

## **PEER REVIEW**

**by Velislav Zaimov**

**Professor Doctor of Score Reading in the Department of Conducting and Composition  
at the Department of Composition at the Faculty of Theory, Composition and  
Conducting at Prof. Pancho Vladigerov National Music Academy**

**for occupation of the position “Professor in Choir Conducting” under Professional field  
8.3 “Music and Dance Arts” in the announced by the Music Pedagogy and Conducting  
Department at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts –  
Plovdiv competition based on Art.3, para.1 of the Act for the Development of the  
Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, published in State Gazette, Issue 12 of  
11.02.2020.**

One candidate participates in the abovementioned competition: Associate Professor Dr. Vesela Ivanova Geleva. From the attached reference – form of the National Center for Information and Documentation it is evident that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Geleva fully covers the mandatory minimum requirements under the Professional field 8.3 “Music and Dance Arts”.

Vesela Geleva is a graduate of Dobrin Petkov National School of Music and Dance Arts – Plovdiv, which she graduated from in 1985 with two specialties – “Piano” and “Music Theory”. She received her higher musical education at the Faculty of Theory, Composition and Conducting at Prof. Pancho Vladigerov National Music Academy in Sofia, where she graduated in Choir Conducting with Prof. Vasil Arnaudov and Prof. Virdzhiniya Atanasova. For excellent grades, during her studies, she was given the award of the Faculty of Theory, Composition and Conducting in the name of Prof. Georgi Dimitrov.

After her graduation, Vesela Geleva devoted herself to pedagogical, conducting, and research activities: initially she taught piano, solfeggio, and aesthetics at the National School of Music and Dance Arts – Plovdiv, led various choirs such as the State Opera Choir in Plovdiv, the Choir of Plovdiv Boys and Youth, the Ladies’ Choir Trimontsium, the Mixed Chamber Choir at the St. Trinity Church in Plovdiv, the Choir of the Angel Bukureshtliev Plovdiv Singing Society. Vesela Geleva’s academic career began in 1994 as a lecturer at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv for conducting a piano choir, score reading, course choir, academic choir, and church choir conducting.

In 2006 she defended a dissertation on the topic: *“Specifics and Education of the Singing Voice in Children and Adolescents and Problems of its Application in the Choirs”*, for which she was awarded the educational and scientific degree “Doctor”. Vesela Geleva has a deep interest in the problems of choir work. In addition to her monograph on the church and choir heritage of Petar Dinev, she is the author of many other articles published in various scientific journals.

The Gaudeamus Academic Mixed Choir founded by Vesela Geleva in 2006 immediately became involved in the concert life at home and abroad with numerous and varied performances. The repertoire of the Choir includes works from different styles and eras, including the first performances of works unknown in our country. It is not possible to mention all significant performances in a short statement. As the most impressive I would point out the participation in the St. Petka Bulgarian Sacred Choir Music Festival in Gabrovo, the Days of Chamber Music International Festival, also in Gabrovo, the Hosanna in the Heights International Sacred Music Festival at the St. Paraskeva Church in Sofia, the International Choir Competition in Ohrid – Republic of North Macedonia, the International Choir Festival in Paralia, Greece, as well as concert tours and festivals in Belgium, Germany, France, England, Czech Republic, Poland, and Italy. Remarkable are the performances of the Gaudeamus Academic Mixed Choir of Cantata No 140 by J.S. Bach, the opera “Richard the Lionheart” by André Grétry with the Sofia Philharmonic, “Music of Love and the Stars” by Jeffrey Van, “Hymn for The Holy Virgin” by Franz Liszt for choir, organ, and piano, and of sacred choir works by Leopold Mozart. At the performances of the Academic Opera Theater of the Academy, the Choir participated in the productions of the operas “Didona and Aeneas” and “The Fairy-Queen” by H. Purcell and “Semele” by Handel. The concert with orthodox choir music was recorded and broadcast for the Resurrection of Christ in all EU countries at the invitation of Euroradio in 2019.

In 2010 Dr. Vesela Geleva was elected Associate Professor of choir conducting at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv. The awards from the 15th International Orthodox Music Festival “Saint Mary – Axion Estin” in Pomorie, together with an honorary plaque for overall contribution to the development of the festival, an honorary diploma from the Darby Foundation – Sofia in 2018 for proven contribution to the musical and choir education of adolescents and young people, the academic award “Meden Chan” for high artistic achievements, the award of the Rector of Prof. A. Diamandiev Academy, a diploma and a plaque for contribution to the popularization of Bulgarian culture from the Bulgarian Cultural and Educational Club in Prague testify to her high creative and artistic achievements as a conductor.

Vessela Geleva is a member of the jury at the International Choir Festival “Saint Mary – Axion Estin” in Pomorie, at the International May Choir Competition “Prof. Georgi Dimitrov” in Varna, at the International Thracian Choir Festival in Yambol, as well as coordinator and conductor (from 2006 until 2018) in the Euroculture en Pays Gentiane Euroculture Organization in Paris under projects of the French Ministry of Culture.

As a **habilitation work – creative and artistic achievements** – on the basis of Art.29, item 3 of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, Associate Professor Dr. Vesela Geleva has proposed:

- **ten concerts** as a conductor of the Gaudeamus Academic Mixed Choir, performed after the award of the scientific title “Associate Professor”. These concerts include works from different eras, genres, authors, and styles and present her performances as a choir conductor in the most diverse light, with a wide range of skills in approach and stage performance.

- **author's program** on the occasion of the 130th anniversary of the birth of Petar Dinev, recorded in BNR – Sofia and broadcast on 03.07.2019, in “Cantate, jubilate”, Hristo Botev program.

- **supporting creative performance** or participation in a collective product in the field of arts – twenty-two participations as a conductor in various performances and festivals.

- **management of a national scientific, educational or artistic and creative project:** three projects with pedagogical orientation and with the issue of performance of Orthodox music.

It is obvious that the creative activity of Associate Professor Dr. Vesela Geleva is extremely rich, diverse, and highly valuable. Vesela Geleva occupies an important place in our musical life as a choir conductor, as a pedagogue, and as an organizer of various projects in the field of choir work. The contributions offered in the report far exceed the average requirements for the announced competition.

Therefore, after all the above, although in abbreviated form, I strongly suggest to the honored members of the scientific jury, Associate Professor Dr. Vesela Geleva to be awarded the scientific position of “**Professor**” under Professional field 8.3 “Music and Dance Arts”.

Sofia, 15.06.2020

Prof. Dr. Velislav Zaimov