Градски детектив/The Urban Detective Podcast English Synopsis/Selected Episodes
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E01 investigates a graffiti line that appeared all over town in the early 00s: “There’s always someone cutting something with an angle grinder!” It’s true – that is the sound of Sofia! – and it became a viral catchphrase before the internet. We trace it back through short stories and novels to its original author.

E03 investigates whether the now demolished mausoleum of Bulgaria’s communist dictator is indeed a hub of underground tunnels. We get down and dirty with some urban explorers to discover the city’s vital infrastructure.

E04 investigates the fail of socialism’s “last big urban utopia” in Sofia, a concrete-and-steel neighborhood aptly known as *The Zone*, which was built as a model housing, but ghettoized after ’89. We ask why architecture fails sometimes and we also hear from world-famous DJ Kink on how the Zone influenced his music.

E05 investigates the bizarre communist plan to build “a sea” south of Sofia. Dug up by “volunteers” in the 1950s and subsequently covered, it was ridiculed by Georgi Markov, Bulgaria’s most famous dissident writer as a symbol of communism’s monumental absurdity. We revive propaganda and counterpropaganda to discover that perhaps the Sofia sailing channel wasn’t such a bad idea.

E06 investigates the World Festival of Youth and Students in Sofia in 1968 and the rumor that the Beatles wanted to play at this strange socialist “Woodstock”. Through literary and witness accounts and declassified state security documents we get a feel of how Bulgarians experienced this iconic year – and we hear the voice of another world-class musician who got his start at the festival.

Episodes 7, 8 and **11** are a trilogy about the echo of early 20-th century avant-gardes in Bulgaria, particularly that of futurism: how a battle from the Balkan war inspired futurist poetry and music, and how a little-known Bulgarian painter became a prominent futurist figure in Italy. We blend original futurist recordings with a recreation of futurist manifestos, and hear from prominent writers and an Oscar-nominated director.

E9 is about the National Radio’s secret Cold War recordings meant to be aired in case of war or emergency. Thankfully they’ve remained unused.

In **E10** we hear the little-known inhabitants of Sofia’s largest park - its multitude of bird species - and how the now diminished “green corridors”, a network of parks meant to provide a vital link to air from Vitosha mountain, are affecting their life and ours.

E12 is about Sofia’s disused and misused wealth of mineral waters - and how Sofia’s public bath was so striking in the 18th century, its fame got to the Louvre!

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E13 investigates how a song by middle-of-the-road English rock band Uriah Heep became an anthem of countercultural youth under socialism and inspired its own holiday: the tradition to travel to the seaside on July 1st.

E14 tells the story of Bulgaria's most populated Roma community, the Stolipinovo neighborhood in Plovdiv, through the eyes of activists who started a community radio there.

E15 investigates communist Bulgaria's only "western" seaside resort, the Club Met Village of Russalka. While this architectural oasis in the far north was foreigners-only, workers from the small nearby village still remember their rare access to rocknroll, jeans and western culture.

E23 is about the capital's forgotten trauma - the allied bombings during WWII, which deleted an old Sofia from the map.

E24 goes back to the 19th century when prostitution was not only legal, but lucrative for the state – and Sofia had its own municipal brothel. While we search for the remains of this early public-private partnership, we tell the story of women in 19th century Bulgaria – and why this practice was not as progressive as it sounds.

E25 is about what it is to be gay in socialist Bulgaria. From the early trials of homosexuals in the 60s through the cruising spots of the 80s and up to the first pride parade, our main character tells us how it felt to be living a double life – and why he'll probably never be truly out.

E28 tells the little-known story of state LSD experiments in Bulgaria. We revive some of the subjects' original accounts through sound design and voice acting and ask what was the state's point.

E33 & 34 tell the stories of Sofia's cinemas - from the first traveling projectionists in the 19th century to limited screenings of pirated foreign films during communism.

In **E33** we hear how blind and visually impaired people navigate and hear the city - and how some of them incorporate it in their music.

E38 starts from an anonymous ruin of a house hidden in a Sofia backyard… to discover the dramatic story of Bulgaria's once richest man and his wife - "the most notorious socialite" of Sofia's 19th century royal life.