

ULTRA

Festivals

- European Film Academy – Best Documentary Award shortlist 2017
- Visions du Réel (int. premiere) – in competition, 2017
- München DokFest – panorama, 2017
- Krakow Film Festival – in competition, 2017
- Sarajevo Film Festival – in competition, 2017
- Minsk IFF – in competition, 2017
- Man in Danger / Lodz – panorama, 2017
- Trieste IFF – in competition, 2018
- Budapest International Documentary Festival, 2018

Tagline

How far must you go to get close to yourself?

Trailer:

<https://vimeo.com/234657781>

Logline:

A radical journey into the pasts, hearts and minds of runners embraced by the running director.

Synopsis

Year by year runners from around the world participate in one of the most prestigious and challenging of races, the Spartathlon. A historic distance of 246 km from Athens to Sparta within 36 hours. The protagonists and the director all have their own personal reasons for joining this extreme run. None of them knows if they will ever be able to succeed but they do know, that it is crucial for them to try and maybe reach the impossible. They are everyday athletes who test their limits, heal their souls, and release their demons. The movie follows them as they confront extreme hardship and surpass the limits of their strength, both in their body and their mind.

ULTRA is a unique journey into the pasts, hearts and minds of runners embraced by the running director, Balazs Simonyi. The Hungarian director, who has finished the race five times, tells a touching human drama about the runners and their universe of cathartic self-

discoveries, voluntary suffering, and hypnotic state of mind, punctuated at times with humour. A real first-hand experience, a unique insight into an unknown world.

Track record (2013-2017)

The story was developed with the help of **Nipkow Program Berlin**, **EDN Docs in Thessaloniki**. The project was selected for **DOK Incubator**, **Sarajevo Docu Rough Cut Boutique** and **WEMW LastStopTrieste** for tutoring the editing process.

Produced by **HBO Europe**, **SpeakEasy Project** and coproduced by **Anemon**, **YLE** and **SKAI**.

ULTRA full cast and credits

Director

Balazs Simonyi (contact: + 36 20 974 9532, simonblaze@gmail.com)

Cast

Bela Szabo, Balazs Simonyi, Judit Tancsics, Annett Bahlcke, Herbert Ziefle, and Francoise, Angel & Gilles Pallaruelo

Producer

Laszlo Jozsa (contact: + 36 20 920 8831, jl@speakeasyproject.com)

Balazs Simonyi (contact: + 36 20 974 9532, simonblaze@gmail.com)

Co-Producers

Hanka Kastelicova, HBO Europe

Anna Zavorszky, HBO Europe

Rea Apostolides & Yuri Averof, Anemon Productions (Greece)

Editor

Thomas Ernst

(editor of Queen of Silence and Drifter; German Camera Award 2015 for Best Editing)

Camera

Csaba Hernath

Sound

Peter Benjamin Lukacs

Music

Balazs Alpar

Country of origin

Hungary, Greece

Length

Cinema: 81' (25 fps) or 84' (24 fps)

TV: 52' and 26' (25 fps)

Format

DCP, HD mov, DVD – both in 24 fps & 25 fps

Sales

Cat N' Docs cat@catndocs.com , mabelle@catndocs.com

Cinema Distributor in Hungary

MoziNet bg@mozinet.hu

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt5943606/>

www.ultradocumentary.com

www.facebook.com/ultradocumentary

ULTRA - *The title refers on ultra running, that means a 200+ km or more than 24h hour continuous running.*

ULTRA Director's statement



This is a very personal movie, maybe as personal as it can be. By being the director and also one of the protagonists, I put an enormous effort to make this film, because the topic and its side-topics are essential for me. I hope to share many feelings with the viewers, and give back what running gave me - not only training, but friendship, humbleness, persistence.

I finished the Spartathlon 4 times, and each time it was a lifetime experience. My first finish was the moment my topic pitched me. I started thinking how could I make a creative documentary about this race which is a deep metaphor of life to me. I learned a lot from running. This race is not a sport achievement but an exercise to release my pain, problems and train my faith on the long road. That is how I met with my protagonists with different motivations behind their running. Ultra means beyond. All you think you are you may get beyond during this race.

Running for these people is a way of living, a way of facing problems, a way of facing life. The film is about people who stand for what they love, their ability of never giving up. The characters may look average at first sight, through my vision their extraordinariness becomes visible. They are heroes who can inspire others. They have many different problems and challenges in life and during the race. But this run to Sparta is a journey into a universe, into the past, mind and heart of the runners. Our self-narrations can take us back in the past and open doors to my story and to the story of the protagonists story. This is a very unique access.

The originality of this project is my personal access to the topic, my involvement in the race and the opportunity to creatively take advantage of my professional skills both as a filmmaker and as a runner. I know much about the psychology of ultra running, the mental and physical mechanisms of a competitor, as well as the bittersweet taste of exceeding one's limits. There is no other filmmaker who is a recognized ultra-distance runner, and there is no other runner who directs films on an international level.