

PEER REVIEW

by

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of the materials submitted for participation in the competition for occupation of the academic position "Associate Professor"

for Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts under Higher education field 8. "Arts", Professional field 8.3. "Music and Dance Arts"

The materials presented by Chief Assistant Dr. Petar Koychev contain specific and comprehensive information about the candidate's artistic-creative, teaching-pedagogical and scientific-research activities and are the basis on which I will build my assessment as a reviewer.

As I know the candidate personally and have played with him in many concerts, I can say that he is a very talented, wide-ranging and original jazz artist. In 2011, Koychev completed his higher education, after which he acquired a Bachelor's degree at the Paisii Hilendarski Plovdiv University, majoring in "Jazz and Pop Performance Art" and "Special Instrument – Guitar". He participated in the activities of the Music Department, by performing concert programs for students from music schools in Kardzhali, Plovdiv and Dimitrovgrad, as well as in front of students at Plovdiv University. In 2012, he obtained a Master's degree in music at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts in Plovdiv. Dr. Koychev specialized in Jazz Guitar at the Giuseppe Tartini Conservatory in Trieste, Italy, on an Erasmus academic exchange.

Chief Assistant Dr. Petar Koychev defended his doctoral dissertation on the topic "*Guitar Improvisation in Modern Jazz*" at Paisii Hilendarski in 2019. Since 2010, he has been working as a lecturer of Electric and Classical Guitar, as well as of Music Theory, and since 2014 he has been conducting Electric Guitar exercises in the Orchestral Instruments and Classical Singing Department at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts in the City of Plovdiv.

On various creative projects, Koychev has collaborated with a number of Bulgarian musicians and symphony orchestras such as: Damyan Peychinoski, Orlin Goranov, Nasko from BTR, Hristiyana Loizo, Ventsislav Blagoev, Tsvetan Nedyalkov, Ivan Lechev, Veselin Koychev, Dimitar Rusev, Aleksandar Lekov, "White, Green and Red" band, Ricardo Kieron, the Symphony Orchestra of the Plovdiv State Opera, the Symphony Orchestra of the Stara Zagora State Opera, the Symphony Orchestra of the Varna State Opera, the Sliven Symphony Orchestra, as well as the Pazardzhik Symphony Orchestra.

In my opinion, the candidate's activity falls into several main sections: *concert activity, scientific-research work, and teaching-pedagogical activity*. Each of the above-mentioned sections is of sufficient volume, valuable content, and definitely contributing nature.

The concerts, in which Petar Koychev has a leading solo performance, are three – with different and diverse genre characteristics.

The “Petar Koychev Gypsy Jazz Trio” *Project*, which took place on 11.06.2022, in Bebop Cafe in Plovdiv, is proof of the great attraction and talent of the candidate for the music of the outstanding guitarist Django Reinhardt. The concert presents the lively rhythm, the beautiful improvisations, lyrical melodies and energy of gypsy swing with some of the most iconic pieces of this style.

The “PETAR KOYCHEV PROJECT CONTINUITY” *concert* is another bright solo performance of the candidate with three guitar masters Tsvetan Nedyalkov, Veselin Koychev and Hristo Neychev, performing a temperamental program including jazz standards, fusion, flamenco, gypsy jazz, ethno, as well as author’s pieces.

The *participation* of the Peter Koychev Quartet within the Autumn Music Days Youth Jazz Festival in Dimitrovgrad is distinguished by the performance of some of the most beautiful and popular jazz standards.

Very impressive and diverse is the list of presented supporting creative performances or participation in a collective product in the field of arts, with which the candidate participates in the announced competition. These concerts are a total of 16 in number, with the participation of prominent names in Bulgarian jazz, pop music and popular singing actors.

I would like to single out Koychev’s appearance at the Stara Zagora Jazz Forum festival. This concert with the participation of Gustave Reichert (France), Steve Hamilton (Scotland), Gabriel Pierre (France), Arnau Garrofe (Spain), Veselin Koychev, Stoyan Royanov, Svetlina Hristova, Dimitar Blagoev, Petar Koychev, Dimitar Shanov, Stefan Goranov, and Ventsi Blagoev, represents a large-scale and impressive jazz production that unequivocally and categorically shows the candidate’s improvisational abilities and indisputable talent in this genre.

Another bright event that I would like to mention is “Masters of the Guitar” on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of Veselin Koychev, held on 30.10.2020, with the participation of Veselin Koychev, Tsvetan Nedyalkov, Angel Demirev, Aleksandar Lekov, Petar Koychev, the Akademika guitar ensemble, and Nikolay Karageorgiev, in the hall of the State Puppet Theater in the City of Plovdiv. This anniversary was an impression – a presentation of one of the most prominent jazz guitarists in Bulgaria, in which Petar Koychev distinguished himself with his exuberant temperament and rich interpretation skills in various styles.

In the presented concert activity, one can see a scale, diversity, virtuosity, and creative collaboration with many performers.

The realized album “Notes for Django” – CD of music by Petar Koychev is an author’s product in the field of jazz stylistics. Here, in addition to his categorical virtuosity and improvisational talent, he declares himself as a very interesting and original composer in the specific style of gypsy jazz.

I also consider the candidate's contribution in his *teaching-pedagogical activity*, with the goals he sets for himself, namely: to look for the intersection between knowledge, with his ability to expand and release applicability, as an ability to consolidate and categorize. Proof of the activity as an educator and pedagogue are the master classes of Chief Assistant Dr. Petar Koychev presented in the report. They are three in total:

Petar Koychev's *master class* "Guitar Chords in Pop and Jazz Music" at Lyuben Karavelov High School – Plovdiv, held on 18.04.2022.

From the presented review for this workshop, we understand the following: "Important theoretical aspects of the CAGED system for learning chords on the guitar were presented. Also, the modes formed by the diatonics of the major scale, chord triads and quadrats formed from their basic degrees were examined. Koychev presented to the audience the principles of playing in one of the most common harmonic progressions in jazz music – the 12 bar blues scheme". In my opinion, these are important and essential features of the modern guitar for the training of young talents.

The other two master classes are: Master class of Petar Koychev "Jazz Guitar" at Hristina Morfova National School of Music and Performing Arts – Stara Zagora, held on 19.04.2022, and Petar Koychev's workshop "Gypsy Jazz Guitar" at Paisii Hilendarski Plovdiv University, held on 13.05.2022. There is no doubt in Koychev's desire to pass on his knowledge and skills, as well as in his mastery to stimulate young guitarists towards professional growth.

There are indisputable and numerous proofs noted in reviews of *realized author's products*, which outline the bright and diverse talent of Petar Koychev, for example: Review of the National Youth Competition for Guitar and String Instruments "Jazz, Pop and Ethnic" – First Edition (2016) by Prof. Stela Miteva-Dinkova and Assoc. Prof. Veselin Koychev, in the academic cultural and information publication Art Spectrum, Issue 40 from July 2016, as well as a Review of Petar Koychev's album "Notes For Django", 2022, by Prof. Dr. Ivan Stoyanov, published at <http://www.musicology-bg.com/>, Reviews section.

According to the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the minimum national requirements, points by groups of indicators related to the scientific, teaching and artistic-creative activities, which are defined in the appendix on scientific and professional fields for the academic position of "**Associate Professor**", the necessary required points by groups of indicators are **400**. For the candidate Chief Assistant Dr. Petar Koychev, the total number of points is **615**.

Distributed by activities, they are as follows:

Group **A**: Dissertation work for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" – **50** points.

Group **C**: Leading (independent) creative expression in the field of arts – **155** points.

Group **D**: Leading (or independent) creative expression in the field of arts, which is not the main habilitation thesis – **265** points.

Group **E**: Reviews of realized author's products or creative appearances in specialized

publications in the field of arts – **70** points.

Group **F**: Participation in a national scientific, educational, or artistic project – **75** points.

The summary of the contributions can be defined as the scale and diversity of the creative efforts, but with one goal – achieving high artistic-creative and executive mastery, combined with a pedagogical focus.

The materials for the announced competition have a high scientific and practical value, cover all the requirements of the announced competition, and meet the corresponding minimum national requirements for scientific, teaching and artistic activity, defined in the Appendix on professional fields for the academic position “Associate Professor” based on the indicators under Art.2b, para.2 of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria. Therefore, I strongly suggest to the honorable Scientific Jury to award Chief Assistant Dr. Petar Koychev the academic position “Associate Professor”.

22.11.2022

Prepared by:

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