

PEER REVIEW

by Prof. Dr. Borislav Aleksandrov Yasenov

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

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

By Order No ПД-27-033 dated 03.05.2022 of the Rector of Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv, I have been selected as a member of the scientific jury of a competition for 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”, announced for the needs of the Musical Folklore Department at the Musical Folklore and Choreography Faculty. Only one candidate submitted documents for participation in the competition, namely Chief Assistant Dr. Vasil Milchev Vasilev from Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv. The submitted documents and materials, in electronic format, meet all the requirements of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its implementation in the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts.

Vasil Milchev Vasilev comes from a family of musicians and this predetermined his future life path. He started playing music from an early age, and received his first shepherd’s pipe lessons from his grandfather Vasil Milev – a famous shepherd’s pipe player and soloist of the Folk Music Orchestra at the Bulgarian National Radio, Plovdiv.

In 1998, V. Vasilev graduated from the National School of Folk Arts in the village of Shiroka Laka with a specialty “Shepherd’s Pipe”, and in 2005 he graduated from the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts with an educational qualification “Master”, specialty “Performing Arts – Shepherd’s Pipe”.

In 2002, Dr. Vasilev was appointed a soloist-artist to the State Folk Orchestra of the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, and also as a part-time lecturer of shepherd’s pipe.

After successfully defending a scientific work on the topic: “Characteristic Features of the Contemporary Shepherd’s Pipe Performance Art”, he was awarded the educational and scientific degree “Doctor” (2015). Subsequently, Dr. Vasilev was appointed to Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv in the academic position of Chief Assistant majoring in “Shepherd’s Pipe and Chamber Instrumental Ensembles” at the Musical Folklore Department. He also develops teaching activities in shepherd’s pipe at Lyuben Karavelov Secondary School – Plovdiv.

Of great importance in his pedagogical practice is the enrichment of the repertoire studied by the students and their inclusion in projects, helping to build future creative personalities,

respectively their professional development. Here is the place to note the management of a project: “Studio Audio Recordings of Prominent Students 2021-2022” – Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv.

Vasil Vasilev’s artistic activity is extremely active. He has performed numerous concerts in Bulgaria and abroad as a soloist of the Academic Folk Orchestra, the Academic Folklore Ensemble and the The Mystery of Bulgarian Voices Vocal Ensemble. He has also made numerous recordings for the Bulgarian National Radio together with the Folk Music Orchestra, as well as for the Bulgarian National Television. Dr. Vasilev participates as a soloist in the pop and jazz formations “Lamico Band” and “Ethno Folk Jazz”.

He has been honored with prizes from competitions and festivals, the most prestigious of which are: Grand Prix from Folklore without Borders International Youth Competition – Albena/Dobrich and First prize from the New Bulgarian Folk Music competition – Chepelare.

V. Vasilev develops scientific and journalistic activities of an indisputable contribution nature.

He is the author of the monographic work “The Shepherd’s Pipe in Bulgarian Musical Practice”, Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv, 2021 (Indicator C2), the contributions of which are expressed in:

- the systematized examination of the achievements of famous shepherd’s pipe players from the middle of the 20th century, which substantiates and gives a clear idea of their contribution to the development of the shepherd’s pipe performance art;
- the use of the shepherd’s pipe in chamber formations for folk music is analyzed and the function of the instrument is described – solo, ensemble-harmonic and mixed;
- consideration of the use of the shepherd’s pipe in the modern orchestra for folk music is important (section 4 of the monograph). The functions of the shepherd’s pipe are analyzed; the components of playing – sound extraction arrangement – types, use of different registers, strokes, dynamic nuances, the so-called missing tones of the shepherd’s pipe range, etc. are described in detail.

By summarizing the above contributions, it is clear that the monographic work is the first attempt at theoretical justification and creating a clear idea of the place, role, function and meaning of the shepherd’s pipe in folklore practice.

In group of indicators D, the candidate indicates a published book based on a defended dissertation work, namely “Characteristic Features of the Contemporary Shepherd’s Pipe Performance Art” – Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv, 2019 (D7), and item No 9 presents the scientific article “Usage of Shepherd’s Pipe and Bagpipes in Chamber-Instrumental and Vocal Folklore Ensembles”, published in Yearbook 2019 of the Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv, the contributions of which are expressed in the following:

- a detailed analysis of the role of the shepherd’s pipe and the bagpipe in chamber-instrumental ensembles, by paying significant attention to the characteristic features of the use of the two instruments, ensemble issues and intonation purity;

- the approach to forming and building a chamber ensemble is described in detail, in order to achieve a qualitative and perfect professional sound during an ensemble performance;

- an important point is the analysis of the role of the shepherd's pipe and the bagpipe in vocal accompaniment, the change of functions depending on the vocal part. The role of wind instruments mainly in an accompanying function is described in detail.

- the role of the shepherd's pipe and the bagpipe in the vocal accompaniment is distinguished, and more precisely in the two main moments – at the introduction of the song and during the vocal performance. Through analysis, guidelines are given for achieving valuable ensemble sound and intonation purity.

For a leading creative performance in the field of arts (D13), a Concert on the occasion of the 110th anniversary of the birth of Nikola Vaptsarov (2019), with soloist V. Vasilev, is presented.

For supporting creative expression or participation in a collective product in the field of arts (D14) two concerts are described: “Ten Years of Academic Folklore Ensemble at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv” in Ancient Theater, Plovdiv (2018) and Folk Line Formation in the city of Osijek, Croatia (2019).

The candidate is cited four times, which meets the requirements of indicator D17.

Under indicator D, item No 19 – Review of a realized author's product or creative expression in specialized publications in the field of arts, the article by Theodosii Spassov “Praise of the Poet with Music” is presented, placed in the Art Spectrum of Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv, Issue 54, 2021

V. Vasilev has published a textbook (F27) together with Prof. Lyuben Dosev – “Non-Measured Melodies from the Repertoire of Popular Master Players”, first edition, Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, Plovdiv, 2017, which is of an applied nature and will contribute to enriching students' knowledge, aesthetic outlook and interpretive capabilities.

Under indicator F, item 28 – Management of a master class, studio or workshop in the field of arts, the following are described:

- a master class on shepherd's pipe at Lyuben Karavelov Secondary School – Plovdiv, on the topic “Mastering the Different Registers and Strokes of the Shepherd's Pipe and Shepherd's Pipe Melodies from the Thracian Folklore Region”;

- workshop at Shiroka Laka National School of Folk Arts, on the topic “Working with Chamber Folklore Ensembles”, with the participation of students from the Performing Arts – specialty “Folklore” at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv;

- workshop at the School of Music in the City of Katerini, Greece, on the topic “Getting to Know the Traditional Bulgarian Folk Instrument Shepherd's Pipe – Theoretically and Practically. History, Structure, Range, Registers and Other Specific Features of the Shepherd's Pipe”.

Of extreme importance in the candidate's activity is the presentation of Bulgarian folk music performance culture abroad, and in particular the traditional instrument shepherd's pipe.

The indicators according to the minimum national requirements are covered, with some of the indicators to a greater extent than necessary.

Bearing in mind the above, I note the high achievements and the contributing nature of the overall active and rich pedagogical, artistic and scientific research activity of Chief Assistant Dr. Vasil Vasilev. The theoretical developments of the candidate have practical applicability and are oriented towards pedagogical work. The achieved results fully correspond to the specific requirements of the specialty “Shepherd’s Pipe and Chamber Instrumental Ensembles”, announced for the needs of the Musical Folklore Department at the Musical Folklore and Choreography Faculty, adopted in connection with the Regulations of Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv for the application of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

After familiarizing myself with the materials presented in the competition and after analyzing their significance, scientific, scientific-applied and applied contributions, I find it reasonable to give my positive assessment to the respected Scientific Jury in support of the candidacy of Chief Assistant Dr. Vasil Milchev Vasilev for 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 “Shepherd’s Pipe and Chamber Instrumental Ensembles”

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Peer Review prepared by:

(Prof. Dr. Borislav Yassenov)