

PEER REVIEW

by

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**Professor at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts –
Plovdiv**

Professional field 8.3. “Music and Dance Arts”

of the materials submitted for participation in a competition for occupation of the academic position of “Associate Professor” at **Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv**

Professional field 8.3. “*Music and Dance Arts*”

Specialty: “*Special Instrument (Pop and Jazz Guitar)*”

By Order No PД27-078 dated 29.09.2022 of the Rector of Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts I have been selected as a member of the Scientific Jury in a competition for occupation of the academic position “**Associate Professor**” at **Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv** under Professional field 8.3. “*Music and Dance Arts*”, specialty: “*Special Instrument (Pop and Jazz Guitar)*”, **announced for the needs of the Classical and Pop and Jazz Performance Art Department at the Faculty of Music Pedagogy.**

The only candidate participating in the competition for occupation of the academic position “Associate Professor”, announced in State Gazette, Issue 60 dated 29.07.2022 and on the website of Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv, is **Petar Veselinov Koychev**, who is a Chief Assistant Dr. at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv.

The set of materials on paper and electronic media presented by Chief Assistant Dr. Petar Koychev includes the following documents:

creative autobiography; certificate of internship in the specialty; certificate of teaching activity and study load; reference table for the implementation of the scientometric indicators and their compliance with the minimum national requirements accompanied by evidentiary material; author’s reference for the scientific contributions of the works and citations.

1. Presentation of the candidate:

Born in Plovdiv, Petar Koychev grew up in a musical environment and was attracted to the guitar and jazz at an early age. His primary education was completed in the music class of Sv. Sv. Cyril and Methodius Secondary School. He received his Bachelor’s degree in 2011 at Paisii Hilendarski Plovdiv University with a major in “Jazz and Pop Performance Arts” and “Special Instrument – Guitar” in the class of Prof. Dr. Veselin Koychev. During his studies, he actively participated in educational concerts of

the Music Department in front of students from music schools in the cities of Kardzhali, Plovdiv, and Dimitrovgrad, as well as in front of students from the Plovdiv University. He completed his Master's degree at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts (today Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts) in 2012. He has performed on stage at a number of jazz youth festivals in Plovdiv, Stara Zagora, Dimitrovgrad, Haskovo, Albena, Borovets, etc. Dr. Koychev upgraded his skills in master classes. He also specialized in jazz guitar at the Giuseppe Tartini Conservatory in Trieste (Italy) under the Erasmus program academic exchange and participated as a mentor in the Student Practices project in 2014. An important stage of his education was in 2019 at Paisii Hilendarski Plovdiv University, where he acquired the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" for a dissertation on the topic "*Guitar Improvisation in Modern Jazz*".

Dr. Koychev began his teaching career as a guitar teacher in 2010. From 2014 to 2017, he worked in the Music Department at Paisii Hilendarski Plovdiv University, and in the period from 2015 until 2017 at the Sv. Sv. Cyril and Methodius Secondary School. In 2014, he was appointed to the Orchestral Instruments and Classical Singing Department at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts as a lecturer of "Electric Guitar".

The candidate's concert activity is extremely diverse, impressive, and voluminous. He has participated in some of the most emblematic productions of the Plovdiv State Opera, as well as of the Symphony Orchestras in Varna, Stara Zagora, Sliven and Pazardzhik under the baton of Krasimir Kushev, Dimitar Karaminkov, Kiril Chaplikov, Hristo Mihalev, Konstantin Ilievski and Konstantin Dobroykov. He partnered with famous and recognized musicians, such as: Damyan Peychinoski, Orlin Goranov, Hristiyana Loizo, Ventsislav Blagoev, Tsvetan Nedyalkov, Ivan Lechev, Teodor Koychinov, Marin Yonchev, Elena Pavlova, Mariyan Bachev, "White, Green and Red" band, Ricardo Kieron, and others. The formations that outline his creative credo are: Hot Club de Plovdiv Jazz Quartet (formed in 2013 together with Lyubomir Tolumbadzhiev – violin), the guitar duo "Two Guitars Jazz Live" with Veselin Koychev, transformed into the trio "KOYCHEV JAZZ III" with Svetlina Koycheva – vocals.

Petar Koychev's discography is also interesting and attractive, consisting of four albums: "Black Coffee Nadya Toncheva" (2017); "Music Springs" (2018) and "Supernova" (2019) to the music of Stefan Kostyanev and the author's project "Notes for Django" (2022).

Having inherited the creative path of his father, Petar Koychev gradually developed over the years as a performer with his own individual signature, and as an educator who cares for and inspires his students. Today, his name is deservedly ranked among the active and well-known guitar artists of our time.

2. Scientific research activity and its results in accordance with the scientometric indicators and their compliance with the national minimum requirements:

Group of indicators A

Minimum required: 50 points

Acquired: 50 points

Indicators 1: Dissertation work for the awarding of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor": The topic of Petar Koychev's dissertation work is "**Guitar Improvisation in Modern Jazz**". It was defended on 05.04.2019 at Paisii Hilendarski Plovdiv University, Diploma No 1000364.

Group of indicators C

Minimum required: 100 points

Acquired: 155 points

According to *Indicator 4: Realized author's product in the field of arts (film, performance, exhibition, concert, etc.)*, an author's album of music by Petar Koychev, together with Ilko Gradev – accordion and Vladi Mihaylov – double bass, published by Riva Sound Records 2022 (RSCD3208), is presented. The very name "Notes for Django" is a guide and a reference to the style of the music. The compilation includes 9 compositions with English titles. Petar Koychev's music "flowing" from swing to bossa nova and tango is bright, fascinating, and extremely pleasant. The following is very impressive: the improvisational mastery, the lightness, the melodiousness, the emotional charge and the ensemble "binding". This album is an achievement in two directions – a claimed and protected author's invention and a demonstration of instrumental virtuosity.

According to *Indicator 5: Leading (independent) creative expression in the field of arts*, three concerts are indicated, which present chamber formations formed under the direction of the candidate, namely: "Petar Koychev Gypsy Jazz Trio", "Petar Koychev Project CONTINUITY", and "Petar Koychev Quartet". My attention was drawn to the CONTINUITY Project implemented in Sofia Live Club and uniting several generations of guitarists-instrumentalists: Tsvetan Nedyalkov and his student Hristo Neychev, as well as Veselin Koychev and his creative successor Petar Koychev. The interaction between instrumentalists of different generations is always positive and guarantees pleasure for the audience and exchange of creative ideas between the performers.

Group of indicators D

Minimum required: 100 points

Acquired: 265 points

According to *Indicator 7: Published book based on a defended dissertation work for the awarding of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor"*, a book entitled "*Theoretical Foundations of Guitar Improvisation in Modern Jazz*", published by Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, is presented. I consider the book an outstanding contribution to the jazz guitar literature because of its comprehensiveness and content. It examines essential questions, such as the relationship between chords and scales, chord symbols, goes into the details of improvisation, stylistic features and tricks in modern jazz, and last, but not least, it touches on purely methodological questions, such as the ways of sound extraction with a feather, the combined techniques with left and

right hand, articulation, and melismatics. The total volume of the publication is 140 pages.

According to *Indicator 9: Articles and reports published in specialized publications in the field of arts*, 2 articles are indicated, the subject of which clarifies the performing subtleties when interpreting blues music and the use of harmonic minor in jazz.

According to *Indicator 14: Supporting creative performance or participation in a collective product in the field of arts*, 16 participations in prestigious artistic and creative performances with foreign musicians, various formations, philharmonic orchestras of the Stara Zagora and Plovdiv State Opera, are listed, including the musicals: "Jesus Christ Superstar", "Hair", "Man of La Mancha", "Bohemian Rhapsody", realized in Stara Zagora, Plovdiv, Kazanlak, Sofia, Dimitrovgrad, Haskovo, Burgas, Veliko Tarnovo, and Perelik Peak.

Group of indicators E

Minimum required: 40 points

Acquired: 70 points

According to *Indicator 17: Citations in monographs and peer-reviewed collective volumes*, there is one citation from the above-mentioned published book based on a defended dissertation work in an article with author Veselin Koychev entitled "Chord Symbols in Jazz and Pop Music", published in the Yearbook of Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, Plovdiv, 2021.

According to *Indicator 19: Reviews of realized author's products or creative performances in specialized editions in the field of arts*, a total of 6 materials are presented. In the first place, I would like to note the flattering and detailed review for Petar Koychev's album "Notes For Django" by Prof. Dr. Ivan Stoyanov, which is published online at musicology-bg.com, with two more reviews for a master class and workshop conducted by Chief Assistant Dr. Petar Koychev under the authorship of Zhivko Karatabanov and Mariyana Miteva. The remaining 3 reviews are part of published articles in the academic cultural and informational edition of the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Art Spectrum. They refer to the album "Supernova" by Veselin Koychev and Petar Koychev with music by Stefan Kostyanov, the artistic performances of Petar Koychev at the Crossroads International Youth Festival and the first edition of the Jazz, Pop and Ethno National Youth Competition for Guitar and String Instruments.

Group of indicators F

Minimum required: 50 points

Acquired: 75 points

According to *Indicator 22: Participation in a national scientific, educational or artistic project*, a participation in the working team of the project – Akademika Youth Guitar Festival, Plovdiv, 2015, is noted. In this section, I would like to add that 5 years ago, Petar Koychev was also a member of the Board of Directors of the Kitara-Plovdiv Association, and as such he actively and professionally participated in all events organized by the Association.

According to *Indicator 28: Leading a master class, studio or workshop in the field of arts*, the following are indicated: Master class at Lyuben Karavelov High School – Plovdiv on the topic “Guitar Chords in Pop and Jazz Music”; Jazz Guitar master class at Hristina Morfova National School of Music and Performing Arts – Stara Zagora and a workshop at Paisii Hilendarski Plovdiv University on the topic “Gypsy Jazz Guitar”. It is well known that master classes and workshops are a creative laboratory that has a huge impact factor on the audience being trained. In the specific case, the described performances cover a wide age range from young schoolchildren to university students. The presented photo material illustrates the way they were conducted and the great interest shown.

Resolution

Necessary required points by groups of indicators for the academic position “Associate Professor”: 400 points

Total score of Chief Assistant Dr. Petar Veselinov Koychev: **615 points**.

Conclusion

I have known Petar Koychev since his youth and I have witnessed his professional growth. He is extremely dedicated to his work, fair and responsible to colleagues and students, as well as a valuable member of the team of the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts. I believe that his overall pedagogical and artistic activity is an undoubted asset for the development of the Jazz Department, the Academy, and the guitar community in the country.

The presented materials and documents under the procedure, as well as the results achieved in the overall scientific, creative and teaching activities, fully correspond to the specific requirements of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation, and the relevant Regulations of the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts.

Based on the above-mentioned analysis and established scientific, scientific-applied and applied contributions, I am fully convinced and justified in giving my **positive assessment** and propose to the Scientific Jury to support the candidacy of Chief Assistant Dr. Petar Veselinov Koychev for occupation of the academic position of “Associate Professor” at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts under Professional field 8.3. “*Music and Dance Arts*”, specialty: “*Special Instrument (Pop and Jazz Guitar)*”, for the needs of the Classical and Pop and Jazz Performing Arts Department at the Faculty of Music Pedagogy of Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts.

25.11. 2022

Prepared by:
/Prof. Dr. Stela Miteva-Dinkova/