

## **PEER REVIEW**

**by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Todorka Malcheva Ivanova  
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**Member of the scientific jury, appointed by Order No ПД-27-033/03.05.2022 of the  
Rector of Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv**

**for the competition for occupation of the academic position “Associate Professor” under  
Higher Education field 8 “Arts”, Professional field 8.3 “Music and Dance Arts”  
(specialty “Shepherd’s Pipe and Chamber Instrumental Ensembles”) at Prof. Asen  
Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv**

### **I. Data of the competition**

The only candidate in the competition for “Associate Professor” under Higher Education field 8 “Arts”, Professional field 8.3 “Music and Dance Arts” (specialty “Shepherd’s Pipe and Chamber Instrumental Ensembles”) for the needs of the Musical Folklore Department at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv is Chief Assistant Dr. Vasil Vasilev. The necessary documents are submitted. The candidate meets the scientometric requirements for the competition. All this confirms that Chief Assistant Dr. Vasil Vasilev undoubtedly meets the conditions for participation in the competition according to the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

### **II. Professional and biographical data for the candidate**

#### Education and academic titles:

Chief Assistant Dr. V. Vasilev graduated from the National School of Folk Arts in Shiroka Laka with a specialty in shepherd’s pipe. In 2005, he graduated with a Master’s degree at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts with the same specialty. In 2016, Dr. Vasilev acquired the educational and scientific degree “Doctor” after successfully defending a dissertation on the topic: “Characteristic Features of the Contemporary Shepherd’s Pipe Performance Art”. For many years, he worked as a part-time teacher of shepherd’s pipe at the Academy, and since 2017 he has been the Chief Assistant in the specialty “Shepherd’s Pipe and Chamber Instrumental Ensembles” at the Academy.

In parallel with his teaching activity at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, Chief Assistant Dr. V. Vasilev is also a teacher of shepherd’s pipe at L. Karavelov Secondary School in Plovdiv.

#### Artistic and creative activity

1. In 2002, V. Vasilev was a soloist-artist with the Folklore Orchestra at the Academy in Plovdiv.
2. He is also a soloist in the Academic Folklore Ensemble and the Mystery of Bulgarian Voices Vocal Ensemble.
3. Has realized numerous recordings for the Bulgarian National Radio and the Bulgarian National Television.
4. Participates as a soloist in the instrumental pop and jazz formations Lamico Band and Ethno Folk Jazz.
5. Winner of awards from competitions and festivals.

### **III. Description and contributions of scientific works**

The monograph “The Shepherd’s Pipe in Bulgarian Musical Practice” is a major habilitation work presented by the candidate, the extremely responsible task of which is to reveal the overall role of the shepherd’s pipe instrument in the development of Bulgarian folk instrumental music.

The research reveals characteristic features of the Bulgarian folk instrumental music for shepherd’s pipe from the 60s of the XX century. The contribution of the folklore ensembles in our country to the shepherd’s pipe instrumental performance is taken into account. Instrumental melodies from the performance repertoire of prominent performers and instrumental groups during this period are deciphered, on the basis of which characteristic features of instrumental music for the shepherd’s pipe during the considered period are highlighted.

In the first chapter, the path of development of the shepherd’s pipe folk music is traced. In this discourse, the stages through which the shepherd’s pipe folk music is realized are highlighted – from song accompaniment to contemporary instrumental pieces for solo performance.

Shepherd’s pipe performance techniques are described based on extensive empirical experience. The characteristic of our folklore are the shepherd’s pipe melodies, characterized by their improvisational mastery and certain performance techniques.

In the second chapter, prominent 20th-century shepherd’s pipe players are highlighted, taking into account their role in the folk instrumental music. The author notes that the absence of musical literacy and education was not an obstacle to the continuous self-improvement of the pioneer players, as well as to mastering the elements of performance. Their successors expanded the possibilities of the shepherd’s pipe, by enriching the means of artistic expression and performance technique. The contribution of the Thracian-Strandzhan shepherd’s pipe style is noted. The performing technique of prominent Bulgarian 20th-century players is analyzed, as well as their role in the development of the performing style for the shepherd’s pipe, indicating the specific contributing directions. The generalization about the main stages through which the shepherd’s pipe instrumental music passes is impressive.

The subject of the third chapter is the use of the shepherd’s pipe in chamber instrumental folk groups. The role of performance elements for the artistic value of

instrumental works stands out. The various shepherd's pipe manifestations are examined, such as the formation and development of the instrumental round dance as a play, the creation and construction of an instrumental introduction, as well as the role of the shepherd's pipe as an accompaniment to a vocal performance.

In the fourth chapter, the research is very resourcefully finalized by considering the use of the shepherd's pipe in the modern folk music orchestra, taking into account the contribution of Filip Kutev National Folk Ensemble and the Folk Music Orchestra with the Bulgarian National Radio. The doctoral student extremely insightfully analyzes the functions of the shepherd's pipe in the modern folk orchestra, sound extraction, registers, touches, and dynamics in modern instrumental performance.

The complete monographic study of Dr. V. Vasilev convincingly proves the goal he set for himself – the shepherd's pipe instrument is the main engine in the development of traditional instrumental music. The significant contribution of the candidate is also expressed in the fact that the conclusions and summaries presented in the monographic work are the result of personal long-term experience and knowledge as a performer and teacher, as well as a multidirectional highlighting of the specific features of the shepherd's pipe instrumental music of recent decades through a thorough study of the performance styles of prominent performers and instrumental groups of the period. It is also well deserved to emphasize that the analytical searches throughout the monograph are supported by professionally notated and analyzed instrumental examples.

Dr. V. Vasilev is also one of the compilers of a collection – a textbook containing 50 non-measured solo pieces for shepherd's pipe, which is a valuable aid for mastering instrumental pieces for this instrument.

The publication realized by Dr. V. Vasilev, as well as his 4 citations, are in the thematic direction of the monographic work.

## **VI. Artistic and creative activity and awards**

Dr. V. Vasilev has a rich artistic and creative realization.

1. Participation in 27 concerts as a soloist in the Academic Folklore Ensemble at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, Plovdiv.

2. Concert as a solo shepherd's pipe player with the Folk Line Ensemble in Osijek, Croatia.

3. Held a master class in shepherd's pipe at L. Karavelov Secondary School – Plovdiv as a lecturer, where the participants had the opportunity to get acquainted practically with the best Bulgarian works for shepherd's pipe and with performance techniques for mastering them.

4. Organized a workshop on shepherd's pipe at the Music School in Katerini, Greece on the topic: "Getting to Know the Traditional Bulgarian Folk Instrument Shepherd's Pipe – Theoretically and Practically". He also held lectures on the specific features of the folk instrument, as well as a demonstration of sound extraction and performance.

5. Workshop at the National School of Folk Arts in Shiroka Laka on the topic: “Working with Chamber Folklore Ensembles”. The initiative concluded with a concert program, including a presentation of the learned musical works.

6. Realized records in the Bulgarian National Radio and the Bulgarian National Television.

7. It is commendable that Dr. V. Vasilev has been awarded two diplomas for his contribution in the field of shepherd’s pipe performance, as well as for preserving and spreading Bulgarian folklore traditions.

## CONCLUSION

The proposed scientific and artistic and creative production under the announced competition for “Associate Professor” at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv outlines the following main contributions of the candidate:

1. A thorough analytical study of the functions and significance of the shepherd’s pipe for Bulgarian folk music was conducted.

2. In joint composition, a collection was published – a teaching aid with non-measured pieces for the folk instrument shepherd’s pipe.

3. A remarkable artistic and creative production was carried out, expressed in rich concert performances and recordings.

4. Certificates have been issued for contribution to the shepherd’s pipe music.

Based on the completed presentation, I believe that the candidate for the academic position “Associate Professor” Chief Assistant Dr. Vasil Vasilev fully complies with the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria. In view of this, my assessment for the occupation of the academic position “Associate Professor” by Chief Assistant Dr. Vasil Vasilev is **POSITIVE**.

The proposed scientific work, the achieved contribution moments, as well as his artistic and creative and teaching activities give me reason to confidently recommend to the respected Scientific Jury that we award the candidacy a **POSITIVE ASSESSMENT**, as well as to propose to the Faculty Council of the Musical Folklore and Choreography Faculty at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv to elect the candidate Chief Assistant Dr. Vasil Vasilev as “Associate Professor” under Higher education field 8 “Arts”, Professional field 8.3 “Music and Dance Arts” (specialty “Shepherd’s Pipe and Chamber Instrumental Ensembles”).

10.06.2022, City of Shumen

Peer review prepared by:  
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