within Globalization: The European Perspective.

#### **Why Hamburg**

Brought up in the bilingual French-English environment of Canada and being both a Canadian and Dutch national Jillian could not but take a chance to study in the two kingdoms of Denmark and the Netherlands and one Bundesrepublik of Germany. Jillian has chosen the specialization Media Systems, Journalism and Public Spheres in a Comparative Perspective, which is to be completed in Hamburg, because she would like the experience outside of Canada to study the differences between and within European and North American media systems.

#### **World Experience**

Jillian has already traveled over 18 countries all over the world and worked as a volunteer representative for World Vision's Destination Life Change program with a concentration on the country of Honduras. She has also acted as the editor-in-chief for an online community magazine, discussion forum and media exhibit. Looking forward to snowboard when winter comes, Jillian has already joined the numerous Aarhus joggers and bicyclers

#### **Future**

After completing this masters program, what is self-evident, Jillian hopes to perhaps eventually take a communications director's position at a public institution, work as a political communications advisor in Canada, or even perhaps further study or research in the field.



## AMANDA FORTIER

### From professional skiing to professional journalism

JIGME THINLEY

It was cold and raining outside. It was my second day and my mentor was supposed to come and pick me up at nine in the morning along with some other mates, to carry out some paper formalities. “Weather in Denmark is very unpredictable,” Stine, my mentor said, as she came to pick me up. I agreed.

And there was Amanda Fortier along with two other friends waiting for me. She was in quandary over what was the problem with her visa card. “I have to pay my tuition fees. Ironically it was even working in Africa,” says Amanda somewhat astonished. Figuring out what could be the problem took her day that day.

Amanda Fortier, 29, hails from Edmonton, Alberta – the home of oil and hockey in Canada. She completed her undergrad in film and media communications with a minor in Anthropology. I asked her why she chose the Erasmus Mundus Masters in Journalism and Media within Globalization. “I was interested in studying abroad, and particularly with an international student body. I think this is an incredible opportunity to learn as much from my classmates as from my professor,” said Amanda, adding that she wanted to have stronger basis and foundation in journalism to kick start her career.

This extremely delightful lady has represented Canada in Salt Lake City Olympic Games in 2002 in cross-country skiing. She was a member of Canada’s national cross-country ski team. She took up skiing at a very young age of five. “It was really my life up until five years ago,” she recalls. But she retired right after the Olympic Games. “I have to see and do so many other things,” she adds.

Amanda is fond of traveling. She has traveled throughout Canada, USA and Europe. She also set foot on Venezuela, China, Australia, Sierra Leone, Mauritania, Senegal, Guinea Bissau and throughout Ghana. She started traveling at a very young age. “In all, I’ve been to every continent except Antarctica. I’ve lived in five different countries (three being developing countries) and have spent the last year and a half doing human rights work in West Africa.”

Her year-and-a-half human rights work in West Africa has prompted her to go to Swansea and take war and conflict as her specialized subject next year. “I am interested in working on human rights issues in developing countries (post-conflict) and working with local journalists,” she says.

Right now Amanda is happily put up at Hejredalsvej in Aarhus. But her visa card problem has not been sorted out. “It is out of commission in Denmark. And I will cross my fingers that the smart-chip hasn’t taken over Amsterdam or Wales before I get there,” she prays.



## WU ZIGING

### Censorship is no fortune

**It was a shock to the young journalist, Wu Zijing, when she for the first time was subjected to censorship: Her articles in an American magazine were cut out by Chinese customs officials**

ULLA SKOVSBØL KNUDSEN

Close your eyes and visualise a Chinese customs office. Take a closer look at the large number of customs officials sitting there all armed with scissors. In front of them, ten thousand copies of the American magazine *Fortune* are piling up, and the conscientious employees are systematically cutting out four pages of each and every copy – An article written by Wu Zijing, a young Chinese journalist.

In the article she investigates why the online encyclopaedia, Wikipedia, had suddenly been unblocked in China while at the same time a lot of other websites are still blocked due to censorship. Her article was illustrated with photographs downloaded from the Wikipedia picturing the Tiananmen Square protest rallies in 1989.

Zijing herself does not remember the Tiananmen incident. She was only four years old in 1989, and when she wrote the controversial article in *Fortune*, she was a student of journalism at Fudan University doing an internship at the magazine in New York. She was shocked when her editor informed her about the four-page article having been cut out of the ten thousand copies meant for a Chinese audience. Her parents back in Hangzhou were worried, and her former mentor, a correspondent at the *New York Times* Shanghai Bureau, had a serious discussion with her about how to protect oneself as a journalist working under a totalitarian regime.

The young Chinese woman tells me her story while sipping tea at a sidewalk café in Aarhus, Denmark. “As a journalist in China, you are always walking on the razor’s edge,” she explains. “Of course, you have to tell your stories, but you also have to find the right way. Don’t irritate the rulers too much. I don’t believe, absolute freedom of the press exists anywhere in the world,” she adds. “But I certainly would like more of it in China. That is what I wish for in the future.”

Though only 22 years-old Wu Zijing has already passed her bachelor exams in journalism and economics, and she has completed no less than three internships: One at a Hong Kong-based Phoenix TV, one at the *New York Times* Shanghai Bureau, and finally she had the thrilling experience with Chinese censorship while working as an intern reporter at *Fortune Magazine*. Now, she is in Denmark to embark upon an international master’s degree in globalisation and the media. Six months from now she will move on to Amsterdam to complete her second term, and next year she will study for her specialisation project and write her final thesis at City University in London.

“I want to specialise in financial journalism, because I have already done my minor in economics, and I want to extend my knowledge in that field,” she says. I am good at maths, and furthermore, I am absolutely sure there will be a huge demand for good, sound journalism within economics and financial matters in China in the years to come.



## FUCHUN TANG

**‘I never expected to end up in journalism,’ says talented Mundus student Fuchun, about his life-changing move**

DANIELLE BATIST

When walking up hill, Fuchun Tang – or Frank, for whoever cannot pronounce his name properly – looks surprised at all cyclists passing by. It is another windy day in Denmark’s second largest city and the Chinese Mundus journalism student finds it hard to understand why all those people bother to tire themselves out. “Those bikes are one of the many things I have to get used to here in Europe,” he smiles.

The fact that he is here in Aarhus now to do his master’s degree in journalism is something he would not have believed a couple of years ago. As he had studied English language and literature, he knew he had developed his English reading and writing skills well. Still, he was surprised when he came in contact with a big local newspaper in Tiangin. “They initially wanted me to become one of their sub-editors in the international newsroom,” he recalls. “But after some changes within the organisation I was more needed as a reporter. So after some training that is what I became.”

After six months Fuchun got another chance to develop in the field of journalism. The publisher of his newspaper was about to start a new business related paper in the area. “By that time I discovered I really liked working as a journalist, so when I heard of the plans I immediately took my chance,” says the ambitious 27-year-old. Another six months later he found himself experienced enough to move on to a new challenge. The China Internet Information Centre in Beijing drew his attention. This big, government funded news website was looking for English reporters and Fuchun was offered a job. “The website is a platform to present China to the world,” he explains. “It has sections in different languages like Chinese, English and French. I started off as a reporter, then got into business news and in the end I was made manager of part of the newsroom.”

Managing a newsroom with ten people taught Fuchun to use his organisational skills and to stay calm when stressed. What made the job in the newsroom easier was the “vibe of new journalism” as Fuchun calls it. “Online media are still pretty new in China. There is this big boom of modernisation going on, and the possibilities Internet offers are endless ... Although the website is state funded the government does not put a lot of pressure on the policies we have in place. In new media I feel we have more freedom. It also provides more possibilities to interact with the audiences ... It is the combination of all those things that make me enjoy new journalism.”

Due to his constantly growing interest in online journalism and international business affairs Fuchun became interested in the Mundus Masters program. He chose it not only because he liked the idea of living in Europe for some time, but also, as Fuchun explains, “I want to learn more in the field of international journalism, financial reporting and globalisation. I think this degree will provide that knowledge.” After the first year and his London specialism Fuchun hopes to get back into Chinese new media because, as he puts it: “Although I never expected to end up in this field, I have developed a passion for it.”



## DALI SU

### Lily's roots

NEELTJE BOLLEN

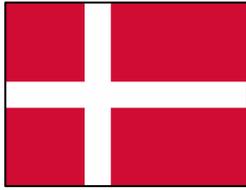
When we walk through the bleak Danish sun to the University Cafeteria, she tells me everyone in Hong Kong calls her Lily. Actually, everyone there calls each other by their English name, she adds. Why? "I don't know, maybe we have the sense that it makes it easier for us to address each other." And maybe it is a good example of the international setting which Lily's love for journalism sprouts from.

The choice of 22-year-old Dali Su to study journalism is a combination of both luck and determination. At 16, she graduated from high school and was appointed to Nanjing University. Can't you choose a University? "No", she said, "You cannot choose in China." Lily has a determined way of speaking, and while talking to you, she keeps looking at you with a focused look in her eyes. She was going to do a degree in accounting, but gladly for her, Hong Kong recruiters came to the mainland before school started and selected her for a scholarship. And off she went. Her interests lay with international relations and languages. However, her fourth year of European studies was not covered by her scholarship and the University had an excellent reputation in the field of international journalism, so Lily decided to take up writing.

Hong Kong was a great opportunity for the young aspiring journalist. "I did not even know what journalism was about," she explains, but she would soon find out. Lily enjoyed her British professors imported from the UK and their friendly way of handling the students. "We even had barbeques at their places," recalls Lily. Because of their methods of teaching, Lily got more interested in European ways of thinking. Yet, after finishing her degree, she did not want to enroll in postgraduate education immediately. Lily: "I wanted to work, I wanted to know what it was like to be journalist." And she became a real one.

For a year-and-a-half Lily worked for a newspaper covering the transport section. "It was not what I had dreamed of, but I needed the practical experience," Lily explains. "It gave me a lot of things and opened my eyes...I was visiting ports and airports and interviewed top business men. As a customer you just see ships and airplanes, but I really dived into that world." Do we hear someone speak about a personal passion? Lily giggles: "I am not passionate, but I am a little attached to the topic now."

During her years at the newspaper she always knew she would pursue her academic career, "I did not want to be a reporter all my life and was waiting for the right chance." The chance soon arrived. Lily's eye fell on the European Mundus Masters. She was attracted by the international character and the European way of teaching. "It is good that the base of the discussion about globalization is in Europe, because it is so open to all cultures." Is she interested in the topic? "Of course, I grew up in China, it is the factory of the world, an example of globalization." Lily wants to explore the logistics, business and cultural sides of the enormous Chinese trade. Here, her roots show again. Although she loves European study, in ten years time she will be back in Asia for a long term career after her PhD. "I don't know why, it's just a feeling. I just see myself there."



## ULLA SKOVSBØL KNUDSEN

**Veteran journalist in pursuit of eye-opening  
Native from Jutland, Ulla is the only Dane in the group, but  
what makes her unique is a more than just that**

WU ZIGING

Ulla Skovsbøl Knudsen has an amazing ability to gain your trust ever since the first eye contact. You know she has something. But it goes way beyond your expectation: a bachelor's degree from the Danish School of Journalism, two post-graduate diplomas in European Affairs and Middle East studies, fifteen years on-the-ground practice as a journalist in print and broadcast, and one book written about women in Danish agriculture.

Throughout her diverse life and career approaches, one thing remains the same all the time; that is the passion to better understand and take part in this rapidly changing world. Along with that, a pursuit of new inspiration took her here, for a master's degree in Erasmus Mundus Journalism program.

Before sitting back to the classroom again, she has been working for six years as editor of a 45-minute weekly environmental program on DR, Danish Radio, covering issues like climate changing and environmental policy. Her former journalistic practice also includes five years at an agricultural focused magazine, and another five years as sub-editor at the regional desk of Danish Broadcast Company.

When asked about her most impressive experience, she mentioned her one-year international study program in European Affairs, which also allowed young professionals to study in several European countries. She thought it was indeed "eye-opening" and enabled her to "start thinking from new perspectives."

Now is the time, to open eyes again and see even further.

She also expects to influence the current situation of journalism in Denmark. "Our national media fail to gain a true global perspective," she said. "Globalization is more and more important in all types of journalism, not only for foreign correspondents, but also every journalist, everywhere."



## RICARDO JOSÉ VALENCIA PINEDA

### A passionate Latino American

ELCO van GRONINGEN

As I am walking around with Ricardo José Valencia Pineda through the inner city of Aarhus, I cannot miss the fact that he is from Latin America. He exudes spirit and passion when he speaks of his childhood, his family, but mostly journalism. He really likes the profession and puts all of his heart into it.

Ricardo was born in El Salvador on October 27, 1980. At the age of ten he made his entrance into the media landscape. Ricardo became a radio announcer. Even at that time, he was not thinking of becoming a journalist. The intellectually rich way in which he was raised by his mother made him want to become an anthropologist at the age of sixteen. It was just one year later that Ricardo decided he wanted to be in journalism.

He started studying communication and journalism at the Central America University in San Salvador when he reached nineteen. During his studies Ricardo became the assistant of the correspondent of the German Press Agency (GPA) in El Salvador, who also wrote for the Spanish paper *El Pais*. Later on, he came to be a reporter of the weekly *El Faro*. He also made his first steps abroad during his studies. He went to Mexico for a year and studied there. At the age of twenty-four he received his bachelor's degree after working at a press office in Valencia, Spain, for half a year. The most important thing Ricardo learnt in Spain was that he did want to return to journalism instead of working in an office.

He went back to El Salvador and started to work in a paper called *La Prensa Gráfica*. It is here that he met his mentor, Saúl Vaquerano, one of the editors. This man showed him the passion in journalism and the independence to fight battles in the newsroom. While working for this newspaper Ricardo had his finest hour in his journalistic career so far. In June 2007, he wrote a 32-paper piece on the links between the KGB and the *guerillero*'s in El Salvador. It is because of this kind of writing Ricardo says, "I characterize myself as a political journalist."

Ricardo wants to have an academic background so he can argue and discuss with academics as he is interviewing them. This is why he went surfing on the Internet in 2006. On the homepage of the European Union he discovered the Erasmus Mundus Masters. He immediately felt enthusiastic and sent e-mails to the institutions involved. After a while he got a response from Hamburg saying that he should apply because he made a good chance of getting through. So, Ricardo applied and the rest is history.

The Erasmus program might not give Ricardo the total satisfaction as an academic he is looking for, so in the future it might be possible that he will apply for a PhD. But as a passionate Latino American his future is still uncertain. As I asked him where he sees himself working after he is done studying. "I don't know where I will be living. Because I think I'm a citizen of the world, I think I should be able to live in any place in the world," answered Ricardo. It is this quote that makes me believe Ricardo is a free spirit and cut out for the globalistic aspects of the Erasmus Mundus Masters.



## BRIGITTA MOLL

### Always on the Run to Gain New Experience

SABRINA EISENREICH

**The hard facts:** name: Brigitta Moll, age: 25, hometown: Cologne, Germany

Although age and origin can shape one's background, the soft facts are more meaningful; and, there is a lot to tell about the German girl from Cologne. Open-mindedness is probably Brigitta's most stunning characteristic and therefore she is keen to get to know different cultures than the European one. With her backpacking trips to Thailand and India, she already acquired an impression of other culture areas. However, Brigitta assures that is only the beginning. This will be no problem for her, as she is both a communicative and creative person. Her willingness to work in a creative environment actually drove Brigitta to become a journalist.

After her high school diploma, Brigitta first decided to study law. She followed this path up to the degree *maîtrise en droit* awarded by the University of Paris and the first state exam in German law at the University of Cologne. It was during her studies in Cologne that she began to realize law was actually too dry and technical for her and she made her first step into the field of journalism. Starting as a freelancer and writing stories for the youth page of *Kölner Stadtanzeiger*, the turning point for her future career came along while she was writing articles for the regional pages. Most of her stories centred on social issues of rather poor districts in Cologne. She felt helpful in doing journalistic work because she could make known the social projects. Brigitta always tried to see behind the curtain and find a critical way to deal with the issues. That was when Brigitta decided, "my dream is to become a journalist."

Comparing her experience in radio and newspaper she prefers newspaper journalism because she wants to inform her audience in a more profound way, giving more detailed and analytical information than is possible in typical radio shows. Feeling both German and European in her identity, she likes the idea of becoming a correspondent for a French newspaper as she already lived in Paris for two years and loves the country.

The experiences she gathered thus far in journalism influence the role concept she draws of a journalist. From her point of view some of the most important features of a journalist are being curious, open-minded and critical. What is also indispensable for Brigitta's concept of a journalist is to always give reliable information and to keep distance from one's topic – although she is convinced that a journalist cannot be completely objective as his or her background will always shape the way he or she sees the world. To give balanced arguments and the eagerness to always see the other side are qualities Brigitta learned in her role as the middle of three daughters.

Something that she expects of the Erasmus Mundus program is learning to approach a topic from different view points and to identify the important points of issues taking place on European and global level. Last but not least, she hopes to evolve and develop during the program within such an international group of people; after all, one of her philosophies of life is: "Never tread water, always keep on moving forward".



## INES DREFS

### **From PR to a purpose**

**Ines is the very picture of an intense journalist in the making**

SRINIVASAN JAGANNATHAN

'Purposeful journalism' is what Ines Drefs wants to do. Among the youngest in the Erasmus Mundus 2007-2009 batch, Ines, 23, has just got her bachelor's degree in communications and social sciences from the University of Erfurt, which she says is a small place of education and the capital of Thuringia in what used to be East Germany.

Ines herself is from Gottingen, which lies some where between Frankfurt and Hanover, and interned for three months with a public relations agency. Ines is all earnest when she says that PR was not her calling, and that she wants to do some serious journalism. She thinks the Erasmus Mundus Masters may be a good way to start. Keen on doing a comparative study of the media systems of the world, Ines is sure that the journalists gathered from all over the world for the Mundus program will offer her an informal exposure to the way journalism is practised elsewhere in the world.

For Ines has had some experience of Asia when she did a semester in South Korea as part of a university exchange program. In Europe, besides of course the exposure to the German media, Ines has seen first hand the French way thanks to a school exchange program. Another similar program took her to the United States.

Her Erasmus Mundus program specialism, in media systems at the University of Hamburg, should, Ines thinks, literally round off her journalism education. As much as learning about their media practices, Ines hopes the multi-cultural/ethnic composition of the Erasmus student group will also help broaden her mind. As she says with her ready, infectious smile, "I hope I will be able to get on well with everyone."

Ines is not all work and no play. A mean tennis player, Ines has participated in local tournaments. Though she protests about her singing abilities, Erasmus students can bear testimony to her talents in that direction (surely none of you has forgotten the karaoke night). Ines also likes to generally hang out with friends.

Ines may be yet to start thinking seriously of what lies beyond the next two years, but surely it is going to be future perfect.



## LARISSA HAIDA

### **Minding her business;**

**Larissa Haida is prepared to go around the world in three semesters**

SULAKSHANA GUPTA

Most of us spend our entire lives looking for what we're meant to do. 23-year-old Larissa Haida knew very early in life that her destiny lay at the other end of a pen. Armed with a bachelor's degree in communication, Larissa is ready to claim her place in the world of journalism. "I could never imagine sitting in an office behind a desk all day, I want to interact with people," says the young woman from Fuerth, Germany.

Larissa's first brush with newsprint was while working at *Heimatbote*, a regional paper where she covered local news for young people. Following an internship at a small American community paper and the larger *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ) back home, Larissa was able to narrow down her areas of interest. "I had the opportunity to write on business and finance at the FAZ and that's what I want to pursue," she adds. No prizes for guessing her specialization.

Apart from bulls and bears, Larissa also finds herself drawn to the smaller stories that constitute our cultural legacy but rarely find place in broadsheets. "These are not always stories of national importance, but matter to the lives of people in a community," she elaborates. While doing an internship in Olney, south of Chicago, she interviewed the survivors of a fire that had ravaged the town fair 25 years ago and relished the stories they narrated of the old days. On another occasion in Hamburg, strolling down the notorious Reeperbahn, the city's red light district, she wandered into a quaint salon run by an old lady with anecdotes as colorful as the coiffures on display. She was drawn into tales of old sailors and lost loves. "This was not necessarily the assignment I was given, but these stories made the article even more vital."

While stories of the common man remain her passion, Larissa enrolled in the Erasmus Mundus Master for a deeper insight into globalization. In a class of 41 students of 20 nationalities she hopes not only to gain an academic understanding of the processes that drive globalization, but also to share perspectives on how the similar events have different repercussions around the world. "I have some idea of different cultures having attended several UN simulations where I represented countries like Mexico, Jamaica, and Venezuela and got to learn about their systems and society." If journalism doesn't pan out, Larissa fancies herself as a diplomat.

Apart from academics, travel is definitely on the agenda while doing her master's degree. Always one foot out of the door, Larissa has toured Europe, paid homage to the jazz greats in New Orleans and wants to head to sunny Australia the next chance she gets. When asked where her other interests lie, Larissa giggles, "I love to laugh." Anyone will tell you that a sense of humor is a great travel accessory.



## KATRIN WOLF

**Passion flower Katrin wants to bring to light the many conflicts that simply escape the world's attention**

CHETNA MAHADIK

The outward reticence of the 25-year-old Bavarian, Katrin Wolf, hides a passionate personality and a surprisingly adventurous spirit. It is this passion and spirit that saw her quit marine biology in favour of literature, seek journalistic internships at several publications throughout a tough bachelor's program, and finally choose war and conflict as her specialism for the Erasmus Mundus Masters in Journalism program.

A love for wildlife originally pushed Wolf to pursue marine biology at the Kiel University. But the antiseptic environs of a laboratory were too limiting for the bespectacled red-head. Sensing no opportunity to explore deeper human experiences in the program, she quit it after a year-and-a-half. Instead, she took up German Literature and Political Science at the Regensburg University nearer home. She completed the program just a few weeks ago.

Katrin's first encounter with journalism was at the age of 16 when she set up a newspaper for her school. The project won her an internship in a German magazine *TV Today*. "I was shoved between different editorial departments for four weeks, reviewing and rating films," she recalled. The experience inspired her to continue working on a freelance basis for various German publications. The most moving story she wrote, Wolf said, was one about two social workers trying to run a project for homeless women in the icy Regensburg winter from a shop with no heating. "The story led to the women getting several calls offering help," she revealed, which in turn strengthened her faith in the power of journalism.

One of the main reasons for Katrin applying to the Erasmus program was its international character, which brought students from all across the world together. "Often, what we see in our newspapers and televisions of the rest of the world comes to us through our own cultural filter," explains Wolf. It is only by meeting people from different cultures that you get to know the reality, she said. For example, she only thought of Singapore as a dreaded totalitarian regime. It was only when she met Singaporean students in her last semester at college, which she chose to spend at the Newcastle University in Australia, she realised that the city is also about the people who live there, their lives, their struggles, history and culture that needs to be understood and appreciated.

Katrin's choice of war and conflict as her specialism is prompted by her desire to bring to light the various conflicts that simply escape the attention of the world. "There are so many hidden wars taking place that we simply don't know about," she said, citing examples of the genocide in Rwanda and more recently in Darfur. "These are wars that journalists should report on," she insisted. After her master's degree, Katrin hopes to work for a quality publication and highlight many such forgotten conflicts.



## SABRINA EISENREICH

### Pushing the European course

### Sabrina underlines the Media's importance in European integration

BRIGITTA MOLL

From a small Bavarian town into the big European world, 24 year-old German citizen Sabrina Eisenreich has personally experienced the amazing possibilities provided by the European Union. During her undergrad studies in communication sciences and politics at the University of Munich, she left the Bavarian coziness to live in Pamplona in northern Spain for six months. She thus speaks three of the main European languages, being fluent in English, Spanish and her mother tongue German.

Her passion for Journalism was awoken when Sabrina did an internship at the local newspaper in her hometown. She was thrown into cold water right away and wrote articles from her first day on, covering a broad variety of topics such as reporting from a criminal court process or investigating in a natural science subject. It was fascinating for her to plunge into matters she knew nothing about before. She discovered her passion for political journalism and became conscious of its influence while interning at the German television channel Bayerischer Rundfunk, where she did research and assisted the production of a political program that departed from the mainly conservative line of the channel.

When hearing about the Mundus Masters in Journalism and Media within Globalisation from a teacher, Sabrina immediately made up her mind to try for this most challenging way into journalism on a European and global level. The prospect of learning with and from classmates from all over the world was in her eyes the best way to "broaden the horizon," as Sabrina puts it. She expects the program to deepen her knowledge in journalistic studies and to become more aware of the ethics and self-conception of a journalist.

Sabrina is open towards her future place in the journalistic profession, though imagining it rather in a weekly or monthly magazine and on a European level. But when it comes to her principles, friendly and smiling Sabrina has set ideas: She is well aware of a journalist's huge responsibility towards his readers who rely on the media. "Good research, explanation and analysis of the matter are vital in the journalistic profession," she considers important. With regard to all subjects, she wants to be critical, objective and be able to consider another person's point of view.

Sabrina considers herself a European citizen and has a positive view on the European Union, which she wants to share and spread among Europeans. Her first major comment would then speak against a *EU der zwei Geschwindigkeiten*, where not all of the European countries take equally part in the process. Sabrina wants to push the European integration and expects the Hamburg specialism in Public Spheres and Media Systems in Europe will be the ideal start-off for her aim. She thinks it important to support the coalescence of the European countries, maybe by working for a European magazine published in many languages and read by a European thinking public. A few of these already exist and, who knows, maybe Sabrina will found a whole new innovative one.



## SRINIVASAN JAGANNATHAN

### A break from working in the Indian media

INES DREFS

Participating in the Erasmus Mundus Masters program represents a far-reaching change to Srinivasan Jagannathan. Not only because he came all the way from India, more precisely from Chennai (formerly known as “Madras”) in South India, in order to examine contemporary journalistic performances from a European perspective, but also because it means a cut to the professional life he has been leading for 23 years. Srinivasan got his bachelor’s degree in commerce at Madras University and later on he half-finished training as a Certified Public Accountant (CPA). In the first instance, Srinivasan has worked for *The Hindu*, a leading English-language daily. He then has been employed at *Frontline*, an Indian magazine, before he became one of the editors of *Businessline* where he has been adjusting and rewriting articles for the last 13 years.

At the age of 44, Srinivasan yearned for a break from working. Moreover, during his work he had experienced that media are losing their seriousness and that the role they once played has changed. These feelings finally motivated him to ask his German contributor whether he could “by any chance” recommend an European master’s program dealing with journalism. The answer was yes, the Erasmus Mundus Masters in Journalism and Media within Globalisation. So, as Srinivasan puts it, he accidentally came to know the program and gave it a try. Convinced that an academic environment provides a wider scope to an open mind than work routine Srinivasan would like to stick to scientific work with the long-term objective of participating in a PhD program. Nonetheless, the recent beginning of term caused both feelings of excitement and fear. Srinivasan is aware of the fact he’s just carrying out a reorientation of life, “Going back to academics is a big step.”

However, using the phrase ‘he began a new life’ to describe the impact of his decision to join a master’s program does not seem very suitable for Srinivasan. Given the fact that he underwent a kidney transplant in 1991, Srinivasan actually experienced what it means when you are given a new life.

Unfortunately, our group is missing the opportunity to enjoy a live performance of Indian music as he was not able to bring his “Veena” – a traditional Indian stringed instrument. A chance for him to demonstrate his musicality will certainly arise though...maybe at the next karaoke night? Moreover Srinivasan invests some of his spare time in sports. Anyone who is in search of a badminton partner: Srinivasan’s your man!



## **SULAKSHANA GUPTA**

### **Journalism as the other side of the fence**

LARISSA HAIDA

“I started out in the field of public relations, but then I got to see the other side of the fence,” says 26-year-old Sulakshana Gupta while sitting opposite of me. After graduating from Mumbai University with a bachelor’s degree in psychology and a post-graduate diploma in social communication, she soon decided that working as a journalist was what she wanted to do. The three years as a senior writer and editor for the *Indian Express* in Mumbai has given her the chance to gain as much practical experience as possible before coming to Denmark to take part in the Erasmus Mundus Masters program. She started out with writing about theatre and all kinds of cultural offerings in Mumbai before she got the chance to work on classical news stories. Certain experiences while writing news stories made her more aware of certain aspects of international relations. “Especially the bomb attacks of July 11 in 2006 made me aware of how interrelated the whole world is, particularly through the global threat of terrorism,” Sulakshana says while looking as if the memorable events of last year come back to her mind. The newspaper she worked for followed the model of the New York Times after 9/11, when every victim was introduced in the paper. “Some stories were so sad and they made me realize that it could have been me,” she explains her feelings while working on these tributes to the victims.

This special experience was a turning point in Sulakshana’s life, because it awakened her academic interest in international conflicts and international relations. She explains her decision to take her specialism in Swansea as follows: “I feel I do not know enough. I really want to study this.”

Her work experiences have made her more aware of seeing daily occurrences from more than one point of view. Another memorable experience at work was a story about the phone sex industry in India. She went undercover and got to know that people working in this area are normal people like everyone else. “I learned that you have unfounded prejudices so often in life,” she adds.

In general, she likes to explore other countries. She has travelled to Europe before and she would like to go to the Middle East or post-conflict regions like Syria as her next travel destinations. But that is not her only aim; “During my time in Europe, I really want to learn French, because it sounds so beautiful,” says Sulakshana.

Sulakshana does not know yet what she wants to do after finishing the Mundus program, since she is also interested in international relations. While she would work as a journalist again, she can also imagine working for the United Nations. “I hope that this course will open my eyes to something new,” shares Sulakshana.



## **CHEटना MAHADIK**

### **A certain spark**

**Chetna is the kind of person who captures your attention completely whenever she starts talking. You can feel her emotion when she is discussing things, using her hands to make her points. Chetna Mahaddik, who has been working as a journalist for four years already, mainly came back to study to explore things more deeply.**

KATRIN WOLF

Chetna can be translated into ‘consciousness’ or ‘awareness.’ Although she got her name more or less by accident (after endless discussions of how to name her, her father simply could not remember what he and his wife had actually agreed upon, and said the first name which came into his mind at the registry), it really fits the 27-year-old Indian. Her goal as a journalist is to make her readers think. “You can only change the world by changing people’s ways of looking at it, not by laying down the laws,” says Chetna.

However, Chetna has not always wanted to be a journalist. After obtaining a degree in business and finance, she was working as a tax consultant, while training to become a chartered accountant in Mumbai. These jobs did not satisfy her at all. “It is such a narrow world, and there’s no connection to everyday life,” explains Chetna. So she quit her job and thought about what could possibly fulfil her life. Chetna was looking for a way of how to combine her interest in the world around her with a job she could find more useful for society. So she decided to undertake a post-graduate diploma in journalism. Her aim was not to necessarily become a journalist, she wanted to better understand the world, she says, and then tell other people about it in her articles.

This hunger for understanding the world is also the reason why she decided to apply for the Erasmus Mundus program. Chetna had felt that she wanted to study more social sciences, mainly because of their analytical aspect. The issue of globalisation has also been a reason for her to join the course, as she directly experienced how globalisation has changed India. Her own life, she says, has improved, as globalisation allowed her to work for an international accounting firm first and for an international magazine afterwards. But Chetna is well aware of the other side of the coin; those extremes can be seen daily in her hometown. Despite its problems, Chetna loves Mumbai. “It’s a huge support system. And that’s the beauty of the city, its people. There’s a spirit of community and a certain spark that many other places don’t have,” she says. Chetna has worked for different publications in the city, including *Time Out Mumbai* magazine, where she wrote about art and cultural aspects of the city. Chetna says she has enjoyed working as a journalist, and perceives a lot of value in this work.

Despite the passion with which she addresses issues like poverty and tries to understand what is behind the issues that affect the world today and how to change them, she never loses her bright laughter. “There is humour in everything. That’s what keeps people going. Also the life of very poor people – it has its own joy, its own pleasure,” smiles Chetna. It is as if she carries this certain spark of Mumbai with her.



## ARUSH CHOPRA

### A restless soul finds its home

PAUL K. KOITIE

His eyes looked at me penetratingly from across the table where we were seated for this interview. His demeanor depicts a man who is sure of what he wants in life and how to get it, but that has not always been the case for Arush Chopra, 23, a new student in the Erasmus Mundus Journalism and Media within Globalisation program.

Arush had just completed his bachelor's degree in mass media with a major in journalism, but was still not sure if he wanted to pursue a journalism career. He says he was fed up with what he calls "lofty ideas" about journalism and decided that he was not going to study anymore.

After a short intern stint with the *Indian Express*, an opportunity presented itself when a new publication was established. Always ready for new challenges, Arush grabbed the opportunity and was part of a team that developed the editorial content of the *Daily News Analysis* (DNA) newspaper. Still, Arush's restless soul was trying to find its rightful place in the cosmos. He quit the newspaper business because of the limitations of the medium. "Considering the literacy barrier which prevents many people from accessing news in the print media, coupled with the fact that life is now faster and people have no time to read I had to change direction. No one can underestimate the impact of images," he philosophically avers. TV journalism was therefore a natural progression for this energetic and vivacious young man.

Arush thus enrolled for a course in TV journalism at the Asian College of Journalism. After graduation he got a job as a desk boss/sub-editor for CNN/IBN. That intercultural dialogue was to reach its zenith when Arush arrived at Aarhus, Denmark to begin his new academic journey in Europe where he hopes not only to hone his journalism skills, but also to learn about cultures from different parts of the world. "This program for me is a big party where people from diverse cultures interact. I am confident that I will go back home more enriched," he says.

Arush has now set his eyes on business journalism and will be doing his specialization in business and finance at the City University, London. "Business journalism in India is still poor. I want to make my small contribution towards changing this. I want to do human interest stories which ordinary people can identify with which is difficult in business journalism," he says. He also plans to get into investigative journalism in future. Despite the enormous task ahead, Arush strongly believes that the Erasmus Mundus degree will equip him with the requisite skills to overcome any challenges.

His motivation? "I just love telling stories," he says. Arush says there is no greater tragedy than for a journalist to be uninformed. He adds that journalists need to update their knowledge throughout their lives. "Even if I was 50, I would still have come," Arush says. As I conclude the interview I am convinced that the future of journalism is with the Mundus program and Arush will no doubt be part of that future.



## ADITI KRISHNAN

**‘Mother of Indian gods’ takes first step to the top of the world**

**Aditi is certain of one thing; the Erasmus Mundus Masters will open professional doors for her**

NJOROGE KINUTHIA

As a youth, Aditi Krishnan aspired to be an army officer, and she took the road to that career early in life. While still in high school in her hometown of Bangalore, India, Aditi joined the National Cadet Corps – an extra-curricular program for the youths conducted by the army. This she says, helped instill discipline and determination in her – no doubt, crucial attributes for anyone hoping to join the military.

But Aditi, whose name means mother of all gods and goddesses, never joined the army. Instead she joined the interesting world of journalism. Aditi says she never aspired to be a journalist and her joining the profession was by accident. Still, she has never regretted the decision since she applied for a job as a reporter with *Deccan Herald*, a daily Bangalore, now Bengaluru. This was after she finished her master’s degree in women studies at Bangalore University. Aditi believes she finally found a home in journalism and reveals that she has written many stories on people, lifestyle, civic issues and food.

The Erasmus Mundus Media within Globalisation will be Aditi's third master’s degree for she studied Literature at the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages in 2005.

Why the obsession with MAs? Her response is brief and philosophical: "I did women studies out of my own personal interests, literature is my guide to life and journalism will help me consolidate my career." And, there are many other things that Aditi has done too. She has a certificate in Italian, has studied several media courses, and she is also a qualified yoga instructor.

Aditi is confident that the Erasmus Mundus Masters will improve her knowledge base and help her understand Europe better. Above all, she believes the program will fling the professional doors open and hopes to work with international media organizations. Alternatively she will pursue a PhD and become a university lecturer.



## SAKSHI OJHA

**Chasing big dreams; 'From writing for pleasure to writing for purpose,' as Sakshi from India puts it, for her words have taken on a whole new meaning**

HELENA NASSIF

I can sit and talk to Sakshi Ojha for hours without recognizing time flying by. It is not only her wit that attracts me, but also the genuine sensitivity of a poet that radiates from her eyes. Sakshi's first poem was published in a children's magazine when she was nine years old. When she was 11, she contributed poems and articles to *HT (Hindustan Times) School Times* in addition to her school magazine *The Springdalian*.

Sakshi's early signs of being gifted received recognition wherever she lay foot or shared pieces of herself. The magazine *Children's World* and the local NGO Unnati Features in collaboration with UNFPA awarded her prizes at the national and international level for her poems. Sakshi's school, Springdales School, Pusa Road, awarded her the Rosalind Wilson Memorial Trophy for Proficiency in English Language and Literature in addition to twice awarding her the Surinder Mohan Bansal Memorial Trophy for Excellence in Creative Writing.

Sakshi's distinctiveness kept on opening doors. She was nominated in 2002 by her school to participate as one of four young Indian ambassadors to the first South East Asian Invitation Program to Japan organized by the Japanese Government. Sakshi expressed to me that the program gave her a brief sense of an open exposure to the world. She was looking, while applying to the Erasmus Mundus Masters program, for a similar experience of multicultural diversity.

Sakshi Ojha the achiever is also committed to community development. Directly after graduating with honors from Lady Shri Ram College at Delhi University with a BA in Journalism, Sakshi took on a project funded by the World Bank. Her assignment was to conduct journalistic needs assessment interviews with members of the local population in eight cities and towns in Uttaranchal. Sakshi's work was published on the web portal of the local government. "I want to put my humanitarian feelings into action," Sakshi expresses with passion; action to Sakshi is in contributing "towards better journalism" and "fair reporting of events."

For the last year before moving to Aarhus in Denmark, Sakshi was a reporter/sub-editor with *HT Next*. She contributed articles on social and youth issues in India to various newspapers and supplements published by *HT*, one of the largest circulated English daily newspapers in India. She wrote about child labor, education and the role of community in development among other issues.

This 21-year-old journalist from New Delhi is looking forward to spending two years in Europe. She expects the program to broaden her "understanding of world affairs at large and war and conflict in specific" and to provide her with "various perspectives on issues that affect humanity." Sakshi's ambition is to become renowned for her achievements in the journalism field. She perceives journalism as a tool for peace building and is ready to engage in war reporting. "Life is about taking the risks," she ends.



## **NAVEEN MISHRA**

**A journalist who fought against all odds to get recognition in India**

CAROLINE HUNGWE

Naveen Mishra, 27, was born in Delhi, the capital city of India. In 2002, Naveen graduated with a bachelor's degree in political science from Gujarat University. Then went on to study for a post-graduate diploma in journalism at Bhavans College.

On what motivated him to take up journalism Naveen says, "My interest in media happened to develop, during the period I was pursuing my first degree. The source of my budding interest in media was my major subject political science, and my professor Pushpa Bisht. She always talked about the immense power of media and its ability to bring about reforms, ranging from social to political, local to national level, but only by the active participation of educated people. One thought resulted, media is a mass educator and I want to be a part of it. And the journey began..."

Naveen's professional experience started when he was engaged as a television journalist at Sahara Samay news channel. This is one of the biggest TV news channels reaching close to 10 million people in India. His duties involved developing and reporting on different current affairs stories from hard news to features. As a freshman at Sahara news channel it took a lot of hard work and perseverance for Naveen to finally get the recognition and respect from his superiors as well as the audiences. "For quite a long time I could not get bylines for all the work I did. Someone else took the credit. Sometimes my stories were spiked or completely rejected but it did not depress me it made me stronger to hone my skills and fight against all odds. I did not give up but instead took it as a challenge and a learning process," says Naveen. Although there have been challenges in his early career experience, Naveen believes, "Every moment while working as a journalist is exciting and he thoroughly enjoyed the job."

After working three years for Sahara Sammy, Naveen heard of the Erasmus Mundus program. Naveen searched the Internet for more details and then applied. Answering the question what motivated him to apply for the program Naveen says, "Well life is a learning process. After gaining some practical knowledge for a while I realized that I needed some time to gain more knowledge and insight into the world events happening at large. Hence the Erasmus Mundus Masters program taking place in three Universities in Europe was a perfect opportunity to realize my dreams."

For his specialism, Naveen has opted to go to Swansea in the United Kingdom, where he will study war and conflict reporting. "War and conflict I believe is going to be in the forefront of the reporting arena in coming days and I want to be part of peace building process," says Naveen. On completion of the course Naveen's plans are to go back home and work for a reputable channel, reporting about conflicts going on various Indian fronts. His aim is to give new dimension to conflict reporting leading towards peace. Naveen is a confident, energetic and cheerful young man. During his free time he enjoys working out and surfing. He misses the pressure and action associated with working as a news reporter. Naveen is known in his circles as "300 bars and running" in reference to his energy.



## SUSAN MUTHALALY

“BANG ON!”

Europe excites young Indian journalist

DANIEL PETER SKRIVER NIELSEN

Susan Muthalaly expected the Erasmus Mundus Masters in journalism to be exciting and a chance to mingle with a wide variety of nationalities. “So far, it’s bang on,” she says.

The 27-year-old journalist from India applied for a place on the Mundus program because she wanted to experience life in three different European cities alongside a bunch of other nationals. After almost three weeks in Aarhus, she is rapt with the sense of community at her student hall of residence and among her fellow Mundusians.

Susan was born in Kerala, South India, but spent her early childhood in Kenya where her father worked as an accountant for a textile company. When foreigners were barred from working in Kenya, the family returned to India. They moved to Chennai as her father had secured a job with Tata, one of India’s largest business conglomerates.

Susan describes a sheltered life living on the company estate devoid of contact with the outside world. Her social life revolved around birthday parties with the other children living there. When she was 10 years old, Susan’s parents sent her to boarding school in Ooty. Here, she got her first taste of journalism editing the school magazine.

Her taste buds were not satisfied though and at university in Chennai she discovered a passion for the craft. Sports journalism was an elective part of Susan’s English literature degree and through it, she interviewed a state-level swimmer. Although he or his sport did not rivet her, Susan loved writing the story and the process of explaining a subject to the average person.

Susan then did a post-graduate diploma at the Asian College of Journalism after which she moved to Mumbai for a terribly paid job at the *Asian Age*. “I was getting 4000 rupees (€5) a month. I can’t believe I agreed to that.” She survived by living with her father and actually enjoyed the job despite the miserable pay. “I was really committed. I got to do everything,” Susan explains.

After a year at *Asian Age*, Susan worked at *The New Indian Express* and *The Hindu*, both in Chennai, before joining the Erasmus Mundus program.

She is not sure what the degree will lead to but says she wants to work as a journalist overseas, preferably in London, before returning to India and working for a news magazine.

Susan is specializing in war and conflict in the second year of the Mundus program because she believes it is more interesting and probably more geared toward practical journalism than the London and Hamburg options.



## ARUNDHUTI MITRA

**Passion, drive and a knack for seizing the day**

**While Arundhuti makes time to explore the world, she hopes to use those experiences to be a better journalist**

JESSICA FEARNOW

Vibrant, determined and willing to take risks, Arundhuti Mitra believes it is important to take life as it comes. “People perceive me as a rolling stone that gathers no moss, but I think your twenties is the time to explore all that is out there,” says Arundhuti.

Originally from India, Mitra comes to the Erasmus Mundus program with a variety of experiences. Her first out-of-home undertaking brought her to Delhi to work for GE Capital International Services after she received her degree in English literature in 2002. Doing this type of work reiterated her passion for writing, leading her to finish post-graduate work at the Asian College of Journalism, Chennai, studying print journalism. At the same time, Arundhuti also completed a course in animal welfare studies at Tamil Nadu University. She explains, “I love nature, and I thought it might equip me with a bit more knowledge about animal rights.”

After finishing school, Arundhuti interned with *The Hindustan Times* in Kolkata, a national English daily newspaper, before completing a research project with UNICEF. This opportunity brought her to the remote corners of India where she was able to observe the differences in rural poverty versus urban poverty. “In urban poverty, people still have access to a lot of resources. In rural poverty, there is no access to a lot of things,” explains Arundhuti. “The intensity of poverty becomes more acute because there is no access to education, clean water and other basic necessities.”

As a final project, Arundhuti presented a critical analysis of the Polio Eradication and Communication Campaign in West Bengal, India, through a group essay, presentation and 15-minute film. “This was a great experience, as the teams were a mix of students from different backgrounds and nationalities.”

Arundhuti worked briefly as a health and features reporter before moving on to *Sanctuary Asia*, India’s only wildlife and conservation magazine. There, she had a hand in magazine content and design, book publishing and the occasional writing of articles.

Currently, Arundhuti expects that her participation in the master’s program will broaden her perception of the effects of war and conflict. “Given the circumstances we are in, the time is quite apt to understand what war and conflict is all about, and how we can do our bit to make people more aware that peace is the order of the day,” she shares.

After graduation, Arundhuti hopes to work for an international publication in Europe, gaining experience in working and traveling outside of her home country so that she later may return to India to utilize these skills to touch and transform people’s lives back home. In the meantime, she has no regrets following a life path that she finds fulfilling. As Arundhuti says, “Do things that make you happy, but not at a cost of others. Decide for yourself what is right because at the end of the day, only you know how true you have been.”



## GIULIA GRIMALDI

### A longtime lover of reporting finds her path

SCOTT ELDRIDGE II

Journalism has always been something Giulia Grimaldi was interested in. If she goes back far enough, she can remember being 11 years old and writing in her diary about the issues of the day, or whatever else crossed her mind, and making her points to herself about the world around her.

“I actually had a diary where I wrote about many issues,” Giulia says, looking back at her early interest in reporting. “I discovered it again few years ago and it was so funny the way I was trying to make statements about social events...the idea of being in a situation like this came up in my mind some years ago.”

In more recent times, she can remember wanting to get involved in journalism, and studying it in school, but found herself in “the never ending bureaucracy of Italian universities.” That frustration is what led her to the Erasmus Mundus program. “I was searching around, to have an idea of what I could do after,” she said. “I was just amazed to find out that a course like Erasmus Mundus really exists....Different backgrounds, different points...everything is done to make the interchange of culture and knowledge [easier].” It was a breath of fresh air to find the program, especially when compared to her previous university, where she had to work largely on her own to find, and in some cases create, ways to practice reporting. “I try to make my own experiences,” Giulia says.

Giulia devoted some of her attention to radio and freelance work. She worked for a European web radio program, covering events in her hometown of Torino, Italy, and later found herself freelancing in Paris, France. Giulia also worked for Italy’s national television, in cooperation with her university, where she worked with school children to help create a news program. She quickly realized that she could rise up to the challenges, something that was underscored when she wrote an article on philosophy – something she knew nothing about – and later received praise from the philosopher she covered. “I was really surprised,” she said.

Giulia’s past work includes a good deal of photojournalism, and in spring 2006 she worked as a freelance photojournalist, covering the riots that “paralyzed” Paris following a controversial labor law, called the First Employment Contract. This sort of work tapped into Grimaldi’s desire to become a “real journalist,” something beyond the “trash and politics” she sees in the press and media of her native Italy. She hopes to walk away with an education that will help her dive into professional journalism; give a voice to normal people, to tell their stories;” and to help us all “wake up.”

In ten years, Giulia sees herself working internationally, and traveling, covering war and conflict with the skills she’ll acquire studying in Swansea, Wales. “I would really like to be able, at that point, to express myself in a complete way,” Giulia said. “For example through documentaries and deeper reportages.” But looking ten years forward, or ten years back, Giulia can still find that importance, and passion, in journalism.



## PAUL K. KOITIE

### The flight that changed a life

ARUSH CHOPRA

28-year-old Paul K Koitie was delighted when he sat in an airplane for the first time, to fly to Denmark. It wasn't only the sheer childlike excitement of being on an airplane alone that gripped him but also the chance to become what he had only dreamt of – a truly global journalist.

The long journey across several continents has a semblance to Paul's career. A graduate in literature and philosophy, Paul always nurtured a strong desire to write for a living, but he did not rush into it just after college. He dabbled with commerce for a while and sold mobile phone airtime for about a year. Soon he had had enough and his interest in writing was to guide his life in the years to come.

Creative writing was not for Paul. "Being a student of literature, I found that creative writing could not influence anyone or bring any concrete results visible on the ground. So, I took up journalism," says Paul. The challenge that beset Paul at this juncture was something every aspiring journalist encounters at that career start – finding a job with a good news organization. He found an internship with the English daily *Kenya Times* as a sub-editor. The pay was meager, but it gave him immense job satisfaction.

It was almost like Paul had found his true calling and it shows in his career path – not only was he confirmed as a full-time employee in just a few months, he rose among the ranks to become the deputy chief sub-editor. "The sub-editor's job is the most unrewarding. You correct other people's mistakes and yet you don't even get a by-line," says Paul. Still, his talent and passion towards journalism afforded him a chance to write a weekly column in the newspaper dealing with politics and human rights issues.

Why academics when you're doing well in your profession? "Journalism isn't only a profession but also a craft that needs to be based on strong theoretical foundations and the skills required need to be honed from time to time," answers Paul, who got a chance to do strengthen those foundations when Wycliffe Asalwa – his boss at the *Kenya Times* encouraged him to apply for the Erasmus Mundus program. Now that he is here, Paul wants to eventually go back to Kenya and pursue journalism in the political and human rights area. He believes the exposure and learning in Europe will enable him to point out relevant instances that correspond to situations in his part of the world.

Yet, Paul is not just a young guy full of utopian ideas. Paul concedes that although he did fall into the trap of lofty ideals that conventional journalism theory entails, his experience has helped him get in touch with the limitations and grounded realities. "When I was fresh out of school, I had these notions of objectivity. But absolute objectivity does not exist. You can only strive hard to bring out as many sides as possible," he says. Another observation that he points out from his experiences is the low pay and corruption rampant among journalists in Kenya.

Paul is headed to Hamburg for his specialism year but for now it is a big 'Jumbo' ('Hi' in Swahili) from him to all the Danes.



## WILSON NJOROGE KINUTHIA

### Kenyan courage

ADITI KRISHNAN

Wilson Njoroge Kinuthia treads a fairly unbeaten path. He is hoping through this program to contribute his mite towards making the world a safer haven for its inhabitants.

"It was a narrow escape," he candidly admits but with a defiant smile. Taking risks is not something new for Njoroge Kinuthia. As a second year undergraduate student – while freelancing for a national daily and the oldest newspaper publication in Kenya, *The Standard* – he wrote a short story revealing the murky details of the connection between a common thief and a policeman. The consequence, "Sources told me the policeman wanted to kill me over the story. I hid for two days in a house, and then covertly left the town," he smiles. He braved threats to his life but this has in no way deterred his passion for journalism or diminished a touching sense of humor in him. It has in fact fuelled his desire to pursue a career in war journalism.

His interest in war journalism is not new either. It was sparked when he was in high school. It was the time when ethnic conflict over land was rife in his country. This conflict in his homeland had turned his family into refugees. He realized even at that tender age, by listening to radio reports and reading newspapers, the importance of journalism. With that came also the realization that Kenya lacked journalists bold enough to venture enough into conflict hidden zones.

This propelled him to pursue a bachelor of education (B.Ed) in English and Literature from Kenyatta University as no undergraduate courses were offered in journalism at that time. His interest in journalism bore fruition during his fourth year study period as he started freelancing, covering news and feature stories during the weekends and holidays.

He then joined *The Standard* for a brief two-month stint before realizing the need to equip himself with a journalism degree. He honed his already practiced skills for a year in journalism at the University of Nairobi. Thereafter, fully armed with a post-graduate diploma in mass communication, Njoroge joined *The Standard* as a full-time journalist.

He eventually moved to another paper, *The Nation Media Group*, in search of better prospects. Njoroge, in his seven years of being a full-time journalist, has tucked under his arm a variety of media experience ranging from news reporting to sub-editing to working with new media.

As for future plans he says that he is torn between news reporting and teaching. He wants to equip himself with a PhD in conflict and peace studies in order to get into full time academics. He has already made a start in that direction by choosing Swansea as his specialism university. His other option, which he says his heart is more set on, is to become an international correspondent. Either way he hopes to contribute in his own small way towards resolving some of the many conflicts dogging the world. The Erasmus Mundus program, he is certain, will help fulfill his noble aspirations.



## **HELENA NASSIF**

### **In the quest for real development**

**From spending her childhood in a war-torn country to being a part of youth programs held around the globe, Helena's journey has been truly extraordinary**

SAKSHI OJHA

"I have had a different childhood," says Helena Nassif matter-of-factly. "I come from a place where the big news on TV everyday is the number of people killed in Iraq or Palestine." Helena grew up in Lebanon and was witness to the adverse affects that conflict has on people. Although the internal political turbulence leaves one, as she puts it, to "have little space and energy to do anything, but to survive," Helena has chartered her own path successfully.

She graduated with a bachelor's degree in environmental health from the American University of Beirut in 1997 and has been an active member of different NGOs and youth organizations, but her desire to "be on the ground and not be only caught up with books and the library" ensured that within a month after graduation, she got involved with the assessment of UNICEF's immunization campaign. "It was clear to me then that I wanted to work with the community and for development," says Helena.

This is how she became involved in an integrated rural development program, which focused on various sectors like income generation, health and civic participation. "My experience as an environmental coordinator changed me. I became aware that real development can not be achieved by any one sector of the society," she shares.

In 1999, Helena was part of the Common Futures Forum, in which young social entrepreneurs were selected from across the globe. After working with regional NGOs and government-related projects, Helena soon realized that the institutions that are working under the banner of development would never be able to achieve the impact she aspires for. "If you want to make the change you want to see, you need to use an important outlet like the media judiciously," she explains.

Helena initiated her first project with the media in 2004, when she undertook assignments as a researcher and producer for a production house based in Dubai and a satellite TV station based in Beirut. She went on to moderate a 12-episode youth chat show, to which 6 additional episodes were later added. The participating youth were from European and Mediterranean countries.

Being selected for this Erasmus Mundus Masters will give her the time to "read and reflect and put all things learnt on the field into perspective." Through this program, Helena wants to contribute in creating media for development. When not working towards development, Helena can be spotted partying, dancing, watching movies or just listening to music. "I also love reading, walking in nature and Aarhus!" she enthuses.

Not many can boast of genuinely feeling for and contributing towards the cause of humanity. Helena belongs to the special few who can.



## DANIELLE BATIST

**A pursuit for the human interest behind news stories**

FUCHUN TANG

Young Dutch journalist Danielle Batist is driven by the belief her mom told her when she made her first moves into journalism: Holland is too small for you. She turned to seek such international opportunities while working for *The Big Issue*'s Namibia office. Meanwhile, her greatest passion, for people's stories, drives her to think over and probe the deeper rooted reasons of social conflicts.

The journalist dream of 23-year-old Dutch woman can date back to TV programs she watched in her childhood. She thought those people interviewing with mics really looked interesting, which led her to work for newspapers when growing up. The dream drove her to enter a school of journalism, and encouraged her, a then-freshman, to go directly to a local newsroom for a freelance job and surprisingly succeeded.

Danielle received a bachelor's degree in newspaper journalism from the Utrecht School of Journalism in 2005, and since then her journalistic career has been in full swing. She has accumulated lots of experience, including those from amateur practices in high school newspaper, a two-year freelancing job for a local newspaper and a magazine, internships with two major Dutch newspapers, and then full-time sub-editing works.

"Holland is too small for you," Danielle kept her mom's words in mind, seeking more international participations and a bigger stage for self-development. Her first international perspective comes from a semester study as an exchange student in South Africa's Rhodes University. She was then shocked at local people's living condition, which poses a sharp contrast with that in Europe. After working as a reporter and a sub-editor for two Dutch newspapers for ten months, she found that such jobs are not completely her pursuit. Instead, her interests developed more in the area of street newspapers and small media organisations in developing countries.

Go back to Africa, Danielle told herself. Afterwards, she contacted NiZA (Netherlands institute for Southern Africa), a NGO supporting small independent media organisations in southern Africa. In February 2006, she was dispatched to Namibia office of *The Big Issue*, a magazine sold by homeless people worldwide. It was a little troublesome for her to write in English at first, but as she says, practise helped. She enjoyed that the monthly social and current affairs magazine helps arouse people's consciousness and touches taboo issues like AIDS and the position of women in Namibian society.

Her passion is not entirely set on the news frontline, but more on people's stories behind news. What drives people to do the things they do? How does this happen? To better understand social conflicts between different groups and to find out the deep-root reasons, she chose the Erasmus Mundus journalism program, with a specialism of war and conflict in Swansea, UK. For her, this program not only bestows her international ambitions, atmosphere and connections, and a master's degree, but also provides an opportunity to raise awareness through journalism later on.



## NEELTJE BOLLEN

### When science and art meet in the young journalist's heart

**Neeltje tells how journalism becomes her way to pursue interests in a broad world beyond the division of science and art**

DALI SU

By nature, the group of Erasmus Mundus journalism students is diverse in both nationality and backgrounds. Neeltje Bollen, 23, contributes to this diversity with her undergraduate degree in biology and environmental science and experiences in science reporting.

Born and raised in Almere, the youngest reclaimed town in the Netherlands, Neeltje studied psychobiology for one year at the University of Amsterdam before transferring to Utrecht and completing her bachelor's degree in biology and environmental science, with a minor in journalism.

From January to June 2007, Neeltje did an internship at a science magazine, *Natuur Wetenschap & Techniek* (Dutch New Scientist), while applying for the Erasmus Mundus Masters: Journalism and Media within Globalisation. The internship was a valuable experience and she was given the chance to write many articles on her own. Among these articles, her favorite was a 10-page feature on bio-art: biological science being used in the creation of artwork, and furthermore, the way that the two distinctly different concepts of art and science meet and interact. And, she is not the only one who found the article important, Dutch New Scientist has nominated the article for the national young science journalist prize.

However, her interests does not stop there. Despite the fulfilment she found in science reporting, Neeltje looks forward to doing journalism in more fields. She is also keen to explore broadcast journalism. "I like my special background in science, but I am also interested in general journalism," she says. One of the reasons that she chose Hamburg as her second-year specialism is because it has a broad topic.

That being said, science is still a substantial part of Neeltje's concerns. Global environmental issues was on her mind when she examined the Erasmus Mundus journalism's emphasis on globalisation. On the other hand, she also maintains her interest in art, having engaged in stage acting for a long time. In this sense, journalism, with an implied broad horizon is truly the best fit for Neeltje.

Neeltje is open and optimistic towards the future after her degree. "I could be anywhere in ten years," she said frankly. To another, it seems wherever she goes, she will be energetically carrying on the work of spreading knowledge and understanding in this globalised world.



## **ELCO VAN GRONINGEN**

### **In the Right Wagon**

RICARDO JOSÉ VALENCIA PINEDA

His life is like a roller coaster wagon. Gigantic ups and worried downs. Being part of the Erasmus Mundus program is one of his big ups. Eldert Cornelis van Groningen is his name, but everybody knows him by the first two letters of his first names, Elco. He was born in the Netherlands already 28 years ago.

He began his academic career by studying Nature Sciences and Innovation Management for four months at Utrecht University, but he quit. "Then I worked in the business of company catering for eight months." After, he started off with a bachelor's program in sports and entertainment marketing. He finished this last year, but does not want to work in marketing. "I don't like marketing because I don't want to sell people things they actually don't need," explains Elco.

He was born to a family of nurses in Heerhugowaard. His parents were Reformed Christians, but he is not religious at all. "There's always something great to be found in every person," affirms this tall blonde man while drinking his beer at a downtown bar Aarhus. This conviction makes him the social planner of the master's program: he bought a calendar so he could keep track of everybody's birthday, he also organized everybody to come to the first Karaoke "meeting" and soon he will be part of the Dutch welcoming party squad.

Elco remembers when he received the admittance of the Erasmus Mundus program, he could not believe he soon would go to Aarhus. "My roommates got annoyed by me because I repeatedly shouted, 'I'm going to Denmark, I'm going to Denmark,' while jumping up and down".

He dreams of working as a journalist in the Middle East for a major news corporation after he has finished his two-year master's degree. That is why he decided to take the war and conflict specialism at Swansea University in Wales. Elco does not see this step as part of being part of a minority of "arrogant" journalists.

"When I have earned sufficient enough, it is my dream to start a company called U.R.I.M. This company should manufacture clothing in developing countries, as for instance Kenya. The clothes are to be sold in developed countries. The biggest share of the profit will be invested in the local community," he clarifies. The letters, phonetically saying, "You are, I am," stand for United Races International Manufacturing. Elco's future points to Africa and he wants to try to use journalism as the best way to help the developing countries there.

But first, we must face a complete year of living in Aarhus and Amsterdam and then one more year in Wales. After that, Elco will be ready to go to the Middle East, Africa or Latin America to cover a conflict and save enough money to maintain his Kenyan dream. Maybe we will see him again, but on a television screen.



## **DANIEL PETER SKRIVER NIELSEN**

### **Globalisation with Stiglitz, Friedman, Tolan and Felix: Three Men and a Baby**

SUSAN MUTHALALY

By age 19, Denmark-born New Zealander Daniel Peter Skriver Nielsen had it all figured out. Demonstrating more foresight than most youngsters his age, during a year off in Europe he made his five-year plan. He would go back to studies to do an undergraduate degree because that was what he needed to get into journalism school. While in school, he would participate in student media ventures, anything that would build an impressive resume to get into J-School.

Life went according to the plan. He participated in student radio, and played cricket again (which is a passion with him). He got into the journalism diploma program where he learnt practical journalism, ethics, short hand and sub-editing. He wrote a story about a junkie couple addicted to methadone. The story followed their life, their one-year-old child and their struggle to overcome their addiction. The article won a Media Peace Award by the Peace Foundation. He even managed to realize his dream of working as a sports writer, covering rugby and soccer.

His first full-time job as a journalist took him to Nelson, New Zealand, where he planned to work for 18 months at the *Nelson Mail*. This is where he learnt a few ground realities of journalism. Like for instance, you have to consider your context. Working in a town of 40,000 people, Daniel was repeatedly warned not to rub anyone the wrong way, as it would not do him good to burn his bridges. Life went on – clashes of opinion with the editor, arguments over what he thought were trivial stories and so on.

One evening, as he entered the local bar in Nelson, he did not know that his well-laid plans were about to be (as Elvis so eloquently put it) all shook up, because that is when Sara entered his life. A year-and-a-half later, he is married to her and they have a three-month-old son, Felix. Daniel now lives in Aarhus, 60 km away from Grenaa, his birthplace, and thousands of miles from Nelson.

He spends his days reading articles on globalization, and nights tending to Felix (who he claims is a lovely baby, sleeps through the night). There's no time for cricket. "Now I'd rather sit at home changing nappies... almost," he says grinning.

Daniel expresses the hope that the Mundus program will serve as "the perfect step towards working as a reporter overseas, not just doing the 'bottom-floor' grave-yard shift type of stuff most New Zealand journalists end up doing at BBC." Once he is through with the Swansea specialism, he is considering staying in Wales for a bit. "Anything could happen though. I'm sure opportunities will present themselves along the way," says Daniel, who has evidently decided that meticulously planning the future is not as good as yielding to life as it happens.



## **ISELIN RØNNINGSBAKK**

### **Iselin's Norwegian corner**

**When she was just twenty this bright Norwegian girl already had her own radio show, so if you were studying at some of the London universities you could have listened to Iselin's Norwegian Corner**

LJUBICA VUJADINOVI

At 22, Iselin Ekeli Rønningbakk already has more both academic and professional experience than most of us had at her age. She has done her bachelor's degree in culture and communication at the University of Oslo and then continued with one year in media studies. During her bachelor studies Iselin spent six months in London at Goldsmiths College.

In the British capital Iselin had her first journalistic experience. She joined student radio and got her own radio show named Iselin's Norwegian Corner where she was saying "Good morning" to students in London with Norwegian music. Since her first radio engagement was a success, after coming back to Oslo, she continued working for student radio there, reporting on film for the next two years.

Another thing that Iselin has experience reporting on is football, this time in print media. For the last two summers those interested in info on the world's biggest football tournament for children could enjoy her articles in *Norway's Cup* newspapers, published daily during tournament week. "Well, to be honest I don't know anything about football. I just reported on everything else that was happening during the tournament. I've only reported on football once, and when my editor read through it, she asked me, 'Iselin, did we actually see the same match?'" confesses Iselin.

Iselin's last job, before joining Mundus, was in PR of VG, Norway's biggest newspaper. "VG is a tabloid paper, and I worked in their media centre, where I was telling visitors about VG and press ethics, and made them pretend to be journalists for a day. And if they did a bad job, I fired them and gave them t-shirts saying 'I got fired'," says Iselin and mentions that our professors should not worry because she did not bring any of those T-shirts with her. Good for them, otherwise...

Besides her studies and work, Iselin is very interested in learning foreign languages and so far she has started with French because she finds it just beautiful.

Iselin will spend her second year of the Mundus Masters in Hamburg and she is still not sure if she would rather pursue a career in journalism or in PR afterwards. Having in mind all the experience that she already has, we can be quite sure that this smart and sophisticated young woman will find her own way in whatever she chooses.



## **LJUBICA VUJADINOVIC**

### **‘I am Completely in Love with Television Journalism!’**

**Ljubica used to be married to her job as a TV journalist in Serbia. Now she’s gotten a “divorce” so she can be married to journalism studies instead.**

ISELIN RØNNINGSBAKK

Ljubica Vujadinovic did not get the perfect start here in Aarhus. She arrived late Friday night and her mentor took her to the place where she was going to live for the next four months. Her mentor gave her the key, and she put it in the keyhole and turned around. Nothing happened. She had the wrong key. To make matters worse, the housing office was closed and she would have to wait until Monday to get the right key.

So, what do you do when you are in a foreign country and have no place to stay? You enjoy the locals’ hospitality. The first weekend Ljubica was in Aarhus, she slept in her mentor’s bed. The poor guy had to sleep somewhere else, but he did not complain, not at all. “I am so impressed by the Danish people’s hospitality, they’ve all been so nice to me here!” Ljubica says with a big smile. Ljubica is a 28-year-old girl from Novi Sad, which is the capital of the Vojvodina province in Serbia. This is the first time she has been in Denmark, and so far she is very happy with her stay here.

At the University of Technical Sciences in her hometown in Serbia, she obtained her master’s degree in engineering management, and her thesis was dedicated to the human resources management at the BBC. Ljubica’s biggest dream has always been working in television, and when she was 21, she finally got the chance. She then started working in TV Novi Sad, which is a part of the Vojvodina public broadcaster RTV Vojvodina. Now she has spent almost seven years working there as a reporter, news presenter and author of numerous special reports on different aspects of European Union integration. Television truly is the love of Ljubica’s life, and since she was always working, both day and night, her friends used to say that she was married to her job.

Ljubica is a big fan of politics and EU issues are in the centre of her professional interest. The last few years she has been specializing on EU integration coverage, and before she moved to Denmark, she spent five months in Luxemburg working as a trainee at the European Parliament. Now she wants to learn even more about the EU, and choosing Hamburg to be the place where she is going to spend her final year in the Erasmus Mundus program was therefore not a difficult choice.

After graduating from this masters program she’s planning to continue her career in TV journalism, and her biggest aspiration is to try to take part in reforming public broadcasting in Serbia.



## DUYGU KORHAN

**Bridging East and West like the historical city of her birth, Duygu moves fluidly from translating German and Turkish texts, studying English literature, and introducing Japanese students to life in Turkey**

ROBIN KAWAKAMI

It's 5:30 P.M. when I knock on the door of the white villa on the Hasle Ringvej in Aarhus. Duygu (pronounced DOO-ee-goo) Korhan greets me amongst the chatter of housemates in the foyer. She has promised me a cup of strong Turkish coffee, and deposits me in her brightly lit room on the west side of the house. In *Blink*, a book about snap judgments and the art of quick thinking, Malcolm Gladwell claims that you can obtain a more accurate understanding of a person by surveying her room than you can by interviewing her. Despite moving in only two weeks earlier, Duygu has turned her room into an eclectic haven: Chinese paper lanterns picked up in San Francisco adorn her window; a white shag rug sits at the foot of the bed; a small jewelry tree strewn with intricate and colorful earrings stands on a dresser; and her laptop flashes a photograph of Duygu, Minnie Mouse, and her Dutch boyfriend at Disneyland, California.

Duygu, whose name means “emotion” in Turkish, grew up as an only child in Istanbul to musical parents who stressed the importance of education and making herself a cosmopolitan person. “I try to be a global person by learning other languages and traveling,” she says. The tradition of excellence and academic focus runs in her family.

The large youth population in Turkey makes competition for spots in the educational system rigorous. Duygu passed a series of exams at different stages of her education, taking her from the Goethe Institut, where she learned German, to the prestigious Bogazici University in 2002, where she studied English language and literature with a minor in advertising. While at university, she took a six-month opportunity to live in Amsterdam. With her talent for languages and knowledge of German, Duygu soon added Dutch and some Japanese to her linguistics arsenal. Upon graduation, Duygu decided to take a job as an assistant chief editor at the largest publishing house in Turkey. She also worked as an editor at the best-selling women's magazine *Seninle* (it means “With You”), and worked on the production side of the fashion pages, as well.

She was at the University of Amsterdam when she found out about the Erasmus Mundus program. “I found it by accident,” she says. “But I immediately said, ‘Hey, this is me.’” Her lifelong love of learning makes her choice a logical one: she wants to pursue a PhD and eventually teach. She expressed curiosity about the subliminal messages infiltrating the media, and the role of the media and how it shapes our cultures. Her Hamburg specialism, focusing on media spheres and theory, suits her academic aims well. “Now I'm in the middle of a perfect world. I don't need to Google anything – just call a person. Everyone [in the program] is just a walking encyclopedia.”

When asked about a geographic or linguistic preference, Duygu remains open to the possibilities – whether it be Europe, Turkey, Asia, or America. The theme of learning reemerges. “Reading is the best thing. Some people don't like it. They can't wait to graduate. There is something graceful about teaching. I like the feeling. It says: I'm good for someone else.”



## KSENIYA OKSAMYTNA

### A journey of her own

**A search for adventure, multiculturalism, and future opportunities brings this Ukrainian woman to Denmark**

LAURA OWINGS

Upon first glance at Kseniya Oksamytna, one might see a young woman with a soft-spoken disposition; but, as she begins to speak, these first impressions are immediately withdrawn. In reality, Kseniya an independent and confident woman, whose abilities go far beyond her years.

A recent graduate in international relations, journalism and computer science from the Institute of International Relations in Kiev, Kseniya knew that journalism was her true calling.

While volunteering at the European Youth Parliament and editing the NGO's newsletter, Kseniya realized her talent and love for writing. Although she had to balance the pressure of editing other people's work while also producing her own pieces, Kseniya still recalls the experience with a smile. "It was pretty stressful, but also pretty enjoyable," she says.

Such ambitious volunteer and school work were not too much for Kseniya. She also found time to practice and master the art of debate, even participating in inter-European competitions. Lending her talents to others, her summers are spent in camps, teaching students what she has learned. For Kseniya, debate is a practice in language skills that lend to her journalistic voice. "Debate is about how you convey your ideas, and the flow of your ideas," she says.

With such a strong background and passion for journalism, it is no surprise that Kseniya is a part of the Erasmus Mundus Masters program in journalism. What she looks forward to the most from the program is the change in academic climate from that of her home country.

"We have a very formal academic culture in my country, there are no class discussions," she says. Here, she is excited about the opportunity to experience the multiculturalism brought by the other students. "I'm looking forward to the different people, different backgrounds and different experiences. I hope to see a different view for a bigger picture," she says.

Kseniya will complete one year divided between Aarhus University and the University of Amsterdam, before heading to City University in London, where she plans to focus her journalistic interest in economics. Following graduation, Kseniya hopes to secure a place writing for the *Economist*, a publication that she admires for their "very strong agenda and analytical journalism."

With her open-mindedness, her passion, and her confident nature, Kseniya will surely accomplish whatever future goals she sets her mind to.



## SCOTT ELDRIDGE II

### Back to the old continent

#### The need to discover different ways of thinking

GIULIA GRIMALDI

Globalisation is something that affects our mind; it is something fluctuating in the air, or maybe some kind of new aspects that our generation have in a remote area of the brain since when we are born. We are a new kind of men and women, and we think, act, feel globally. This already will be a good point to explain why a journalist from the United States could leave his liberal country to go and study in the old continent.

What has brought Scott Eldridge II across the ocean is something different. He already had experience in the U.S. as a print journalist, working in newspapers since his time in university. After starting his career as a photographer, he paved his way through the intricacies of municipal government and local balance of powers as a newspaper reporter. It does not take much time for Scott to find new and more exciting fields, and soon he was training himself in the hard work of investigative journalism.

It was during this time he started looking at China, its quickly rising power and its connection with U.S. business and trade policy. And it was working on this subject at *Inside US-China Trade* and *Guanxi: the China Letter* that Scott went through what he consider to be his most motivating experience in his job until now. It was summer 2005, when he and his editor were able to publish several articles that showed “how the US Customs and Border Protection Department had failed to collect hundreds of millions of dollars in antidumping duties from China crawfish importers” and had failed to do anything to collect these duties.

Still, even this kind of perspective was an U.S.-centric view of the world, which is why Scott, decided to move for a couple of years and try to benefit as much as possible from different cultures, societies, and educational structures. To learn something different from U.S. journalism, which seems to be very often driven by corporations and by audience-oriented strategies, is one reason why the Erasmus Mundus Masters program seemed to Scott like a very good opportunity.

Three counties, three views of the world, three particular concepts of the reality in a relative small area and in just two years; this seemed to be a kind of solution for the curious journalist that feels that the old continent still has something to teach. Aarhus, Amsterdam and Hamburg, then maybe a PhD, because journalism is a choice of life but also a state of mind and Scott hopes to be able to teach it in the future. This is, of course, a hope that everyone can sincerely share: that journalist will keep on being curious enough to avoid corporation styles and try to go back to the old teachings, to grow up, opening their minds.



## JESSICA FEARNOW

### A tête-a-tête with Jessica

ARUNDHUTI MITRA

She is a fine storyteller. She tells her story sometimes compelling, sometimes humorous, but never trite through her visual art. Jessica Fearnow's first job out of university entailed that of a page designer, graphic artist and occasionally a copy editor with *The Tribune*, in California. On the best days, she created alternative types of storytelling for the newspaper in the form of maps, diagrams and illustrations on various topics ranging from how to combat sea sickness and dangerous drugs to cheap eating joints for students. In Jessica's words, "While I don't consider myself to be an artist or a writer, my job combines elements of both. It's little more satisfying for me to create something that looks visually striking, but is also 100 per cent functional to explain a news story."

If you thought that is the only thing she does differently, read this: She held a variety of side jobs outside of journalism in the fitness field, like teaching fitness classes and working for a diet and nutrition company. She also assisted 10 to 14 university students per week at Ball State University, Indiana in learning to edit and improve papers without tutorial help, administered writing workshops, helped in planning, execution and evaluation of Excellence in Leadership (EIL) program, created office and EIL Web sites, and more.

Quiet, shy, independent, adventurous, always searching for new experiences, Jessica initially might come across as standoffish or bored to others. But she has a good sense of humor once you get to know her.

Jessica loves to travel and explore, and wants to experience as much of the world as possible before life tethers her to a single place. She likes to get lost in nature (as long as she knows she will eventually find her way back out again). She likes to try out new things... she has bungee jumped and gone skydiving and ziplined in Costa Rican rainforests (Ahh! just the thought of it makes me feel giddy!).

It is this adventurous spirit and will to try out new things and experience life in different ways that made her take part in the Erasmus Mundus program. Jessica is convinced that she will learn much from the course by the end of the next two years, but even more from her colleagues.

A firm practitioner of 'work to live than live to work,' she does not have any lofty future plans post-Erasmus Mundus like landing herself with a high-paying job at a major news outlet. But she would like to work as a visual journalist outside the U.S. so that she can continue to learn and experience life while contributing to society through her work.

Jessica would not mind breaking stereotypes about Americans either.

To see some of her works, please click on:

<http://www.newspagedesigner.com/portfolios/portfolio1.php?UserID=4376>



## **ROBIN KAWAKAMI**

### **Born to be global**

DUYGU KORHAN

Robin Kawakami is a fourth generation American from a Japanese family which moved to Hawaii in 1901. She was born in California and attended high school there as well. Then she went to the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia to study history. After her studies she decided to explore new cities, so she moved to Washington, D.C. and then to New York. During that time she worked in several fields ranging from marketing to advertising. After witnessing the underground marketing strategies and consumerism that was led by advertising agencies, she decided to follow another path.

She worked for an independent magazine as an editor and writer and covered many topics in detail mainly about emerging art, design and new architectural trends in the world. “I was waking up at 8 a.m. while working for the advertising agency and after I came home I was doing editing for the magazine mostly until 2 a.m. It was a tough time but I can keep this pace as a journalist for all my life,” she says. During her work experience she found out that what excited her most was the profile pieces that intersect with social life. After working on ads for companies like NetJets, a niche service, providing fractional aviation ownership for celebrities like Bill Gates, Tiger Woods and Nicole Kidman, she made a shift to journalism and by looking at her bright eyes while she talks about her past experience, it is definitely not hard to see how content and ambitious she is to dedicate herself to reporting and narrating for the rest of her life.

When I asked her why she chose this program she replied, “Human interests and social connections always excited me. Journalism can be improved in the States. Their coverage of the war is the biggest example of that. I prefer newspapers like the British *Guardian* which are boldly asking questions and judging the events.” With this program she is hoping to blend the theoretical information she will get with her academic and professional background. During her London specialism, she is planning to have some side experience by working at the papers and learning more about the quantitative aspect of journalism. She also adds that living in three different countries will equip her with a great variety of experiences that can not be acquired from a textbook.

Apart from her work experience, she has spent a lot of time traveling. Although she has already seen many places in the world including Brazil, Guatemala, Japan and many cities in Europe, she felt like that was not enough. That is why she decided to take part in one of the most “global” master’s programs in the world.

This American woman who holds multiple identities in one body shows that she has a colorful character when I ask her about her hobbies. Besides photography, her biggest hobby turns out to be football (“not American football,” she clarifies). She confesses that she has even read a lot of literature about the history of football. “It shows the social dynamics in the world and blends people from all around the globe so in this respect it is very global,” she says. Being a global woman from birth, she seems to enjoy every global atmosphere that she finds herself in, so it is obvious that she has definitely come to the right place.



## **LAURA OWINGS**

### **An American woman in Aarhus**

**After working as a health reporter for ABC News, Laura is willing to open up to something new and different**

KSENIYA OKSAMYTNA

In childhood Laura Owings dreamt of becoming a doctor. You might wonder what brings this charismatic and buoyant young lady to Aarhus. After graduating from the faculty of microbiology in 2004, Laura worked in a lab but found this job unexciting. In quest of more communication and greater involvement, Laura decided to apply for the position of a health reporter with ABC news – and she got this job.

Desirous of advancing her knowledge of journalism and media, Laura enrolled in this Erasmus Mundus program. As for her expectations from the course, Laura believes that this experience will open her up to something different than health journalism. Her specialism is war and conflict, which she believes is the most interesting out of three available options. Laura deems that in the U.S. news and broadcasting corporations often overlook important matters of war and peace. “There’s a war going out there, and no one really cares,” she states. She is passionate about telling the people of her country about the true state of affairs in the world.

Laura finds Denmark to be a lovely country inhabited by open, nice and helpful people. She recollects that one of her first impressions of Denmark was that a stranger helped her with her baggage. Similar observations are true about our Erasmus Mundus class – Laura confesses that there is not a single person she would not have good feelings for. “I’m happy to be here. I’m very lucky,” says Laura with genuine enthusiasm.

Apart from journalism, Laura’s interests include reading and visiting cultural venues like museums. The brightest experience in her life was a month-long medical trip to Nicaragua, where she was helping the local population to obtain basic medical care.

Having lived in Boston and New York, Laura admits that Aarhus is the smallest city she has ever stayed in. “I enjoy street noise and things going on,” says Laura. While being serious about studying, Laura is also excited to discovered Aarhus’ vibrant city life.



## CAROLINE HUNGWE

Calling the shots on Zimbabwe's only national TV station

SANDRA BANJAC

Caroline Hungwe intended to become a nurse, but fate had a different plan in mind. After failing to get into the nursing school, she decided to pursue journalism. At that time this was an unfavorable career choice and it was looked down on. Her family was discouraging and did not see this as a meaningful career. However, her presence in the Erasmus Mundus journalism program today is clear evidence that Caroline made the right choice in persevering with her decision to become a journalist.

Before joining the Erasmus program, she had already climbed to a very influential position as the Television Programs Manager of the only national TV station – ZBC TV - in Zimbabwe, a country of 13 million people. This meant she had to create and manage the daily TV schedule in addition to knowing the content of all the programs broadcast at any given time. On a daily basis she “ensured that ZBC-TV broadcasts 24 hours a day without fail as well as ensured that the programs broadcast do not conflict with the values and policies of the government.”

“The media in Zimbabwe is divided between privately owned independent media, which is anti-government and public media where government is the major shareholder, hence it is pro government,” explains Caroline. This division is reflected in the programming and the stories carried by both sides of the media. A country with a divided media and so many social, political and economical challenges made Caroline’s position not at all an easy one. “There was a lot of suspicion and mistrust among workmates and bosses that one could betray the shareholder and transmit a tape conflicting with the shareholders policies.” says Caroline.

The last time Caroline found herself in a sticky situation was on May Day – workers day – when she approved to air, on primetime, a one-hour TV musical video program running with a theme about the plight of the workers being oppressed and underpaid. The decision upset the Chief Executive Officer who cautioned her and told her that a lot of people in power had called him to express their disapproval of such programs. “They argued that I was motivating workers to rebel against the government who is the major employer. Prior to 2002 this program would have been acceptable, but nowadays the socio-political context has really changed,” says Caroline.

Perhaps the biggest sacrifice and most inspiring element of Caroline’s presence in the Erasmus Mundus program is that she is a mother to a nine-year-old son who she has had to leave behind in Zimbabwe. “This was one of those difficult decisions to make,” she reflects. “It took a lot of sweet-talking and explanations to make my son understand and accept that it was good for both of us. I told him once I do this course it would open doors for me to get a better job in another country where life is manageable.”

Caroline’s plan after the degree is “to work for a regional or international organization that deals with issues of peace, security and conflict management.” She also wants to raise awareness of women’s rights. It is only natural that her second-year specialism will be in war and conflict, in Swansea.