



Audio-Marathon
Reading while Running

Under the project:

BE
(p) **ART.**
Grow with arts

The project is being implemented by:

rokodil
Engaging Words

Dissemination partners:

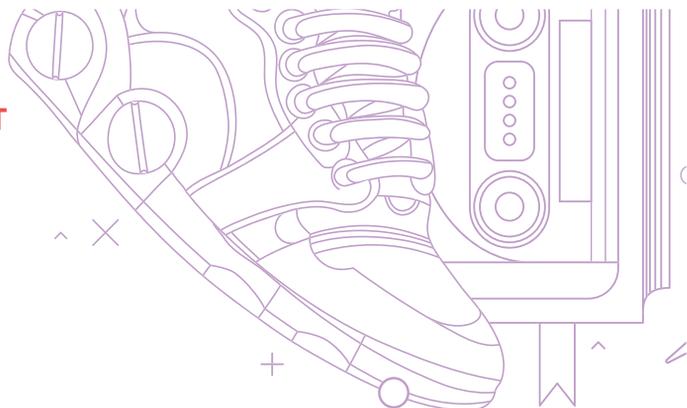


Running 



Co-funded by the
Creative Europe Programme
of the European Union

ABOUT THE PROJECT



Introductory Speech

Dear friends,

The main purpose of our latest project "Audio - Marathon: Reading While Running" is to engage runners and sports fans in literature, but also vice versa: to convince young writers and literature lovers of the importance of running and other forms of physical activity. Having this in mind, it is our intention to promote and boost the practice of "Reading while Running", i.e. listening to audio books in combination with recreational running as two complementary activities with a synergistic effect on physical health, mental stability and intellectual potential.

As part of the BE (P)ART GROW WITH THE ARTS project, which we are implementing with the support of the European Commission's Creative Europe 2020 programme together with like minded organisations from Spain, Belgium and Hungary (PEN Català, UC Limburg, Szepirok Tarsasaga Egyesuleteuc and Fundaci3n Uxio Novoneyra) "Audio - Marathon: Reading While Running" is a unique endeavour that brings together the world of sports and the world of books, while promoting healthy lifestyles. During the three years of planned activities, we will organise focus groups, preparations for the Belgrade Marathon for both readers and writers, book-club meetings where we will discuss the audio books that the participants have listened to while running, various panels at the KROKODIL Literary Festival as well as educational workshops and lectures for teachers in primary and secondary schools.

Follow our activities, join them and - of course - have fun reading while running!

Your KROKODIL

For further information about this and other projects of the KROKODIL Association, visit krokodil.rs or find us on social networks @Krokodil_Engaging_Words

INTERVIEW WITH AUTHORS



What They Talk About When They Talk About Running:

Marathon writers Vladimir Arsenijević, Milica Vučković and Nebojša Lujanović

“You can think clearly for the first ten kilometers,” says Nebojša Lujanović when asked about what is going through his head while running a marathon. “After that, you start to feel pain all over, so you can’t wander off that easily. You ignore the pain for another mile or two. You make sure to maintain your tempo. In the third quarter you go through a string of crises, and in the last quarter you reach nirvana.”

“All thought is gone,” he adds. “It becomes interesting near the finish, during the final few kilometers when you strip yourself of everything, down to the simplest, the most elementary. When you start to run, you think about what awaits you - about life, work, the end result - and when you cross the finish line, all you crave is a glass of Cedevita vitamin supplement. I wouldn’t trade it for the world. In such moments I don’t need anything in my life but that drink.”



This is how this well-known writer from Split talks about the activity to which he has dedicated the last fifteen years of his life. Training three to four times a week, with a mileage of up to 1000 kilometers per pair of sneakers, Lujanović says that he cannot live without marathons.

“In the beginning, it may have been stubbornness because of health issues,” explains the author of several novels and scientific papers, referring to a heart condition that prevented him from doing sports as a child. “But what I really wanted was to do what I was not allowed. I later saw that it also helped me focus. When the blood flow to my brain increases, I can read more, see things more clearly, and then it’s easier to type three pages of text than it is after lying in bed until noon. And after that, it became a way to treat frustrations, to release some anger. Now it’s a silly, addictive habit I can’t get rid of, and I don’t even have to have a reason anymore.”

Lujanović is not the only writer with such an attitude towards running. There seems to be an invisible line following these marathon authors in all their races - be they physical or literary. Apart from Haruki Murakami, who is among the most famous racing enthusiasts in the world of literature, the list includes various foreign and domestic authors. Milica Vučković is also one of them.



Photo: Rastko Surdić

“My first race was in 2014,” she says. “I ran the Vidovdan night half marathon after my wonderful friends Nikola, Milko and Aleksa invited me to join their racing team BURT a few weeks before that. It was truly one of the most valuable experiences. As in the song from Bebi Dol – there was everything: blood, happiness, tears and sweat.”

From growing up in Cerak, playing tag and climbing trees, to doing athletics in her teens and her newfound love for long-distance running, the author of the novel *Boldvin* (LOM, 2019) is used to spending most of her day in motion. “Running is the only way to be alone with yourself. Although,” she adds, “only after about five or six kilometers.”

The writer Vladimir Arsenijević, who has published eleven books so far and who was ‘hooked’ on running by his wife Milena, feels the same. “When you run, you shut off everything,” he says. “It lets you reach a weightless state of harmony, where fatigue is no longer important.”



Photo: Marija Piroški

However, with the exception of swimming, which he has, with occasional breaks, practiced since childhood, he had no great affection for physical activity until recently. "At the age when boys in primary school started to develop a passion for football and team sports", he explains, "I realized that I was not interested in that at all. For me, sport has always been something you do straightforwardly on your own track and in your own company. Then you eventually compare your results with others or preferably with yourself. Classic Olympic sports are the only sports that ever interested me, while these more modern collective sports, staging wars with one team fighting against the other through physical fitness, tactics and luck, followed by mostly bloodthirsty cheering from the spectators, are not for me at all. I've always hated football."

When he founded the band Urbana gerila in 1979, the probability that Arsenijević would ever take up any physical activity became even smaller. "At the end of the seventies, with the emergence of punk and new wave music, which were actually ideologically very puritanical, there was something completely disconnected in the idea of, say, playing in one such band and playing sports at the same time. They didn't go well with each other, so I neglected sports for a long time."

Similar to Nebojša Lujanović and Milica Vučković, the author of the famous novel *In the Hold* (*U potpalublju*, Rad, 1994) translated into more than twenty languages, says that at one point the enjoyment of writing started equating to the enjoyment he felt while running. Arsenijević sees an irresistible similarity between these two activities which lies in the proof of human endurance:

"The way you run long-distance has a lot in common with the way books are written," he says. "It is the ability to give up some momentary and short-term impulsive thrills and pleasures for the sake of proper and thoughtful distribution of energy and questioning of your own limits and possibilities. Anyone who takes a careless spring at the start will certainly not be able to run the entire race, which is similar to working on extensive literary materials, specifically the novel."

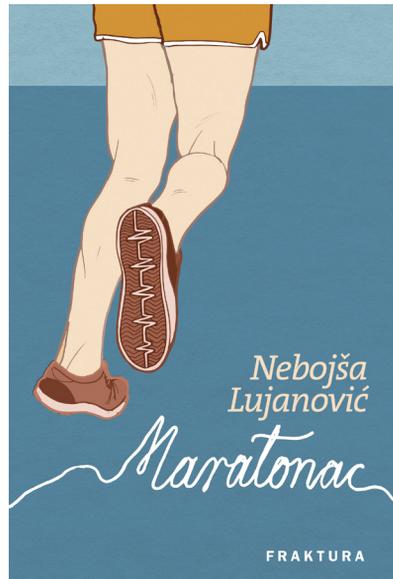
As additional links, there are elements of ascetic life, loneliness and renunciation. As the title of the film *The Loneliness of The Long Distance Runner* suggests, Milica Vučković adds, "running, like writing, is the work of a loner." It is something inside you, a battle with yourself, which everyone fights in their own way. These are the similarities."

In the book *The Marathon Runner* (Maratonac, Fraktura, 2020), where he writes about his own experience in six different world marathons, and where he actually talks about various breaking points and points of recovery, Nebojša Lujanović continues on this thought:

“There is no difference between running a marathon and writing a novel,” explains this writer in the chapter on the Plitvice Marathon. “Both require long preparation and circumnavigation, consideration, like measuring up the opponent in the ring before the fight. A long search for weak spots in order to remove them, for breaking points in order to visualize them. Before the very race, you have already run each part of the track in your mind several times. No one decides to do a marathon or a novel overnight. Or if they do, it will not be much of a success.”

Inspired in many ways for both writing and sports with the famous excerpt “All the way” in Charles Bukowski’s novel *Factotum*, Lujanović adds: “I wrote about running trying to talk metaphorically about the only right way in life, and that is to do your best without any calculation. Only when a man does his best and when he overcomes himself does he find some crumbs of pleasure. Now, whether it’s running or something else doesn’t matter, but don’t start anything if you don’t want to get to the end.”

As Bukowski says, once you cross to that other side and squeeze out your last ounce of strength before you finally fall to the ground - that is the closest to the gods you will ever be. Although this American author never ran a mile, his philosophy proved to be correct among marathon writers. Whether it’s 42 kilometers of track or a kilometre of letters: “if you want to try, go all the way.”



Olivera Mitić, KROKODIL Journalist for a Day, April 2021.



FOCUS GROUPS

✕ STATISTICS, PERCENTAGES AND NUMBERS

In November 2020, we started the first phase of the Audio- Marathon, a research project with sixty-five participants from Serbia, the Balkan Region and Europe; men and women aged 20 to 50 with different lifestyles. Based on the information collected from two focus groups and an accompanying survey, we obtained the following interesting data on the relationship between physical activity and the world of culture, on the practice of listening to audio books, training, and the potential overlap of these activities.

Which is more important:

physical activity or culture??

Culture: **65%**

Physical activity: **35%**

How often do you train?

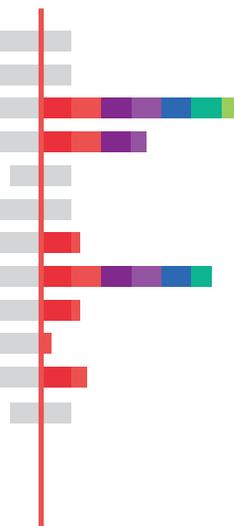
Every day: **12,5%**

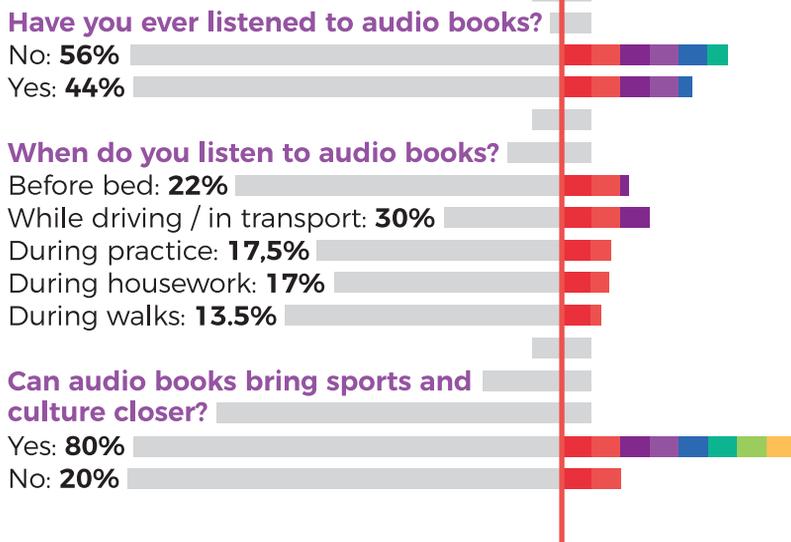
2-3 times a week: **56.5%**

Once a week: **12.5%**

Once a month: **3.5%**

Never: **15%**





✗ WHAT ARE HEALTHY LIFESTYLES?

The answers offered were healthy food, good sleep, physical activity, exposure to cultural content and all of the above. The respondents could also write their own answers. Most listed healthy food first, then good sleep, consuming cultural content and finally physical activity. A clear conscience, good mental health, a lack of stress, time spent in nature, physical health and self-improvement were also mentioned as additional factors of a healthy life.

✗ WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON PREJUDICES AGAINST PEOPLE WHO ARE ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY?

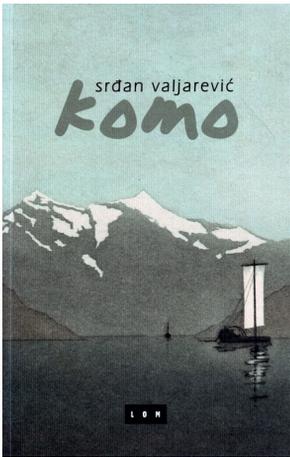
The prejudice mentioned most often was that physically active people are superficial and obsessed with physical appearance. Respondents further stated their lack of interest in cultural / intellectual content, that physically active people are considered stupid and extremists who exaggerate physical engagement, but also that these are healthy people and/or take care of their health. In addition to this, fads, discipline and competitiveness were also mentioned.

✗ WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON PREJUDICES AGAINST PEOPLE WHO ARE ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN CULTURAL OR INTELLECTUAL WORK?

The prejudice mentioned most often was that people engaged in cultural or intellectual work are inactive, careless and uninterested in their health. The next most common assumption was that these people are clever, but that they are also snobs, bores and nerds. It is said that these people are considered creative, conceited, weird, closed personalities who are weak, vain, elitist and egotistic

See the complete research results on the website www.krokodil.rs

In January 2021, we published an invitation for the first group of ten future runners. These people accepted the challenge to prepare for the Belgrade Marathon for three months under the supervision of coaches and nutritionists while listening to audio books provided by our friends at the app Book&Zvook. The three books that the runners listened to during the programme were Srđan Valjarević's novel *Lake Como* (performed by Nebojša Glogovac), Rumena Bužarovska's collection of stories *I'm Going Nowhere* (performed by seven different narrators) and the book *A Tomb for Boris Davidovich* by Danilo Kiš (performed by Miki Manojlović).



WHAT DID THE PROGRAMME PARTICIPANTS SAY AFTER THREE MONTHS?

"At first it seems like you're trying to connect the unconnectable. In time, you discover how the book complements physical activity, and vice versa."

-Milica Lazarević-Jekić





“Running is much easier when you run towards the end of the chapter than towards the next tree. An exciting audio novel or story can keep you stay focused and successfully divert your thoughts from the question My God, why am I running at all? to the question And what happened then?”

-Marija Mitić

“For me, running with audiobooks achieves the ideal of productive multitasking.”

-Vladimir Ožegović

“It’s an amazing feeling, especially for people who don’t like to run alone. You’re not alone.”

-Jelena Stipčić



“Listening to audio books during training can turn Mirijeovski bulevar into the shores of Lake Como. It can really make a miracle out of this city.”

-Marija Rajić

Photos: Alex Dmitrović





Reading in the 21st century can be a real endeavour. With family, work, friends, TV, all other obligations, dusting (yes, even that happens sometimes!), we have a chronic lack of time for hobbies. With a busy everyday life, a reduced attention span and an environment that does not stop throwing various contents at us, it is understandable why finding a moment in the day to sit and turn the pages becomes an almost impossible mission for many people.

If you're eager to be drawn into a well-told story or, on the other hand, if you're tired of trying hard to find the twenty-fifth hour in a day you can spend on literature - maybe it's time to switch to audio books. And maybe you need five more reasons to convince yourself that the audio format is the right choice for you.

✗ NA DOHVAT RUKU

Za razliku od štampanih izdanja, koja zapravo morate fizički nositi sa sobom ukoliko želite da ih čitate van kuće, audio knjige imaju tu pogodnost da se nalaze u vašim pametnim uređajima na tek nekoliko klikova od vas. Zahvaljujući raznim aplikacijama kao što su Scribd, Libro i Audible, ili njihovom domaćem pandanu Book & Zvook, svu literaturu ovog sveta u zvučnom formatu možete nositi u unutrašnjosti džepa.

✗ NOVA STARA NAVIKA

Ukoliko već imate izgrađenu naviku slušanja muzike, radija ili podkasta, "čitanje" audio knjiga prihvaćete lakše nego što biste očekivali. Samo zamenite vrstu zvučnih zapisa na koje se oslanjate dok se vozite autobusom, šetate ili perete suđe i audio knjige će postati neizostavan deo vašeg dana, na isti način na koji su to već vaše omiljene pesme i emisije.

✗ DUPLA BRZINA

Praktičnost ovog formata nenadmašiva je i kada je u pitanju brzina kojom ćete proletati kroz knjige. Ne samo da ćete uvek tačno znati koliko vremena treba da izdvojite za neku zbirku ili roman, već ćete moći da se igrate i s brzinom reprodukcije. Računajući da su snimci audio knjiga namenski rađeni tako da budu izuzetno razgovetni, a samim tim i nešto sporiji od brzine običnog govora, povećati brzinu reprodukcije na 1.5 ili čak 2 može vam ubrzati ovaj proces, ali ga učiniti i znatno dinamičnijim - kao da ćaskate s prijateljem kojeg oduvek poznajete.

✗ VEŽBA KONCENTRACIJE

Čitanje kao takvo delom je uvek je bilo i vežba koncentracije. Ne samo da se čitajući bavljamo, učimo i širimo horizonte, ono nas uči strpljenju i fokusu neophodnim za jednu ovakvu aktivnost. Oslanjajući se na iste regije mozga zadužene za obradu informacija, slušanje izvedbe nekog teksta, isto kao i samostalno čitanje, pomaže vam da se usredredite i razvijate moždane vijuge.

✗ MULTITASKING

Za one koji nikad nemaju mira i koji su stalno u pokretu, audio knjige mogu predstavljati idealno rešenje kada je u pitanju problem pronalaženja vremena za literaturu. Zamislite da istovremeno možete da slušate Dostojevskog i slažete slagalice ili da se možete prepuštiti novom omiljenom ljubavnom romanu dok završavate kućne poslove. Ne samo da ćete uz zvučnu književnost spojiti lepo i korisno, pretvorivši svakodnevne manuelne radnje u znatno podnošljivije poduhvate, već ćete sebi obezbediti priliku da istovremeno uživate u dva različita hobija za koja možda inače nemate lufta u danu.



How many times do we catch ourselves saying “I’ll start training on Monday” and how many times does that Monday not come, even though we know that physical activity is one of the best things for the state of our body and mind? The answer is: enough times to make this the final one. Here are five reasons why you should start running today.

X SMALL COST - BIG GAIN

Unlike other sports, running is an extremely practical activity that requires minimal investment in equipment. Of course, for enthusiasts, there are always supplements, various nutrient additions, a special diet and the latest expensive gear, but you need none of that to enable you to start galloping this very instant. All you need to sprint is a track, good will and a pair of sneakers to hold your ankles tight.

✕ A NEW CIRCLE OF PEOPLE

Although running is an individual endeavour, which in many ways leaves you to yourself, it certainly does not imply complete alienation. There are many runners - professionals or amateur athletes, and there is no greater joy than meeting people with whom you share a passion for something. Once you start with the honorary circles around the neighbourhood, you will meet more and more new people with whom you will be able to share this amazing experience, suddenly making it less lonely than you could ever have imagined.

✕ VISIBLE RESULTS

As with all new things to which you dedicate yourself, by investing time and effort, you will become better at running. The more often you run, and with more enthusiasm, the quicker and more noticeable the desired results will be. Not only will you feel upgrades in your level of fitness and physical strength after just a few weeks, but you will also notice how your body changes and shapes into the healthiest and most resilient version of itself.

✕ ENERGY BOOST

The more energy you spend on sports - the more energy you will have. This fact is supported by biology and all the positive reactions that take place in your body during activity. As we run, the brain secretes more endorphins. Endorphin is a natural opiate, chemically similar to morphine and highly addictive. It reduces the feeling of pain and tension and enhances the feeling of relaxation and satisfaction. But endorphins are not solely responsible for the euphoria we feel while running and immediately after running. While on the track, our brain treats us with endocannabinoids, and some recent research indicates the secretion of phenylethylamine - the so-called love molecule. This substance is also found in chocolate and is secreted more when we are in love.

✕ TIME TO LISTEN TO AUDIO BOOKS

If the only reason you haven't started running so far is because you find this activity boring, then it's time to try audio books. As an ideal counterpart to physical engagement, literature that captures your full attention will not only drive away boredom but will also make you not feel the many miles you will run. Jump in your favourite pair of sneakers, put your headphones on and run to the beat of good plots and exciting heroes.



RECOMMENDATION FOR AN AUDIO BOOK



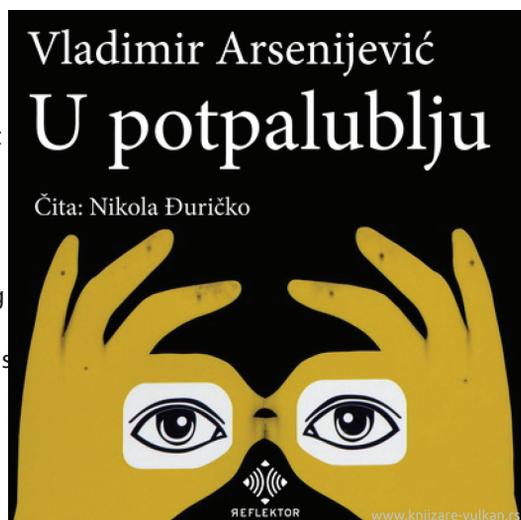
If you don't know where to start with audio books - we recommend:

In the Hold (U potpalublju) by Vladimir Arsenijević

Narrated by: Nikola Đuričko

Duration: 2 hours and 50 minutes

Since its first publication in 1994, Vladimir Arsenijević's debut novel *In the Hold* has been translated into dozens of languages and prepared in various editions for domestic and foreign markets. One of them is an edition by the publishing house Reflektor - Knjige za slušanje, which in 2011 transformed this anti-war story, performed by the famous actor Nikola Đuričko, into one of the first audio books published in *the Balkans*.



The year is 1991 and Yugoslavia is on the brink of war. After mass emigration and escape to the security of foreign countries leave Belgrade deserted, one young couple finds themselves at a turning point in their lives. This is a story about their family, about those who are close to them and about people who are desperately trying to live their lives in a world ruled by primitive passions.

On the stage of this novel are the sardonic future father who desperately tries to keep the peace in the house, his fiery-tempered wife Anđela, who replaces her career on the black market with the role of a mother and housewife, and her younger brother, a follower of Hare Krishna whose destiny tragically intersects with the challenges of a country on the verge of collapse. Together, they play the main roles of a drama with an ending we cannot even start to guess, and which depicts a bleak reality more than familiar in this region.



Download the free audio version of *U potpalublju* by Vladimir Arsenijević*
office@krokodil.com

1. Send an email to office@krokodil.com with the title "Audio knjiga", leave your contact information (name, surname, email address) and wait until you receive your unique code to download the book.
2. Scan the QR code or download the Book & Zvook app from the Play Store.
3. Create your account and register on the Book & Zvook app.
4. Enter your unique code.
5. Enjoy listening!



* This offer is valid for the first 50 users who apply.