

# the INSIDER

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Stockholm School of Economics in Riga



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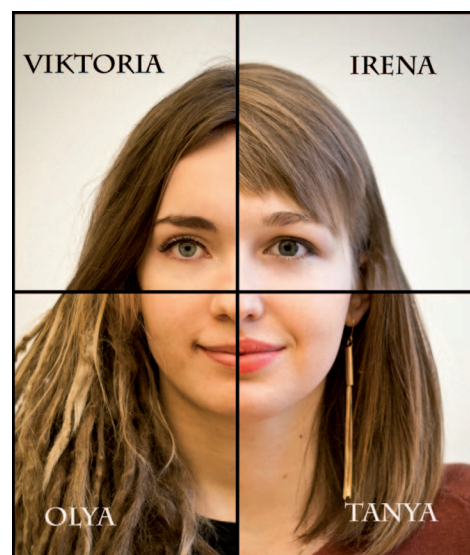
  
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And here it comes, our first issue!.. Many sleepless night, many ideas, much brainstorming and a lot of nerves so that you are able to hold it in your hands on this wonderful day. We hope that this issue will tune you in to the right mood for Valentine's and you will spend this day in a special way with a special person. And even if you don't have one yet, maybe, you should look around more attentively? Maybe, your true love is already around the corner. Enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed making it, and stay in touch!



P.S. Big thanks to everyone who helped us with this issue, it was tough but rewarding. Thanks to our writers, Marija Grjazniha, Artsiom Boyarin and, of course, the previous Insider team.

P.P.S. Happy Valentine's Day!



## SSE Riga's Triple A(nders) rating

Recently, several of the Eurozone economies got downgraded by Standard & Poor's and some, e.g. France, lost their Triple-A rating. The AAA-rating is becoming more and more seldom on this planet; just about a dozen countries in the world currently hold it, among them four of the five Nordic countries (no prize for guessing which one does not...).

SSE Riga is neither a country, nor does it have an S&P rating but I hope that the visit on 1 February by Anders Borg, Sweden's finance minister, will give me a chance for a photo op with 3xAnders – Paalzow, Alexanderson, Borg – thereby creating my very own Triple A(nders) rating for SSE Riga.

OK, rather far-fetched, I know. Back to preparations for macro. Greetings to everybody and best wishes for 2012 but special greetings to Y2 – they need it right now....



Dear community of SSE Riga,

Already a month has passed for the new SA Board 2012/2013. I believe that I can speak in the name of all committees' chairpersons and say thank you for showing your trust in us. We all are truly proud to receive this possibility to represent the Student Association of the Stockholm School of Economics in Riga.

As we all have a lot of motivation and passion to carry on the work of our senior colleagues, we are shaping and planning the next half year of the SSE Riga life and looking for new ways to develop the exclusively made events.

Besides the numerous meetings and discussions with our supporters and idea generators we can conclude some of the main aims for the Student Association that we want to achieve throughout the next year:

1. Reveal and shape up the image of the Stockholm School of Economics in Riga student. We are going to pay close attention to how the student activities in SSE Riga are revealed to the outside society. This is an important point for the whole community because usually the outside society has a perception only about the School. We think that the focus should be on the student achievements.

2. Continue and implement the ideas of our fellow students. A lot of planning and consulting has to be done for all SA board members and our helpers to achieve a successful outcome for such projects as renewed Articles, expansion of LMS, closing the pending sponsorship contracts, communicating with SSE and a lot of others. With the help of our school, alumnus and mentors we can really achieve a lot.

3. Strengthen the cooperation. This issue has been improved already for years. By using the Cooperation Council we want to stress that together we are able to form new ideas and future plans for the community as a whole. In addition, we have made a mutual agreement with the RGSL Student Association to test out and implement a new event mode with a high possibility of conducting a joint Valentine's Day party.

Of course we will continue to organize guest lectures, support new events and help our administration when there is a necessity. We are here to work for you.

To sum up, our motivation is not to rebuild the existing system, we want to search for and implement new possibilities and improvements that could benefit all the community of the Stockholm School of Economics in Riga.

"The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing"

Walt Disney.

I am looking forward to working with you!

Yours sincerely,

Kristaps Bošs

President of the SA 2012/2013



## Days of Opportunities

Dear SSE Rīgians,

We are very glad to see you all full of enthusiasm back to the School. Hope you are more than looking forward to experience your first or second internship. If you are still perplexed and do not know where you would like to have it, please, be patient we – the team of Days of Opportunities – are working very hard to provide you with a wide variety of options (starting from finance field ending with marketing or communication). Let us survive the Finance course and then have the most amazing, important, (maybe even) life changing event of the year – the annual DoO gala event on 30th of May. The big date is approaching, but you still have some time to brighten up your CV's and motivational letters. Good luck with that!

Always caring,

Days of Opportunities 2012 team

SSE RIGA  
DEBATE SOCIETY



Greetings, ladies and gentlemen.

The Debate Society has had a period of really hard-core organizing, but now it can finally take a breath – most of the debate events in SSER have already happened and now we can look forward to actually debating rather than solving organisational issues (although Y2 gets no break – it's FE time!). On the session front – our Y1 debaters have already 'levelled-up' and they can now debate in international tournaments with good results. We hope that this will be clearly seen in upcoming tournaments in Lithuania and Estonia as well as in Germany and UK. Best of luck to all of you and start planning your end of the world party – the debate party will surely be legen – wait for it – dary!



## PAUSE.MOVIE TIME

As Pause.MovieTime has two new hosts now (Justas Kurtinaitis and Julius Šimulionis) it means that it is time for some changes! Here's the first one - each week we are going to present two movies (one selected by Justas, other by Julius), post trailers on facebook page and wait for your likes. The movie which receives more likes will be shown on the upcoming Pause.MovieTime session. The choice is yours!



Dear SSE Riga students! Do not miss a chance to meet and listen to experts of energy here, in Riga. Baltic Economic Forum for Students has granted an opportunity to see and hear the future of one of the most important industries in the world from the leaders of the sphere. The forum will concentrate on four problematic sectors: Electricity, Gas, Oil and Nuclear Energy.

Most of the speakers work in energy industry and are well known experts. The forum will also gather journalists, researchers and economists. Few of them are: Daniels Pavluts (Minister of Economics of Latvia), Romas Svedas (former Vice-minister of Energy of the Republic of Lithuania), Juris Ozolins (worked more than 30 years in Latvenergo, independent energy expert) and many others. Also the event will feature different energy related companies (do not forget – looking for an internship is never too early).

During the event, there will be a contest for students; they will work in groups and analyze different industries of energy. At the end of the forum, students will present their analysis, ideas, and suggestions for the future.

The event will take place from 15th till 17th March, 2012, in the premises of SSE Riga. We hope to see you there!

Yours sincerely,

BEFS organising team



Dear all,

It is getting more and more exciting here! The registration for Peak Time 2012 opened on January 2 together with our new website, video, and weekly updates on interesting business-related topics posted on Facebook. For the whole month students from all over the world apply to compete in one of the biggest and oldest business competitions in Europe, which we are so proud to hold. So far we have participants from countries like Vietnam, Nigeria, India, USA, and many others.

Not only promotion is going on. We are preparing for the preliminary rounds that start on February 13 – this year we will have a new Cesim business simulation! Also, we are gathering the best guest speakers for the final event, and can promise that it will be very interesting.

For now, enjoy the winter! And don't forget to Like us on Facebook if you haven't done that yet – all the news come appear there first.

Yours,

Peak Time 2012 organizers



CHARITY CLUB

On December 14th SSE Riga hosted annual Blood Donation in cooperation with Kārum, AXA and Liepkalni bakery. In 3 hours the event gathered 42 bravehearts, 37 of whom met high standards of the Blood Donation Centre. Altogether students managed to donate almost 20 litres of blood for blood bank. Faces of those who donated blood for the first time were shining with special happiness. It is worth mentioning that each year the number of blood donors increases, as well as does the number of those who donate for the first time; therefore, let's keep doing good things together!

At the end of February we will have the event for children from Ziluks orphanage, so hurry up to do good things, help is always appreciated!



Finance is hitting hardly into the agenda of the iFund board, so we will keep it brief. As scholarships have been promised, we are slowly approaching for the Investment Game 2012. Many people are already involved in a lot of activities connected with either the iGame or our Fund's portfolio, yet the preparation for Market Overviews is yet to be launched so stay tuned for the news. Regardless of that, help is always welcome, so if you are eager to help with the iGame promotion or Market Overviews, do not hesitate to contact us, as there are still free places for that. One more thing: in order not to keep you bored, in February there will be a few lectures from the former iFund members on very interesting topics in applied financial analysis, so that you could master your skills before the big trading starts in March 12.

Yours financially,

iFund board '11-'12



Salut, nos amis!

Also, happy New Year of 2012! We hope that the Mayans were wrong and this won't be our last year together... On to happier things - the theme and the date for the main event have been set – the event shall happen on the 19th of May and the theme provided by the organizers of Museum Nights is 'blue colour – the sea'. You will be able to see all the creative and sometimes shocking ways of how we implement it into our chosen topic – the stages of life. Good luck in all of your endeavours and look forward to Je Joue's museum night!

Cheers,

Je Joue







Arvydas graduated from SSE Riga in 2009 and joined Ernst & Young Vilnius office, Advisory department. He now holds a position of a senior consultant. In a serious yet slightly humour-infused tone Arvydas describes himself as somebody who helps to develop his country at work and builds civil societies in developing countries during his free time. Below he contemplates his choices, past and future, while juxtaposing SSE Riga and Ernst & Young experiences.

### *Why are you where you are?*

I am asking myself this question every day. SSE Riga graduates are usually very confident when going out to the job market. Sure, why not – they were prepared for it during the three intensive years. Nevertheless, there is a downside to it as well. The school's career-focus culture is set in a certain conceptional framework imposing subconsciously predefined career choices. One blogger I have recently read grasps this pretty well by pointing out that a typical elite university student (a) has been very successful by conventional standards for his entire life and (b) is driven more by fear of not being a success than by a certain desire to do anything in particular.

I believe SSE Riga is doing an excellent job in reinforcing the latter point by constantly pursuing its "you are the best business students in the Baltics" rhetoric. As a result, a vast majority of SSE Riga graduates, after considering significant opportunity costs, choose Big 4, banking or similar safe-heavens, thus minimizing the risk of deviation from a "conventional success path".

I am constantly asking myself to what extent that point (b) was involved in my choice of a career and I want to believe that rather little. But yet again, the actual substantiation of this choice that I genuinely believe in may seem as a merely artificial rationalization of why I am doing things that I am doing.

### *Still, why do you work in the consulting business?*

It is due to three things.

First, it is about the impact my work allows me to make. I usually do projects on a national scale, which determine the directions and means Lithuania is going

to develop, be it the private sector development, export promotion, FDI attraction, creating strategies for transport and medical sector, or running sustainability initiatives in major Lithuanian companies.

Most importantly, debate and its global perspective exposed me to broader issues of philosophy, international affairs, politics and economics I otherwise wouldn't have developed any interest in. It somewhat freed my finance- and business-conditioned mind already during SSE Riga study years. And now those questions constantly remind me that whatever I do is so small on the grand scale of things. It humbles you down, which is healthy, at least for your curiosity and aspiration to develop further.

On the other hand, in my recent conversation with an expert from Harvard Medical School, who was then helping us to develop Medical tourism promotion strategy for Lithuania, I found out that she was planning to go to a Caribbean island for a project in a hospital with 70 beds, noting that she usually doesn't work with such small hospitals, but at least this time she expects the island and the weather to be nice. As the conversation went on, I was asked what size the Lithuanian private medicine sector was in terms of patient beds. After I told her that it was less than 100 there was an awkward silence ...

This is to illustrate how small things are here, in the Baltics. One working for example somewhere in UK consultancies, investment banks or private equity houses would definitely be equipped to make substantially bigger impact in terms of money involved or number of people affected. But the national element existing in my work is what makes a trick.

What matters to me is not only the impact in absolute terms but also the extent to which you identify with the final recipient of that impact. Part of the reason why I find the things I do meaningful, is because I do it in Lithuania and for Lithuania. Interestingly, I do not tend to define my identity in national or cultural dimensions but in this context

subconsciously I probably still do.

The second thing I enjoy a lot is the political dimension of my work. Consulting, particularly in the public sector, is not just about working out a technically flawless solution. Its success also depends on how it encompasses the interest of all the stakeholders. There usually will be somebody opposing to changes, despite their overall benefits to an organization. Understanding the underlying reasons of a certain behavior and making the solution seem more favorable to all of those affected, without changing its essence, usually poses an exciting challenge. Human dimension, with all its biases, information asymmetries, etc. is more prevalent in consulting than any outsider could imagine.

Third, consulting is a vast space for autonomous creation - be it developing new opportunities with clients or applying an innovative approach to doing things. The higher the career ladder you are, the more autonomy you are given, thus allowing you to concentrate on further development of ideas rather than the technical aspects of implementation. Selling consulting services is not like selling an ordinary good. It's about carefully and attentively nurturing the growth of idea in a client's head, before it takes off as an actual engagement, which is an exciting process in itself.

*How did studies at SSE Riga help you in your career?*

Consulting work is primarily about the ability to manage the unknown and unexpected in a constantly changing sensitive environment. SSE Riga provides a superb basis for that. The problem-solving-based learning process, teamwork, and extracurricular activities containing lots of elements of project management – all of these make you comfortable playing “games” with the defined goal but without any straightforward rules or path how to get there. That is a vitally needed skill in consulting. Wherever I go in my life, besides all the industry experience gained at Ernst & Young, I will primarily bring skills to grasp changing situations, learn, and adapt

quickly. After some time of working in this field you realize that consulting is not about learning solutions to all the problems, but rather gaining an ability to find the best approach to reach the solutions needed for the situation at hand.

*You have mentioned building civil societies. Can you please comment on it?*

The term is clearly an exaggeration, but I like to believe in it. My previous debating experience and social networks provided me with significant opportunities to travel and teach debate in various exotic countries such as Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, China, the Philippines and others. I love teaching, particularly in

culturally sensitive contexts. It is absolutely fascinating to try to break the “walls” of some people’s minds corrupted by “learning the only right answers by heart” education system, showing them that there are plenty of right answers given they are well argued for. It is exciting to deal with cultural biases in countries with various deeply entrenched religious perceptions while exposing them to pluralistic views.

*What would be your advice for current SSE Riga students?*

One of Ernst & Young managers, who is participating in a recruitment process, once commented that very often applicants can present themselves well, talking about generic (interview guide-book type answers), nevertheless they lack a real substance if challenged to analyze things deeper. In most cases SSE Riga will provide you with a good base knowledge, but it is totally up to you to develop the substance by finding out what you are genuinely interested in.

Do not choose consulting as the easiest way to stay on the “conventional success path”, choose it if it is the way to stay on “your success path”.







This semester SSE Riga has opened its doors to 17 exchange students from every possible corner of the world. We have had a chance to get to know them a bit better, and in this article we are sharing some interesting facts about them with you. They are students with long and challenging names, but with interesting personalities. So let's meet them.

Corina Safaler





### *Natalie Mets*

The girl with carrot-colored hair and big blue eyes, whose decision to come to SSER fits her future plans. And her future is in the music industry. For four years already she has been very active in the music and entertainment field. She likes to watch quality movies, spend her time on exhibitions, in cafeterias and she is keen on having conversations with inspiring people. So if you want to spend a nice evening in a good atmosphere, you know whom to approach. And one piece of advice, never call her NataLIA, never.

### *Nodari Nazagaidze*

One of the two exchanges from Georgia that we have this term. Actually, he is the one who contacted SSE Riga and negotiated with the administration about having an exchange program with his Uni. He built some new bridges :) Second of his great achievements of last year is that he climbed up to the peak of the highest mountain in Georgia, Kazbegi - 5048 m high!!! That's remarkable. Nodari lives at the foot of the mountain, near a winter skiing resort, that's why he really enjoys skiing, and hopes to find here some good places for that, so whenever you know about an event, tell him.

### *David von den Driesch*

David is the only exchange student from Germany we have this semester, so from now on we are not going to see only Germans around. He has heard that our Uni is good, and as he is interested in new cultures, he took this opportunity to come to Riga. Btw he is very glad that it is not -30oC... yet, David, yet. At SSE Riga he finds everybody to be friendly and helpful, which makes him feel at home. He expects to have the best time of his life here! So let's not disappoint him and be his best family ever, which will make his life unforgettable! He likes to travel, so if you want to take an adventure outside Latvia, David is the one you should approach!

### *Aykanysh Tabaldyeva*

"I knew from the very beginning that I wanted to come exactly here. For me Riga is the heart of the Baltics, the old town is so beautiful, art nouveau architecture around SSE Riga is wonderful as well, but unfortunately there is not enough sun." Aykanysh is from sunny Kyrgyzstan, even on their flag there is the sun with 40 branches. Here she expects to experience the impact of different cultures, to communicate with people who seem friendly, tolerant and cool, and to open new perspectives for her future career, because she is willing to work in an international company. One of her hobbies is camp tennis that she would like to experience ASAP.

### *Akerke Bagaliyeva*

Akerke was born on Friday 13, but as she said she has never had troubles with it, she would even say that she's actually a very lucky person. So those who

want more luck in their life, hang around this pretty girl. She can play the kobyz, a traditional instrument that is similar to violin but is played like a cello. She is from KIMEP and as she said: "Everybody admires SSE Riga and those who have already been here are willing to come back, so I decided to experience what SSER is on my skin. What can I say? Even though I have been here for a few days only, I already agree with them".

### *Isaam Daoud*

"I chose to come to SSE Riga because one of my teachers recommended me this school. I've already travelled in many countries, but I have never been to Eastern Europe, so I was quite eager to meet Latvians, a new culture". Isaam is "extra" active: "My hobbies are simple and different: dancing, writing, shopping, bungee jumping, kayaking, nightclubbing, painting... I am just curious and love to try everything." By the way, he was writing songs for musical shows at his school, so we have a composer here.

### *Artsiom Boyaryn*

Artsiom is the cook of the dormitories, and everyone who saw him cooking or tried his yummy dishes will agree. As he says, "music plays a great role in my whole life. It is the cure, the best friend in the worst situations. When playing, you tell a story and you feel it with all your heart". During the first course in Uni back in Belarus, he was playing in a rock-band, now he likes to play the guitar accompanying it with his voice. Sometimes when you hear him singing, you may have goose bumps, his voice is quite deep. He finds people here interesting and open-minded, and he said that everybody has special qualities and each person can offer you something new and special.

### *Anna Bachnetzer*

"I chose SSE Riga because the education system seemed so interesting, and besides I have never been abroad for a long time, so I decided to begin with the Baltics". In Austria, Anna studies "Non-profit, Social and Healthcare Management" and she is sure that here she will acquire useful economic knowledge which will help her in her future career. Red-Cross is the place where she did her internship, so if you need some fast healthcare, give a call to Anna, but do not disturb her too often, because she already experienced to be over-exhausted and fell down near the patient in a need of sleep and energy pills.





Tadas Stankevičius

Though the end of the year should be associated with calm and cozy Christmas spirit, with people enjoying the first snow, it is not like that here, at SSE Riga. And it is so not because of the tough schedule or the fact that snow was, let's say, a bit late – a new SA board had to be elected.

Though the end of the year should be associated with calm and cozy Christmas spirit, with people enjoying the first snow, it is not like that here, at SSE Riga. And it is so not because of the tough schedule or the fact that snow was, let's say, a bit late – a new SA board had to be elected. More than 20 enthusiastic Y1's applied for different SA board committees in order to replace the previous board and to promote their own ideas. At first it may seem that it is impossible to reinvent the wheel and improve significantly what the previous board has done, but presentations of candidates were more than promising. So, how did it look behind the curtains?

Year2&3's might ask: where the hell were promotional campaigns? Well, this year the whole procedure of elections was shorter, and candidates had only one week to promote themselves (before their presentations). Two candidates actually managed to prepare and launch their campaigns on time, while a few other ones were planning to astonish everyone on the last day before the end of campaigns. However, because of some misunderstandings about the exact day, they had no choice but to rely only on their presentations.

Voting itself went smoothly; there were only a few students who tried to vote twice. I should say that Meelis is a very precise person and not a single vote was missed. Also we would like to thank JeJoue for the box that we used for the elections. A harder part was to live in the same flat with one of the candidates. Fortunately, he put himself into my shoes, understood that it was my 'duty' to be confidential and didn't insist on revealing the results; and I did not want to spoil the moment of victory for him. I should say that boys were not so curious about the

results, but as for the girls... sometimes I just couldn't help teasing them – questions about the difference between the top two candidates and 'not direct' questions were common until the Snow Flake ball party. I should admit that it was a real pleasure to make fun of those who asked, as the reaction of some of them was literally priceless.

Presidential debates were even more interesting. Both couples had something that would make a student want to vote for them, and both had something that would make you think twice before giving your vote; and differences between the couples made the debates enjoyable for everyone, except for the candidates, of course. Votes from the box spoke for themselves: results were almost equal and everyone, even us, who were responsible for the elections, were waiting for e-learning votes wondering who would replace Rihards and Kristaps. In order to decrease tension and to remind us that elections are not the most important event even in our school, beer for degustation was present right after the debates were over. Not surprisingly, those who 'foodraised' the beer (admit it, nothing serves better than a cold pint of beer when your fridge is empty and you are hungry) bought some voters by doing that.

During the party, when the results were announced, it was a pleasure to see all those happy faces, though not many of them made it 'on the house' for others after the results. One night of limitless fun and a year of tough work which has to be done – let's hope they'll be able to cope with their duties. And we are the ones who will make them have those duties. The previous SA board raised the standards to the next level, and we should be grateful to them for that - our students' life isn't so bad, right? Nothing's impossible – let the new SA board borrow this phrase from Adidas, and we'll see what happens.





Tanya



Olya

This year the Stockholm School of Economics in Riga admitted 20 non-European students who benefit from a full Swedish Government Scholarship. This provoked a lot of discussions, and we have decided to clarify this issue with Diana Pauna, the pro-rector.

What is the reason for non-EU students being awarded full scholarships? Is it somehow related to the lack of international environment that is lowering SSE Riga's position in the Financial Time ranking?

It is very simple; this amount of money is provided by the Swedish Government. The School is given support through the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the development of international relationships. We do not have to spend our own money to go to different countries to attract students, instead we get financial support, which makes it possible to go and recruit international students, and as a result we become more international. I think this is wonderful.

Do you think it is fair that non-European students occupy 20 places that could have been taken by Baltic students?

Look at the demographics in Latvia and in the Baltic countries. The birth rate has decreased and so many families have left abroad. People are questioning what will happen in the upcoming year. The demographic situation across Europe is also bad. In a way, all educational institutions are looking for international students. Actually we have approached the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia because our interest is really in neighboring countries or countries where Latvia has some kind of historical or regional cooperation. We asked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs if they could support this initiative so that we could attract more people. They said that they wouldn't have money for the time being. The Swedish government was ready to provide money for such an initiative. This explains why non-European students get a Swedish, not a Latvian scholarship. The initiative is very much appreciated by SSE Riga alumni, they wish they



studied in an international environment at the School as it would be useful for them to have future business partners in different countries. Historically, the School was established to serve as a bridge between the north and the east. I am certain that all of us win a lot.

And as to these 20 places... Originally, when the School was established, we admitted 100 students and the School was developed for 100 students. For example, rooms 303 or 311 have seats for 50 students for a divided group of 100 students. In a few years we observed that there were some students lagging behind the programme (10-15 students) and not being able to graduate, and therefore we first increased the number to 115 to make sure that around 100 students graduate every year. And then we increased the overall number to 120 students.

Why Latvians, Estonians and Lithuanians are not awarded scholarships?

First, all assistance programmes from the European Union to Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia have been finished already. They used to exist in order to assist a new country and new educational institutions. If we look at the overall picture, all scholarship programmes were gradually closing down after we had joined the European Union. This is the first argument. The second argument is provided in the original agreement according to which our School has been working, it says that all assistance of providing tuition free for undergraduates was planned for 10 years. The School was started in 1994, however, the crisis in the late 90s had an impact on building up SSE Riga's financial independence, and therefore the agreement with the Swedish government was extended to 2010.



Kristaps Bošs

The LSF's mission is to offer education programmes and conduct academic research in finance at the highest level. It strives to attract outstanding individuals as students and faculty, and to create an environment of excellence.

Questions to Gundars Ostrovskis

Q: According to the Alumni database you have been working successfully for several years after graduation from SSE Riga. How did it happen that you decided to continue your studies?

A: My interest for the financial sector had been growing gradually even before the financial crisis struck. But its repercussions on the real economy strengthened my interest in the interaction and feedback loops between the financial sector and the real economy. Since I had only studied economics and business, my academic background in the financial sector was largely limited to corporate finance and financial reporting. Therefore, it seemed opportune to supplement this with a more in-depth education in banking and finance, covering the various capital market players, instruments and systems.

Q: Why have you decided to get an MSc in Banking and finance at Luxembourg School of Finance?

A: I picked LSF partly due to personal reasons, but partly due to my belief that it will offer the best balance between theoretical and applied knowledge. Given the prevalence of the financial sector in Luxembourg's GDP, I was hoping for some synergies in that respect. I was also reassured by the broad coverage of their programme, as well as by the cooperation with the NYU Stern School of Business. The latter culminates in a one-week residential course at NYU in New York.

Q: Was it hard to enter the finance school?

A: I'm not sure if I am allowed to disclose this, but just amongst ourselves – not at all. Perhaps this had to do with the fact that the tuition is quite high and the enrolment took place in the midst of the crisis when the demand for this programme may not have been at its highest.

Q: How do you like the study process there? (are studies conducted in English? Is there a need for other languages? Some parallels with SSE?)

A: The programme is entirely in English and I indeed found some parallels to SSE Riga. Namely, LSF is still in its formative years – it was established only in 2003. It offers excellent technical support and premises, as well as has most of the faculty flying in from across the world (mainly, the US, the UK, France and Benelux). I must confess that I found the faculty outstanding. We had professors from INSEAD, LSE, NYU, as well as many practitioners from financial and regulatory institutions (e.g. from the CFTC in Washington).

Q: Could you tell more about the financial side? (Did you have to pay a tuitionfee? Are there any scholarships? Housing costs and everyday expenses?)

A: The entire programme costs EUR 17,500 and can be taken either as a full-time (FT) one-year and part-time (PT) two-year programme. This includes books, lunches during the course days and the course at NYU (including accommodation,



but not the flight). I took the part-time option due to professional commitments, but there is no loss of quality with this option: students get exactly the same number of hours and subjects, but they are simply spread over two years instead of one.

PT programme is more appropriate for people with work experience, since FT programme mainly attracts young graduates with limited work experience. Besides, PT programme is mainly over two weekends (Fri + Sat) per month. Occasionally,







The core objective of the Luxembourg School of Finance is to be an academic leader in the creation and dissemination of an integrated body of knowledge in banking and finance. In order to fulfill this mission, LSF places a high priority on research.

there are lectures on Thursday, too. The summer is free from mid-July to mid-September. The same is true for FT programme, except that the lectures are also during the week. Last but not least, FT students have to do a traineeship project in a financial sector institution instead of an MSc thesis (i.e. to improve their career prospects upon graduation).

As for the cost of living, Luxembourg is not cheap. I was commuting from Belgium and Germany, so I cannot give a precise estimate. But it is rare to get a flat at less than 800-900 EUR a month, although the university has student rooms at some 350 EUR a month. Altogether, the university quotes 950 EUR as the minimum monthly cost estimate. However, for those who are residents in Luxembourg and are employed there, substantial public support could be available.

Also, there are also occasional scholarships offered by local professional associations. They are awarded on the basis of essays on specific topics of interest to the association in question. I myself obtained two such scholarships. So far, there have been five scholarships (one in 2010 and four in 2011). They have amounted to EUR 3,000 and can only go towards financing tuition fees. In practice, one has to pay one's own tuition fees and the scholarship then comes as a partial reimbursement.

Q: Overall, do you like the atmosphere and people at school?

A: I loved it. I found the programme very balanced, the faculty outstanding and my co-students very friendly. Perhaps this also had to do with the fact that our group was only about 20 people in size. Beside locals, we also had many other nationalities represented (including Japan and Brazil). However, most of the people are Luxembourg residents.

Q: So what are your future plans?

A: Only God knows for sure. My current contract runs until the next summer and I always have the possibility to return to the European Commission where I worked before and have a permanent career. Should this scenario materialise, I would certainly aim at joining either DG Economic and

Financial Affairs or DG Internal Market to be able to work on financial sector issues, so that I can apply my newly acquired knowledge.

Q: Anything you would like to say to SSER students?

A: I would like to say that I highly recommend LSF to people who have not studied banking and (investment) finance before. At the same time, it could be too basic for someone who has already studied financial economics or quantitative finance.

In general, I would highly recommend SSE Riga graduates not to follow up with a Master's course immediately. I personally found it very useful to have work experience to benefit fully from further studies. Unless, of course, people want to pursue an academic career, I would suggest continuing with Master's studies some three to five years after graduation from SSE Riga. Who knows, it may then even turn out that you want to study something completely different to your initial ideas. Be it as it may, lifelong learning are not just empty words in this day and age, so it will never be too late.

As for the European Central Bank (ECB) internship, I trust it would be a good way to get to know the institution. The ECB offers traineeship opportunities for students with at least a bachelor's degree, including PhD students, or for recent graduates in areas such as economics, finance, statistics, business administration, law, human resources and translation. Thus, SSE Riga graduates should be perfectly eligible!

For the future, I would also like to draw your attention to the bank's Graduate Programme. It is aimed at highly talented recent graduates with a postgraduate degree, preferably a PhD, in one of a broad range of disciplines and a keen interest in central banking. More details are available on the bank's website.

I wish you best of luck with your studies and future careers!

\*WARNNG. THIS PAGE CONTAINS MATERIAL WHICH SOME READERS MAY FIND OFFENSIVE. THE INSIDER TEAM DOES NOT TAKE RESPONSIBILLITY OF THE CONTENT APPEARING HERE AND THE ACTIONS THAT MIGHT HAPPEN BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS AFTER READING THE GOSSIP PAGE. IF YOU FEEL THAT YOU COULD BE OFFENDED IN ANY WAY, SKIP THIS PAGE. AND REMEMBER, THIS IS JUST FOR FUN ;)

THEY SAY ESTERE IS THE MAJOR SOURCE OF GLOBAL WARMING CAUSE SHE IS SO HOT

THEY SAY THERE ARE NEW POKÉMONS IN SSE PARTY, THEY ARE CALLED WILD PRIDITES. THE ONE IN YOUNGER STAGE IS KRISTINE PRIDITE, THE ONE IN GROWN UP STAGE IS ESTERE PRIDITE

THEY SAID THERE ARE NO VIRGINS IN SSE

THEY SAY SSE SHOULD HAVE ITS OWN COFFEE AND LIQUOR STORE INSTEAD OF RECEIVING EXPENSIVE TUITION FEE, WHAT WE BELIEVE IN IS MORE PARTIES AND EXAMS, IT WILL RECEIVE MORE MONEY THAN COLLECTING SCHOOL FEES

THEY SAY MARIJA O. (Y1) SPENT HER CHRISTMAS BY POSTING STUFF ON FACEBOOK

THEY SAY THAT TADAS BEAR (Y1) STALKS EVERYONE ON FACEBOOK

THEY SAY "PETER, PETER, PUMPKIN EATER"...

THEY SAY FE TIP: If because of studying you miss your gym training, you can compensate by bringing back and forth to uni all the compendiums - like Dimitrijs Surenans (Y2) does

THEY SAY DURING FE Y2s FOUND OUT MANY NEW THINGS ABOUT THEIR COURSE MATES. FOR EXAMPLE, THAT THERE IS KING ARTHUR, MR HAT AND MYSTERIOUS MR BLOOD AMONG US...

THEY SAY SOME Y2s FIND IT CONVENIENT TO BLAME ALL THE STUPID THINGS THEY DO ON FE BRAIN F\*\*K. :))

THEY SAY NOBODY KNOWS HOW OLD PETER (FE) IS. SOME SAY HE'S SO OLD THERE ARE NO DATA ON THE INTERNET ABOUT HIS AGE

THEY SAY FOR KRISTINE P. (Y1) AND ANDREJS B. (Y2) THE SPRING HAS ALREADY COME!

THEY SAY WINTER SYMPOSIUM WAS TOO MAINSTREAM, SO WE WENT TO A NON-MAINSTREAM PARTY INSTEAD. NO, YOU HAVEN'T HEARD ABOUT IT

THEY SAY IRINA DOESN'T SUSPECT THE REAL AGENDA BEHIND HER NEW FRIENDSHIP.

THEY SAY THE OLDER THE STUDENT, THE MORE HE TALKS

THEY SAY YEAR 2 WILL SOON BE VERY UPSET CAUSE FE COURSE IS COMING, THEY DON'T EVEN HAVE TIME TO HAVE A SATIFIABLE SEXUAL LIFE DURING THAT TIME

THEY SAY THAT ANDREJS (Y2) MANAGED TO CUT DOWN THE PINE TREE JUST IN TWO HOURS IN ESTONIA

THEY SAY THAT STATA CHANGED EDUARD'S (Y2) LIFE, HE REGRESSES HIMSELF TO SLEEP AFTER READING FE COMPENDIUMS. THEY SAY THAT EDUARDS (Y2) IS IN A RELATIONSHIP WITH STATA

THEY SAY SOON, WHEN FACEBOOK GOES IPO, SO AS WELL WILL E. JAKOBSONS, UPS, SORRY, I MEANT SEAN PARKER

THEY SAY THAT YEAR1s HAVE A STUDENT WHO IS OLDER THAN THE LECTURER!

THEY SAY THAT REINHOLDS (Y3) IS BETTER LOOKING TALIS! :)

THEY SAY THAT SOME Y3 AND Y3+ STUDENTS USE DOCTOR'S NOTES TO DITCH FE AND GO TO WORK INSTEAD

THEY SAY THAT THE LAST TIME AN SA PRESIDENT PASSED FINANCE WAS BACK IN FEBRUARY 2008

THEY BEG YOU, PEOPLE, NEXT TIME YOU ARE PLANNING TO HAVE AN INTERCOURSE IN THE COMMON KITCHEN AT LEAST TURN OFF THE LIGHT AND DON'T STAND IN FRONT OF THE WINDOW!

THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF THE CURRENT SA BOARD IS LITHUANIAN, ISN'T IT?

THEY SAY THAT THE NUMBER OF VLAD'S (Y1) FAILS IS INCREASING EXPONENTIALLY

THEY SAY THAT NOT ALL "CHRISTMAS TREES" SMELL LIKE HOLIDAYS, THERE IS ONE BROUGHT HERE FROM LITHUANIA, AND THE SMELL GIVES OTHERS A FEELING THEY GOT A HANGOVER...

THEY SAY ANDREY ROMANCHENKO AND MARINA ALEKSEJEVA HAVE SUSPICIOUS RELATIONSHIP

THEY SAY YEAR 2 GIRLS SHOULD SPEND MORE TIME WITH YEAR 1 BOYS. BREAKS ARE NOT ENOUGH! :\*

THEY SAY THAT VALERA IS THE MOST PASSIONATE MAN EVER

THEY SAY RAMAN NAKAZNY ATTRACTS GIRLS WITH PLAYING THE PIANO AND THE GUITAR



THEY SAY KANYSHAI TABALDYEVA, AN EXCHANGE STUDENT FROM KYRGYZSTAN, LOOKS VERY FUNNY WHEN SHE IS DRUNK

THEY SAY NEW GROUPS FOR RESEARCH METHODS SHOCKED SOME PEOPLE

THEY SAY THAT GOING TO A PARTY WITH YOUR OWN BOOTS IS WAY TOO MAINSTREAM FOR Y1 LITHUANIAN GIRLS.

THEY SAY IN PAST LIFE EINARS GAROZA (Y1) USED TO WEAR THE EAR-RING, ONLY PURPLE TOPS AND A LOT OF HAIR GEL

THEY SAY SOME EVEN MAKE VIDEOS TO GET WHAT THEY WANT

THEY SAY THAT LENA CAN'T FIT IGOR INTO HER HEAD. AND THAT'S A PROBLEM.

THEY SAY THAT THE PREVIOUS PARTY' COM. IS AN EXAMPLE OF PRACTICED RUSSIAN CORPORATE GOVERNANCE - TRANSPARENCY

THEY SAY TOMAS U. (Y3) WILL STAY ANOTHER YEAR JUST BECAUSE HE FINALLY FOUND A SUSTAINABLE GIRL-FRIEND

THEY SAY THAT ANDREJS B. SHOULD CHOOSE WHICH ONE HE WANTS MORE.

THEY SAY THAT TOMAS (Y3) THINKS HE WOULD LOOK AWESOME IN BLACK LEATHER PANTS. =D

THEY SAY THAT PANDA IS STILL THE BEST DANCER AMONG Y2 GIRLS

THEY SAY THAT ESTERE (Y2) SHOULD HAVE GOT THE TITLE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL GIRL IN Y1. LOOKS LIKE SHE IS FIGHTING FOR THE TITLE IN Y2 AS WELL

THEY SAY THAT JEGORS(Y3) IS BRINGING SEXY BACK FROM FRANCE...

THAY SAY THAT NOT EVEN JESUS BLESSES YOU DURING FINANCE

THEY SAY THAT LITHUANIANS AND RUSSIANS SERIOUSLY NEED MORE FRIENDS TO TALK WITH IN ENGLISH

THEY SAY YELLOW BLUE BUS! (P.S.: HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY;)

THEY SAY THERE SHOULD BE A NEW NOMINATION IN THE YEARBOOK - PERSON OF THE YEAR. THE FIRST AND ONLY NOMINEE - VALERAS (Y2)

THEY SAY DIFFERENT LANGUAGES AND NATIONALITIES AREN'T OBSTACLES FOR LOVE

THEY SAY PRIEDITES ARE SO HOT, BOYS COULD EAT A PINE-CONE

THEY SAY MAKE AS MUCH MONEY AS YOU CAN. FOR AS LONG AS YOU CAN. WHOEVER HAS THE MOST WHEN HE DIES, WINS

THEY SAY THAT ANASTASIJA OLEINIKA (Y3) IS SMOKING HOT!

THEY SAY THAT THE SCHOOL'S LIBRARIANS PULLED OFF THE BIGGEST TROLL EVER - THEY CANCELLED THE SUBSCRIPTION TO REUTERS' DATABASE RIGHT BEFORE FINANCIAL ECONOMICS SO THAT STUDENTS CONDUCTING QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH WOULDN'T HAVE DATA TO WORK WITH

THEY SAY THERE ARE TOO MANY PIECES OF GOSSIP THAT DO NOT BEGIN WITH "THEY SAY"

THEY SAY MR. AVOTS FEELS SO COOL, THAT HE SITS WITH LAPTOP DURING FE SEMINAR

THEY SAY DOMANTAS, LIENE P AND KRISTS - THE NOISE YOU MAKE WHILE COMING LATE IN EACH AND EVERY SEMINAR IS FU\*\*ING ANNOYING! MAYBE BETTER STAY HOME NEXT TIME...

THEY SAY IF YOUR PLACE IS TAKEN IN THE MIDDLE AND YOU COME 1 MINUTE BEFORE LECTURE - FLY!

THEY SAY TALIS EXCHANGED HIS CHARM TO THE RING...

THEY SAY IF YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO ESCAPE FROM CONTROLLERS IN THE TROLLEYBUS, JUST ASK CORINA SAFALER FOR ADVICE

THEY SAY GEDIMINAS UZKURAITIS HAS ALWAYS BEEN DREAMING TO WORK AS A FIREMAN

THEY SAY HANNA EFREMENKO LIKES HER EXPERIENCED TEAMMATE FOR RESEARCH METHODS

THEY SAY JEKABS JURDZS IS PROFESSIONAL AT SLEEPING DURING THE CLASS WITH OPEN EYES

THEY SAY ADAM (EXCHANGE STUDENT FROM POLAND) IS VERY IMPRESSED WITH LATVIAN GIRLS

THEY SAY THREE Y1 GIRLS OWN A LION WHO VISITS THEM ON A REGULAR BASIS

Everyone has his own methods to survive in the cold... :D



GOSSIP



Viktoria Pilinko

Every year some graduates of SSE Riga choose a challenging way to continue their self-development with... teaching pupils! Why would one start working with problematic kids and teens instead of going for Masters, setting up his own business or trying to get into a fancy company like the big four? Imants Auziņš shares his vision about working in this organisation.

*Q: How did you find about “Iespējamā misija”?*

A: First I learnt about “Iespējamā misija”, or “Mission Possible” in English, from a friend of mine. But the organisation also took part in various events happening at SSE, in DOO, for example.

*Q: What was your motivation to join “Mission Possible”?*

A: After my exchange semester in Germany I came back to Riga and started writing my bachelor thesis, which was connected with the field of education. I was not sure what I should do next, because I didn't have passion for any specific field, be it Finance or Marketing. I thought that maybe I should try something out of the ordinary and outside of my comfort zone. I was a TA at SSE, so I had some experience in teaching. And that's how MP came to my mind. I found it interesting because, firstly, it is highly responsible - you are put in charge of a class and students' development is your duty, and secondly, it gives many opportunities for self-development. I had a theoretical “toolkit” in management from SSE Riga, and at school I'm provided with a possibility to practise this knowledge on the possibly most challenging audience – pupils – people who sometimes do not have a motivation to study or the skills how to study well. I saw it as a big challenge and a great opportunity at the same time. Besides, the leadership development program contributes a lot to my skills.

*Q: For most SSE Riga graduates teaching is not a typical occupation. What is the advantage of going into this field?*

A: In most companies in the beginning you have more technical responsibilities. And here I am given an opportunity to manage

people right from day 1. In many other companies it wouldn't be possible. Well, and untypical occupation... I actually didn't see it as a problem, I knew some people from SSE Riga who had finished the program and were very satisfied with it. I like teaching as such, and I was happy about the fact that I would be doing a nice job that would have an impact right from the beginning. In a larger company I wouldn't probably have this feeling.

*Q: How is this program different from being an ordinary teacher?*

A: Mostly, it is support which I get from the program. Before starting to teach at school, I had 6 weeks of trainings in the academy during summer, which included 2 weeks in a summer school in Liepāja teaching kids with low performance in natural sciences and low study motivation. Also, it is the staff of MP, who all the time support you in teaching. Other members are teaching as well, and there is a constant exchange of experience. Here I acquire “people” knowledge and skills which I will be later able to apply in whatever field I will be working at.

*Q: So what are your plans after the program ends?*

A: I've thought about an academic career path. That is one of the interests of mine. I don't know for sure now how I am exactly going to do that, but I think that after these 2 years I could find a Master's program which would combine my interests in teaching and developing people. That could be an HR program, for example. But maybe I'll come back to studying more classical economic disciplines, who knows. Still, only the quarter of the program has passed, and I already have my small victories that I've managed to do in the classroom and there's much more to look forward. I would say that I want to continue my studies, do Master's, that's for certain. I think that when you are approaching 25, there won't be a



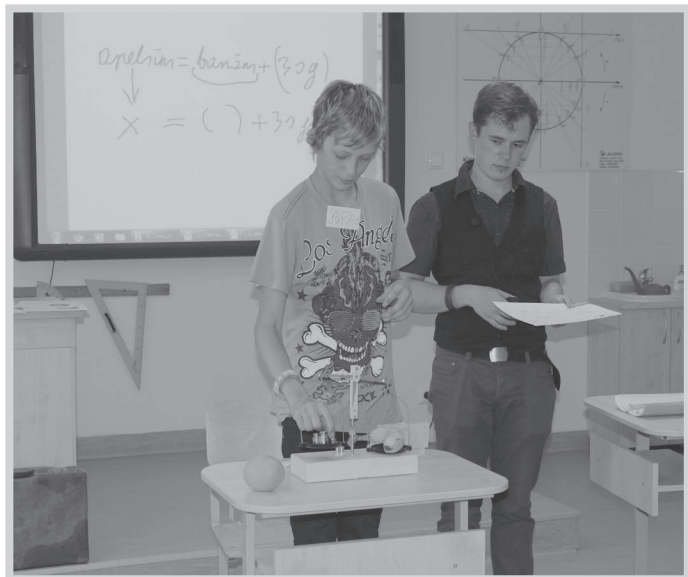




Imants Auzins

“...now I am able to realize the most effective way to achieve a goal in the particular group, where all people are so different and you have to consider it...”

lot of opportunities to do experiments, so now I am trying to experiment as much as I can. Many people would like to try to do something meaningful, share their knowledge with others when they are not young already, but an opportunity cost of doing like this is too high. That's why I am happy that I managed to become a member of such a program. And afterwards... maybe I'll continue experimenting on things, but it makes sense experimenting on something you know that you like.



**Q:** *In Latvia you often hear the complaints about the teachers' low salaries. Didn't it stop you?*

**A:** Well, that's actually the thing, I would not ever consider working for teacher's wage, but program also gives a scholarship which amounts to 150 LVL, and combined with the teacher's salary that I receive I get ~400 LVL net. And that's what you would expect from an entry level position. And even though there are not many prospects of a salary increase in those two years, I think I am actually investing in myself: I develop as a personality and as a professional. Besides, I believe that with such a diverse background – SSE Riga diploma, MP – I may have very intriguing perspectives, differentiating myself on a job

market.

**Q:** *What exact skills did it help you to acquire?*

**A:** First of all, it helps me on an everyday basis. It develops skills of short-term and long-term planning. Starting from the structure of your lessons and finishing with how you translate your vision into smaller goals and how you achieve them.

Also, understanding how people work. I watch how people develop their attitude towards different things, how they form their mind. Now it even helps me when trying to understand adults.

Moreover, now I am able to realize the most effective way to achieve a goal in the particular group, where all people are so different and you have to consider it.

And finally, when studying at SSE you are surrounded by the people who are similar in their motivation and goals. This worked has helped me to understand how to work with people who come from a different background. I got incredible experience in summer academy, where I spent 6 weeks with people coming from various study fields. They have a completely different perspective on things than we, SSE Riga, do. This helped me to open up a bit and it really broadened my horizons.

**Q:** *How and when could one apply for MP?*

**A:** On their home page [www.iespejamamisi-ja.lv](http://www.iespejamamisi-ja.lv). It is worth mentioning that the program runs both in Latvia and Estonia. The deadline is 11th of March. The admission procedure consists of several steps, including application, test and interviews. And also I would like to add that MP is a member of the global “Teach for All” network, so it gives a valuable opportunity to develop useful connections.



The tradition is back! After a gap of couple of years iFund is proud to announce that they once again have a real investment portfolio. But, of course, as usual - none of this would be possible without our generous sponsors, and, in this particular case - Orion Securities, who trusted us with a portfolio worth 10 000 Lit.

### Who is Orion Securities?

Orion Securities is one of the biggest financial groups in Lithuania, who also have branches in other countries. They mainly offer brokerage services, also they are operating in asset management and corporate finance fields, where they are best known for great results in dealings with small and medium sized companies throughout all of the Nordic region.



### What the Portfolio is all about?

This year the main aim of the portfolio is to beat the market. And it doesn't mean that we just have to make a positive growth of portfolio value, it is a bit more complicated. Actually we have to outperform OMX Baltic Benchmark Fund, which is passively managed by Orion Securities and consists of stocks from all the Baltic countries where the weight of the stock in the fund is determined by the company's free-float capitalization. The good news is that although it will be harder to earn profits if the markets are positive, we will still be able to earn profits even if the markets aren't very kind to us. Because the entire positive difference between the value of 10 000 litas invested in the benchmark fund and our portfolio will go to us at the end of our agreement with

Orion Securities. And the best thing is that all those profits will be given out as scholarships to our SSER students.

### Your involvement

For those who are interested in portfolio management there will be opportunities to show their skills and abilities. We, the iFund board, decided that we will gather a team of a couple



of Y1s and Y2s who will help us find the best investment opportunities by analyzing different stocks from the Baltic markets. As for those who won't be chosen for the team we want to say that we are still willing to hear any suggestions and critics that you will have about our portfolio. So we hope for active participation from everyone as the sizes of the scholarships depends on our performance.

Yours financially,  
iFund Board





Andrei Romancenco

Genre	Horror/drama
Directed by	Peter Högfeldt
Screenplay by	Peter Högfeldt, Tālis Putniņš, Jevgenijs Babajcevs
Head Stage Manager	Justina Banytė
Stage Managers	10 TA's(Y3s)
Starring	Y2s + re-takers(Y3s, Y4s etc.)
Studio	SSE Riga: The George Soros Auditorium; W-32
Country	Latvia
Release Date	March 6, 2012

As the beginning of a new semester approached, joyful and enthused Y2s came back to their alma mater willing to share amazing holiday impressions with colleagues. Nothing foreshadowed troubles. However, when they entered Soros for the first time in 2012, they were suddenly seized by a feeling of the unknown. It didn't look like a usual course was going to start. An old and experienced professor, Peter Högfeldt, seemed neither friendly nor cordial. His speech of 'welcome', which lasted for four, plunged Y2s and lots of re-takers into despair. A pile of harsh requirements listed on 40 pages shocked the students. Financial Economics was supposed to be extremely tough, but no one could imagine the real level of toughness. It turned out that the professor enjoyed pointing at a random person and asking to continue his thoughts. Therefore everyone had to wear name tags in order to be easily identifiable. Missing either a lecture, a seminar, or a colloquium was equal to immediate fail (in our case, death). Later on, poor students were overloaded by a huge amount of reading packages, which weighed as much as a thin Y1. The climate in the auditorium was becoming more and more stressful. The weak-nerved even felt dizzy and rushed to Maja's office to get some medicine. But the lecture was far from the end.

All this nightmare was to be conducted by many 'supervisors' as following: the lecturers themselves (a Swede and a Latvian), a bossy BICEPS person, a brainy SSE Riga graduate and the Fantastic Tenner. By and large, each and every was very sophisticated and ferocious in terms of torturing 'fresh blood' with various assignments, term papers, quizzes and so on. After the exhausting introductory lecture, frustrated students started rescheduling their routine because it was highly recommended to study at least 12 hours on a daily basis. Some

people suggested shortening time for having meals and intensively practicing speed reading, the others were strictly against sleeping more than 5 hours a day. BTW, taking a nap on sofas in RGSL became very popular amongst the Finance people. Actually, they spent the same number of hours on sleeping per week as Y1s did per day. All in all, there was the only aim – to survive(mentally and physically) – since Y2s were terrified by the example of depressed re-takers, who were experiencing the disaster for the 2nd, 3rd or even 4th time.

The biggest frenzy of the course was definitely related to having the best seat, which launched the war of 'occupying seats', in which a lot of Y1s were deliberately involved.



It is worth mentioning that the most persistent were Lithuanians, exemplifying impetuous aspiration to knowledge. The majority of students regularly invaded the lobby, the library; apart from this, they found out the codes to some of RGSL auditoriums.

People were not able to take care of their appearance, nutrition or leisure anymore. A wave of pessimism covered SSE Riga. Nobody wanted to break any of those deathly deadlines. Everyone did his/her best to endure the finance torture...





### Ana Efros

Most of us came to SSE Riga to obtain higher education, however for some students it turned out that the university had more to offer them. I guess love can also be seen as a career that you dream about all your life and it actually does take a lifetime to build a strong and empowering relationship. I decided to present you a few affairs of the heart, the heroes being our SSE colleagues. This will help us understand the secrets of a beautiful and long lasting relationship.

Our first couple: Ülar Kirikal and Lili Kirikal, two SSE Riga alumni from Estonia, who graduated a few years ago. They met during a summer camp in 1998. She was 13 and he was about to turn 16. They met again two and a half years later, when Lili started her studies at the Tallinn Secondary Science School.



As soon as Ülar found it out, he started sending her anonymous emails to win her over for almost half a year. They started dating at the same summer camp where they initially met. Ülar was very shy at that time, but luckily Lili

was the one that made the first move, which probably would have taken Ülar another half a year, he says. When he saw Lili for the first time he just simply felt the butterflies in his tummy and nothing rational could explain that. Lili's attention, however, was brought by all the nice things that he used and is used to telling her. In Ülar's eyes Lili is one of the kindest persons he knows and she amazes him each day. The only annoying thing about her would be that she is extremely busy. For Lili, however, the favorite thing about Ülar is that

L-O-V-E. Four random letters that in one way or another change everyone's life. Some are running from it, others never give up the hope of finding it. Some cannot stand seeing couples around them, while others feel inspired by the love that surrounds them. No matter how you feel about love or what you think about it, no one can escape it.

when they are apart (and they have spent a lot of time living in different countries), he keeps their relationship warm and exciting. He is also the one who always brings some little (or not so little) romantic things into their everyday lives. When they were studying at SSE they were living together, which made them learn a lot about each other. One of the most romantic moments from their relationship would be Lili's graduation day when in the evening, after the party, they were walking in the park and Ülar asked her to marry him. A piece of advice for all of us from Ülar and Lili would be to "follow your heart, be yourself and do not be afraid to compliment her, girls do like it if you say nice things about them when you really mean it".

Our next couple is Gabrieliuss Vaicaitis and Rasa Girtaviciute, one of the well known couples in our community. They started dating about two years ago and their relationship is a survivor of the long distance provocation. As a piece of advice to those who might be experiencing it, Rasa said "if you really want it to work, you will find a way to do it". Keep trying until you



find the right thing that will make your relationship alive regardless of the distance. Getting

back to the way their relationship started, Gabrieliuss remembers that Rasa's smile and laugh caught his attention from the very first sight and continues to be his favorite thing about her. At the same time Rasa enjoys feeling like a small child next to him for at least a few moments each time Gabrieliuss makes her laugh in the most ridiculous ways. Today, even though they study at the same university, the amount of lectures and assignments they

have to do takes a lot of time and sometimes keeps them apart for quite a long time. Therefore, on this year's Valentine's Days they intend to isolate themselves from the rest of the world. Their plans include a romantic day spent in a cabin in the middle of nowhere, surrounded by the wild nature.

The third story is the one of Santa Kratule and Kestutis Tyla, who have developed their relationship gradually (not without the help of the Insider). One of the first things that caught Santa's attention about Kestutis was the way he spoke, as she states "being clever is sexy". At the same time Santa caught Kestutis' attention by winning almost every debate they had. Since Kestutis really doesn't like losing he challenged himself to outdebate her. Being crazy and weird is one of the favourite things about each other, which definitely makes their relationship very special. One of romantic things that Kestutis did for Santa is a good example to illustrate it. As he believes



that roses reflect only outside beauty while potatoes tell the person that you care about their inside beauty, not appearance (potatoes grow stuff when left alone and roses wither; also, potatoes can be made into batteries!), one day Kestutis ran to her with a bag of potatoes and shining eyes repeating "Do you remember what it's all about?" to rise her mood. It made Santa feel thousand times better than if he'd brought flowers like casually all the guys do. SSE Riga was a very influential factor in their relationship as they say. It "pushed the relationship further, because you daily communicate and you cannot even be in a quarrel for longer than a day if anything happens." Being asked to send some advice for all of our readers, this was the response I got: "Don't date people from SSE Riga! JUST DON'T! Think it over a hundred of times before and if you are crazy enough & dare to try – screw all the other things,

enjoy fully this relationship and don't care what happens next or what others think".

The last but not least will be the story of one of the newest couples at SSE Riga, Aura Seselgyte and Tomas Urniezius. Is it possible for a boy and girl to simply be friends? This is a question that raises a lot of controversial opinions and, as our couple states, it lasted only 5 months for them. One common thing about Aura and Tomas that I observed was their quality of joking and laughing. As Tomas himself said this



is what brought them together, their attitude towards life, which in short is about

making everything that is possible fun and enjoying every moment. Joking and laughing is a big part of their relationship. Even their first official date was full of this kind of moments. Tomas was preparing seriously for their first date thinking of a good place to go to, Aura, on the contrary, insisted that they should go to eat kebabs. He adores the way she laughs and Aura likes his humor and the way he looks at her. From the very beginning both of them agreed to live the present and not look into the future, since it would most probably put some constraints on their relationship. Their motto is simply living the moment and enjoying each experience they have. Being asked what they would say to our readers, they answered that there is no need to come up with complicated plans for getting the attention of the person you like. It's better to let it come naturally, this way it will be real.

As you can see every couple has a different story to tell. Love is probably one of the most diverse philosophies from our whole life. It appears when you least expect it and you just feel that you have the right person next to you. It is an old story, but always new. Happy Valentine's Day to all of you.





Nana Rostobaia

After long hours spent at school, SSE Riga Dormitories are welcoming quite a decent number of students. People from different courses all together create a happy family under the one roof.

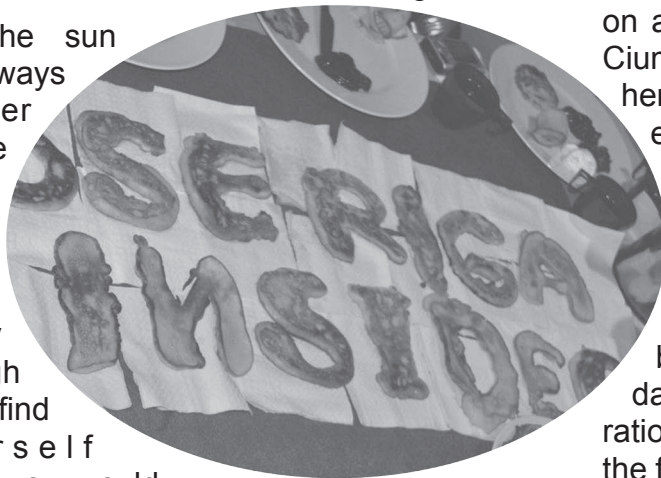
After long hours spent at school, SSE Riga Dormitories are welcoming quite a decent number of students. People from different courses all together create a happy family under one roof. Life in the dorms is pretty interesting. What can be more fun than living together with your course mates? Dwelling in a place at a reasonable price, 15-minutes away from the school, with a friendly atmosphere created by representatives from all over the world - sounds awesome, right?



with the limits of table soccer, a handmade Ping-pong table and a poker game, held once in a month. Our dormitory is the place where boys eagerly hunt down each person who leaves dirty dishes in the kitchen. It is the place where some harmless pranks may result in a penalty. This is the only spot on earth where on a peaceful night all of a sudden Tatiana Ciumacova finds drunk Roman Nakazni in her bed. The life here is so exciting that even some postgraduates do not want to live the place.

But the sun is always brighter on the other side. If you were lucky enough to find yourself there, you would definitely hear impressive debates about the size of beds on different floors, the motives for room distribution, washing machine usage rules and why Vlad from Moldova lives in a double room all by himself?

Nevertheless, everybody is enjoying his or her dormitory life and is trying to add more spice in everyday routine. We are doing our best to have a good time in the dormitory, even



Dorms already have an impressive list of traditions, starting from hosting new exchange students every half a year, organizing competitions for revealing the best cooking skills, and global cleaning days, the number of which are in direct ratio with Maija's arrivals. Maja represents the first force in the dorms. She is the mother for every person who lives far away from home. It is nice to have a person who will worry not only about the critical minimum of dust on the table and sanitary standards, but also about a student's soul, neat appearance and free time as well. She has organized the hairdressing and manicure events, helped to arrange Christmas and pancake parties. As we know, there are a lot of surprises coming up.







Marija Odineca



Anastasija Muravjova

St Valentine's Day has come and we all want to spend it in a special way. The easiest way to make your evening special and pleasant is to share a piece of a mouthwatering dish with the one you are in love with. Going out to a restaurant may be an option, but it becomes much more romantic when you cook dinner on this special day yourself, putting all your feelings into it. What to cook and how to cook – this is what we found out from our beloved lecturer and a former fitness trainer Natalja Tcelovska.

*Q: How would you describe your perfect St Valentine's dinner?*

Natalja: Oh, let me think... Most likely my dinner will be easy, healthy and stylish (because I care about being fit), moreover at the moment I am not in the mood for long cooking hours, so I'll make something easy, drink wine and have a talk mixed with laughing.

*Q: Do you have something particular in your mind?*

Natalja: Well, I think my menu would look very similar to:

Starter: mozzarella, tomato, basil leaves, pesto

Main dish: salmon with mixed green salad

Desert: smth small and sweet

#### *Starter*

*Mozarella, tomato, basil leaves, pesto*

As easy as the picture shows, the only thing to remember is to drizzle olive oil over the cheese and tomatoes and finish with a very light sprinkle of salt. Serve with slices of bread.

#### *Main dish*

*Salmon with mixed green salad*

Place a piece of salmon on aluminium foil. I usually put many different herbs on salmon and then close it with the remaining part of the foil so that the salmon is covered.

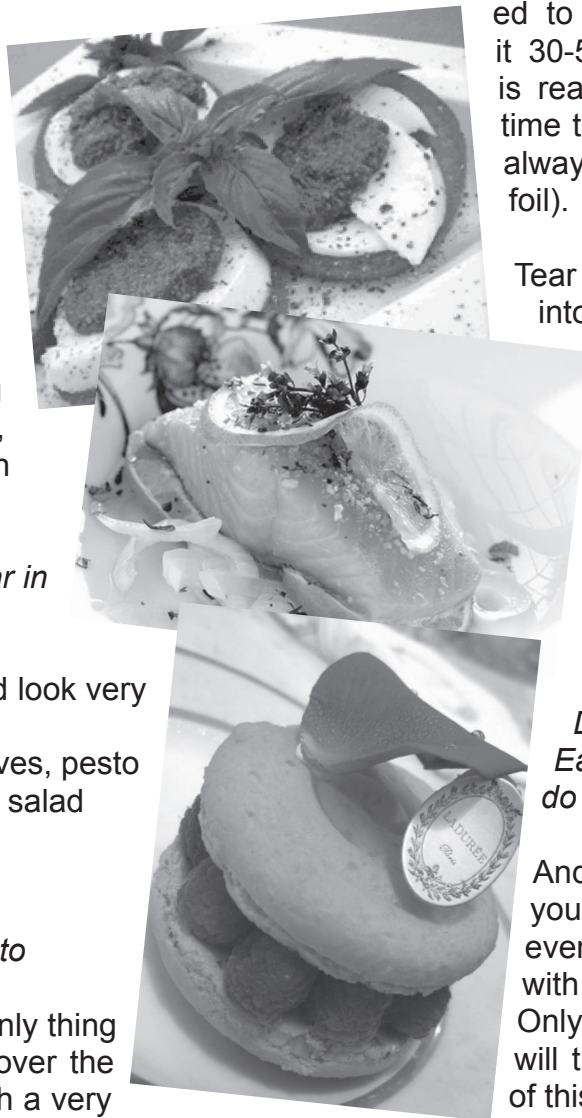
Oven should be preheated to 180-200 C. Give it 30-50 minutes and it is ready (check it from time to time so that it is always covered with the foil).

Tear the lettuce leaves into bite-size pieces and transfer them to a large salad bowl. Add cucumber, tomatoes, sprinkle with oil, red wine vinegar, and salt and pepper, and toss the mix.

#### *Desert*

*Easier to buy, so just do it :)*

And in the end I wish you to enjoy your evening and spend it with someone special. Only in this case you will truly take pleasure of this menu.





Veronika Parmon

Sooner or later we all face the same problems: where to get any food so as not to die from starving, how to put these 3 hours of sleep into your schedule, and - most importantly - where to get money! The first two are more or less solvable, but when it comes to money problem, the answer doesn't appear to be so easy.

Of course, the most obvious way to deal with this problem, except for coming up with some random reasons for your parents, is to have a part-time job. But, unfortunately, this plan is not perfect. Education process at SSE requires a lot of time and efforts, and often it is simply impossible to find a spare minute during studies. That is why the only chance to earn some real money without harming your study process is to work in summer. I am going to give you a few insights on how to earn the maximum amount of money in a short period of time.

For the first time I heard about Work and Travel program when I was in high school. Then I didn't know much about it, perhaps only that students go to the USA and bring some nice pictures after all. But during the first year at University I had a chance to go to the office with my friend and learn more about this program. Since then I've been to America twice and I would like to go back there if I have a chance.

It all starts with choosing a company. There is only one such company in Riga - "The International Student Center". The whole process takes about 2 weeks. The prices are 785\$ for participating in the program and around 700\$ for a return ticket to America. Lots of student fly through London and spend some time there. Then, after you sign all the papers you have an appointment in the embassy. As far as I know there is no problem with it for people who live in the EU. And that's basically it.

The most important process is searching for a job. And this is the stage where all problems start. There are several ways to find a job. The first one seems to be the easiest one - to pay some 100 LVL to the company and don't bother anymore. But in this case the expression "money can buy anything"

doesn't work properly. Any normal employer, who cares about his business, wants to know who is going to work on him even during summer. So if you buy the contract and do not contact your employer, or if it looks like your future boss is not very excited about your calls, you may find in the end that your position is already taken and no one wants to return your money for this job offer. This is not a very pleasant thing to discover, especially because in some cities season starts in May and if you come later there is almost no chance of finding a well paid job. That's why we are moving to the next variant- to find a job yourself. The first mistake people often do is to follow the company's advice and search by sending emails. The problem is that an email doesn't show your personality and the level of English. What is more, the average person in America receives around 20 messages every day and your application can be easily ignored or put into spam. My personal advice is to call via phone or even better via Skype.

So how to choose whom you're going to call? Almost everyone I know started to look for a job in big cities such as New York, Chicago, Miami, or Los Angeles. But the truth is that in big cities they don't need workers only for a summer season. Also 90% of all students fly to NYC and start looking for a position there. Even if you are lucky to find one well paid job, it doesn't mean that you will be lucky to find a second job, or an apartment near it. Moreover, you will be forced to pay for public transport and there will be more temptations to spend your money on. It's a much better idea to go to small, not well-known cities. There you can find a lot of small cafes, restaurants, stores, hotels and so on, whose owners have their best time during summer so they definitely need extra help. And these are people usually interested in foreign students, since, honestly, we a little bit more hard-working. That's why sometimes employer provides cheap housing, free meals (if you work with food), discounts.



Calling such people you don't need to be very formal because they don't look for a future partner; they look for cool young people who can communicate with customers well and do their job. The rate can vary. In some regions, like Florida, a normal rate per hour is 7-8\$. But usually it's lower since you're supposed to get tips. The East Coast offers 9-10\$ or even more, but first of all it's quite expensive to get there (plus 300\$ for a round trip), and secondly, there are a lot of American students who go there and it's very hard to compete with them because of the



language. In other parts of America you would expect 8-9\$ per hour plus some benefits I've mentioned before. You can also work in a team and have common tips that will be divided at the end of the shift. In this case your rate in total will be 12-15\$ per hour, depending on the amount of tips. Waiters and bartenders have 1-2\$ per hour. They don't pay any tax from it and they also don't pay any tax from tips, which can be 70-200\$ per day for waiters and 100-300\$ for bartenders, or even 400\$ at the weekend. Being a bartender is a good variant for those who want to earn money, have fun and not to work too much. They work only in the evenings so there is an opportunity to go to the beach during the day, or have a second job. To work as a waiter or as a bartender you need to be at least 21, but if you are not, you can pass a special exam in the States and get the license. The tricky part is that to pass this exam you should be already hired to the position.

The average student earns about 5000\$ in net. Taxes will be returned to you after a year. Taxes are different in different states, but be prepared that the more you earn, the more they take and not all of the taxes will come back.

I spent my first summer in America on Block Island, Rhode Island. It's a small, quiet and expensive place, where the problem is not employment, but housing. My first job was in Bagel Shop, where we did all kind of work: cooking, serving, cleaning, washing dishes. The shift started at 5:30 am and ended at 4 pm, but this is an exception. According to the law, after an 8-hour shift an employer should pay extra, but don't count on it because if you ask for it, you will probably have only 8 hours to work and that's it. After Bagel Shop I, as most of the students, had a second job, which was in a clothes store and wasn't very difficult. It was from 5 pm till 10 pm. Yes, it seems a lot, but it lasted only for 2 month and in the end I had around 7000\$ in cash. The beauty of this island is that the season starts in July and ends in the middle of September. In September there is not much work and you can go traveling around America! Well, that year I didn't travel, I visited only NYC and was there for several days (in reality it is even better than in films!). Next year I came back to the same place but to a different job. I came with the rate of 10\$ per hour, free housing and a 13-hour per day contract. But after I came I asked to increase the rate, since I was the one who was in the store all day long, and what is more important I didn't have an opportunity to find a second job. That's how I ended up with the position of the manager and 12\$ rate. It's not very common to ask about promotion but the truth is that if you are a good worker and it's the middle of the season, you are very important since it's very hard to train someone one more time or to find a person who can work hours you need. During my second summer there I traveled more. I visited Boston, Newport, Denver, traveled a little bit in Colorado. It was an amazing time for me since I met many new people, saw many incredible things and definitely experienced the part "party harder"! I heard that in Latvia people mostly go to work in the UK because they earn a bit more money there, but I want to say that many students from Britain go to the States since they think it is much more fun. And that's true!





Liva Levane

Perfect weather, happy people, Red-Bull girls, drunk naked chicks (kidding), a lot of sausages (yummy!) and frozen beer – everything was there. But now let's look at the entertaining event in more details!

The day started in Žagarkalns – the best place for skiing & snowboarding in Latvia.

In the beginning participants were willing to test the hill and try every track, so they rented equipment and went skiing for a few hours. For many Y1s and also for some exchange students it was their first time ever in snowboarding and skiing. As Juozas (Y1) explained, "It was painful, but brought pleasure as well". However, more talented students quickly figured out how to ski and became addicted to this pleasure.



After the exciting first steps, participants met at a spot reserved for SSE Riga, where everyone had a chance to eat (by the way, frozen chocolate tastes like stone) and have some rest. Later students participated in funny relays, like Winter Sniper and Sledge Races, which brought back memories from their childhood, and brushed up skills in playing frisbee. The most accurate sniper was Anastasija



Karolis Montvila

(Y1), who claimed that she had never played frisbee before. Tomas Z. (Y3), a student who came into the world on a snowboard, this time showed the best result on sledges.

It was really cool that the Red-bull team was regularly refreshing our community with energy drinks and motivating us to show the best result in SSE Riga Slalom. Therefore, this competition attracted much more students to try their luck. Even though there were some people falling, it was a really exciting, entertaining and



excellent competition. Furthermore, we found out that the fastest SSE Riga students on skis are Estonians Artur (Y1) & Anu (Y1). However, among snowboarders nobody managed to beat Kristers's (Y1) result.

The evening and night were spent in a cosy and nice guest house, where a few students still had energy to play Twister and dance Limbo (Business.com). During the award ceremony the winners of relays and slalom were awarded their prizes.

And then, of course, a party! Friendly beer pong matches, crazy dances and Vice-President's speech about birds; however, nobody knows how it ended...



We all know what it feels like when you have so much to say to a person, so many beautiful, important words, but once you open your mouth - everything is spoiled! But it may be easily avoided if you take a pen and express your feelings on a sheet of paper. Hearts of many women were won by such confessions, and the most romantic of them have lived through centuries. Yours may be the next...

*Letter by Ludwig van Beethoven*

My angel, my all, my very self - only a few words today and at that with your pencil - not till tomorrow will my lodgings be definitely determined upon - what a useless waste of time. Why this deep sorrow where necessity speaks - can our love endure except through sacrifices, except through not demanding everything - can you change it that you are not wholly mine, I not wholly thine?

Oh, God! look out into the beauties of nature and comfort yourself with that which must be - love demands everything and that very justly - that it is with me so far as you are concerned, and you with me. If we were wholly united you would feel the pain of it as little as I!

Now a quick change to things internal from things external. We shall surely see each other; moreover, I cannot communicate to you the observations I have made during the last few days touching my own life - if our hearts were always close together I would make none of the kind. My heart is full of many things to say to you - Ah! -- there are moments when I feel that speech is nothing after all -- cheer up -- remain my true, only treasure, my all as I am yours; the gods must send us the rest that which shall be best for us.

Your faithful,  
Ludwig

*Letter by Napoleon Bonaparte*

I wake filled with thoughts of you. Your portrait and the intoxicating evening which we spent yesterday have left my senses in turmoil. Sweet, incomparable Josephine, what a strange effect you have on my heart! Are you angry? Do I see you looking sad? Are you worried?... My soul aches with sorrow, and there can be no rest for you lover; but is there still more in store for me when, yielding to the profound feelings which overwhelm me, I draw from your lips, from your heart a love which consumes me with fire? Ah! it was last night that I fully realized how false an image of you your portrait gives!

You are leaving at noon; I shall see you in three hours. Until then, mio dolce amor, a thousand kisses; but give me none in return, for they set my blood on fire.

*Letter by Honore de Balzac*

My beloved angel,

I can no longer think of anything but you. In spite of myself, my imagination carries me to you. I grasp you, I kiss you, I caress you, a thousand of the most amorous caresses take possession of me. As for my heart, there you will always be - very much so. I have a delicious sense of you there. But my God, what is to become of me, if you have deprived me of my reason? This is a monomania which, this morning, terrifies me. I rise up every moment saying to myself, "Come, I am going there!" Then I sit down again, moved by the sense of my obligations. There is a frightful conflict. This is not life. I have never before been like that. You have devoured everything.

I feel foolish and happy as soon as I think of you. I whirl round in a delicious dream in which in one instant I live a thousand years. What a horrible situation! Overcome with love, feeling love in every pore, living only for love, and seeing oneself consumed by griefs, and caught in a thousand spiders' threads. O, my darling Eva, you did not know it. I picked up your card. It is there before me, and I talk to you as if you were there. I see you, as I did yesterday, beautiful, astonishingly beautiful. Yesterday, during the whole evening, I said to myself "she is mine!" Ah! The angels are not as happy in Paradise as I was yesterday!

*Letter by Victor Hugo*

My dearest,  
When two souls, which have sought each other for, however long in the throng, have finally found each other ... a union, fiery and pure as they themselves are... begins on earth and continues forever in heaven. This union is love, true love, ... a religion, which deifies the loved one, whose life comes from devotion and passion, and for which the greatest sacrifices are the sweetest delights. This is the love which you inspire in me... Your soul is made to love with the purity and passion of angels; but perhaps it can only love another angel, in which case I must tremble with apprehension.

Yours forever,  
Victor Hugo



*Love is the answer*

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