

OPINION

by

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In connection with the competition for the academic position of ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR in professional field 8.3. Music and Dance Art, major 'Music Stage Production and Classical Singing' for the needs of the Department of Classical, Pop and Jazz Performing Arts at the Faculty of Music Pedagogy of Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, Plovdiv

1. General presentation of the procedure and the candidate

I review the complete set of documents, according to which the only candidate in the competition for the academic position of **Associate Professor** in Music Stage Production and Classical Singing is Asst. Prof. **Ivaylo Trifonov Mihaylov**, PhD. He is a graduate of *Antoine de Saint-Exupéry* French Language School in Plovdiv. He graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Classical Singing at *Prof. Pancho Vladigerov* National Academy of Music and a Master's degree in Classical Music at New Bulgarian University, where he specialized in Vocal Pedagogy. Ivaylo Mihaylov's wide range of professional competences, which he has realized through two more Master's degrees - in Art Management and Music Stage Production. In the meantime, vocal improvement is the constant line that the young singer follows steadfastly and in extremely prestigious centres of classical vocal art such as the *Boris Hristov* Opera Academy in Rome and the Opera Academy in Osimo - Italy. Asst. Prof. Ivaylo Mihaylov, PhD has demonstrated a rich and long-lasting career as a soloist in a number of opera theatres in the country (State Opera Plovdiv, State Opera Varna, State Opera Stara Zagora) and abroad (State Baltic Opera - Gdansk, Experimental Opera Theatre - Spoleto, Opera Theatre - Cagliari, National Opera - Bucharest, etc.). The excellent command of several languages basic for classical singing complements the image of the talented musician as an erudite artist with

respectable and thorough pedagogical knowledge - a guarantee for successful and versatile realization.

2. Brief presentation of the materials received for review according to the different indicators of the Periodic Table of Scientometric Indicators

In 2022 Asst. Prof. Ivaylo Mihaylov, PhD successfully defended his dissertation thesis entitled: ‘Vocal Song of Reynaldo Hahn and the Application of French Phonetic Transcription to the Interpretation of French, Compared to the Practical Transcription and Transliteration into Bulgarian’. In 2023, a book based on the defended work with the same title was published (**Group Γ indicators**).

Ivaylo Mihaylov presents his author’s product in the **group B indicators**: *Concert-performance ‘The Songs of Puccini’* in Bulgaria Chamber Hall. Here he performs as author of the script, director and performer-singer. His translations are from Italian, as well as the overall concept of the multi-faceted musical event. The premieres of three operas are listed as the leading creative performances:

1. *Faust* by Gounod (the role of Faust) 18.11.2022 (Opening of the 52nd Festival of Opera and Ballet Art. State Opera - Stara Zagora)
2. Tchaikovsky’s *Cherevichki* (the role of Vakula) 20.12.2014, (Opera Theatre of Cagliari, Italy. Recording for RAI TV)
3. Bizet’s *Carmen* (the role of Don José) 24.05.2014 (Orquestra do Norte, Coliseo do Porto, Porto, Portugal)

The three articles published in the period 2020-2022 deal with artistic issues from personal creative incarnations (directing and singing) - **group Γ indicators**. The two productions of the Academic Opera Theatre, which Ivaylo Mihaylov brings out as short authorial products in his role of director-stage producer, are respectable:

1. *Ba-ta-clan by J. Offenbach* - 12.10.2020, Concert Hall of AMDFA - Plovdiv

2. *Bastien und Bastienne by V. A. Mozart* - 03.05.2017, Concert Hall of AMDFA - Plovdiv

Opera *Thais by J. Masne* is noted as a leading creative performance, which is not a major habilitation work. The production takes place at the Baltic Opera (Gdansk - Poland), where Ivaylo Mihaylov performs the main tenor role of Nisias- 01.03.2019.

Impressive is the huge project activity of the colleague (as a leader or participant in projects), which practically covers all the productions of the Educational Opera Theatre from 2019 until today.

3. Contributions of the leading creative performances

The contributions to the overall artistic and pedagogical activity of Asst. Prof. Ivaylo Mihaylov, PhD is indisputable. The richness and wide range of his performances reflect a true singing talent that has received excellent polish, the professional and human virtues of an artist who often presents himself and the native vocal art beyond the borders of the country. Such career development requires perfect preparation - vocal and acting: strength of character to endure the myriad challenges of the stage, diligence and a sense of responsibility to the varied duties of the active singer and teacher.

All three tenor parts presented as leading in the Table of Scientometric Indicators are significant and vividly representative. They unequivocally define the colleague as one of the 'leading voices' of Bulgaria and abroad. This successful singing practice is encrusted in Ivaylo's pedagogical work aimed at the education of vocal students.

4. Contributions of other habilitation materials and citations

I would not like to create an artificial watershed between the main habilitation materials and all the others. For me, this is the profile of an organic artistic whole that bears the marks of a dense creative commitment, affection and understanding of the operatic stage, which, by the way, is the most difficult to conquer, but also the most generous in rewarding those who have tenaciously defended their way to it.

5. **Personal impressions** - I have them in abundance. I follow all the productions of the School Opera Theatre. I am glad to see all creative projects realized - the fruit of Ivaylo's directing skills. The talented performance of Puccini's songs leaves a deep mark on me. This tenor repertoire, as if created for the timbral beauty of our colleague, identifies him as a 'bright voice' of the present on the Bulgarian opera stage.

In conclusion: Appreciating and admiring the wide range of artistic and pedagogical activities of Asst. Prof. Ivaylo Trifonov Mihaylov, PhD, taking into account all the elements of contribution in them, I propose with conviction to the esteemed scientific jury to award him the academic position of 'Associate Professor'.

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