READ, LISTEN, WATCH

# Listen Closely

As the global podcast market continues to grow, adding an estimated $33 billion to its market cap by the end of the decade, there is a shift away from lengthy, loosely structured talk shows toward tightly produced, story-driven audio docuseries. Usually told in fewer than a dozen episodes, these are deep dives into a single subject, company, scandal, or scientific controversy.

Episodes are constructed like a limited TV series or documentary. Publishers, especially in Europe, are pushing these high-end productions to attract subscriptions. The subscription audio product launched last year by the German new paper *Die Zeit* is mostly driven by exclusive documentaries and miniseries, with the first few episodes typically free before a cliffhanger moment triggers a paywall. Here are *Briefings's* picks for audio series that pack a big reward for a modest time investment.

**LIGHTS ON**
*A deeply reported exploration of whether consciousness is a fundamental building block of the universe.*

**INVISIBLE HANDS**
*The tracking of how a radical set of ideas led to free-market capitalism, reshaping global economies, politics, and society.*

**FELA KUTI: FEAR NO MAN**
*A critically acclaimed telling of the life and legacy of the Nigerian musician and activist credited with inventing Afrobeat.*

**BROOMGATE: A CURLING SCANDAL**
*How a new "super broom" tore apart the competitive curling community and nearly destroyed the sport, in the words of a comedian and semi-professional curler.*

**FIRST AMERICA**
*A recontextualizing of the current political moment that looks at the founding of the United States from the perspective of Indigenous nations.*

Charday Penn, Insta-photos/iStock, Miguel Guasch Fuxa, Pikseli/iStock, D3sign/Moment, Torsten Asmus, FabrikaCr/iStock, Filo/DigitalVision Vectors/Getty Images; Aer; Sheryl McHale

SUGGESTED

## The Everyday Work Bag

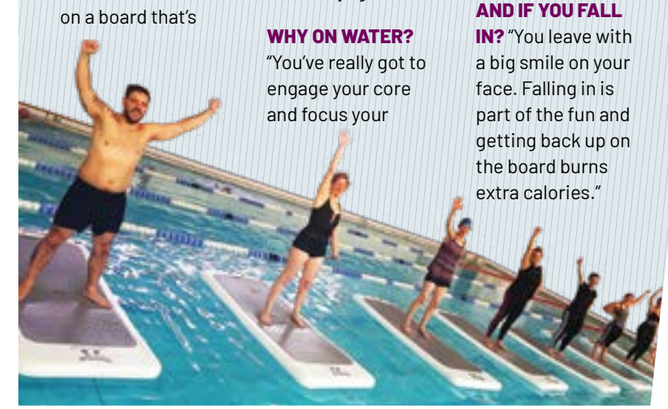
Aer, the San Francisco brand known for thoughtfully engineered travel gear, has added a versatile over-the-shoulder design to its collection. The Aer Pro Brief blends the professional aesthetic of a briefcase with the relaxed function of a messenger bag. The 13-liter tech bag is made from recycled Cordura and includes a padded laptop pocket, smart internal organization, and several easy-access pockets to hold a phone, water bottle, and other essentials. The removable strap lets the Aer Pro Brief shift from briefcase by day to shoulder bag by night.

*Aer Pro Brief, $139*

PRO TRAINING

FloatFit instructor Sheryl McHale shares why people are working out on water instead of in the gym.

**WHAT IS FLOAT-FIT?** "A low-impact 30-minute workout on a board that's floating on water. You can do HIIT, balance, or yoga."

**WHY ON WATER?** "You've really got to engage your core and focus your mind, otherwise you risk falling in."

**AND IF YOU FALL IN?** "You leave with a big smile on your face. Falling in is part of the fun and getting back up on the board burns extra calories."