

## **PEER REVIEW**

**by Prof. Dr. Sevdalina Ilieva Dimitrova**

**Episkop Konstantin Preslavski Shumen University, Information, Qualification and  
Continuing Education Department – Varna**

**for the teaching, research and artistic activity**

**of Chief Assistant Dr. Zhan Stefanov Pehlivanov**

**candidate for the competition for occupation of the academic position “Associate  
Professor”**

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

**Faculty of Music Pedagogy, specialty “History of Pop and Jazz Music”, Higher Education  
field 8. “Arts:, Professional field 8.3. “Music and Dance Arts” at the Music Pedagogy and  
Conducting Department**

1. The competition for “Associate Professor” has been legally announced in State Gazette, Issue 26/30.03.2021.

2. The position is provided with the required number of hours.

3. Only one candidate participates in the competition – Chief Assistant Dr. Zhan Stefanov Pehlivanov, who since 2001, has been a lecturer, and since 2004 – a full-time lecturer at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – City of Plovdiv.

4. The candidate Chief Assistant Dr. Zhan Stefanov Pehlivanov presented the necessary and required under the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria documents and materials for participation in the competition, which are well presented and sufficient. His achievements are evident from them. His biography reveals the image of a purposeful, talented, and hard-working man, lecturer and artist, devoted entirely to his wonderful profession. Dr. Pehlivanov completed his secondary education at Dobrin Petkov National School of Music and Dance, majoring in Piano, and his higher education, as well as his Master’s degree at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, as a music teacher in kindergarten, elementary, middle, and upper years, and as a Piano teacher. During those nearly 18 years of teaching experience in Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, where he still conducts lectures and seminars with students, masters, and graduates in the disciplines: History of Pop and Jazz Music, Music Computer Compilation, Styles in Jazz and Pop Music, Music Computer Technologies, Specialized Computer Training, Music Software and Synthesizer, Arrangement for Electronic Ensembles, and Synthesizer, also forming and managing the Music atelier “*Online Atelier – Workshop*” in the field of arts in the beginning of 2020, realized as a practical part of the classes in Music Software and Synthesizer, Zhan

Pehlivanov developed his potential and in 2020 successfully defended a dissertation on the topic: “*Modern Electronic Music Systems in the Preparation of Students of Pop and Jazz Music*”.

5. The research activity of Chief Assistant Dr. Zhan Stefanov Pehlivanov can be systematized in the following areas:

5.1. *Participation in projects* – The participation of Chief Assistant Dr. Zhan Pehlivanov in projects for scientific and artistic activities, shed light on another area of his achievements – the preparation of students, future music teachers, as well as their realization. “*Highly Professional Sound Recording Equipment, Meeting the Modern Standards for Sound Recording According to the Typical Training Activity and the Specifics of the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts*” – 2010; “*Professional Sound Recording Software and Information Technologies – A Means of Activating the Practical and Applied Activities of Students of Music Pedagogy According to the Specifics of Their Education at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts*” – 2012; “*Software, Hardware, and Information Technology – The Basis of the Lecture Course in Sound Engineering in Accordance with the Specifics of Training at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts*” – 2013, are projects under his leadership. Also of interest is the project from 2021, in which Dr. Zhan Pehlivanov acted as a coordinator. The theme is engaging: “*Children’s Song Festival*”, including a concert and a national academic competition for writing children’s and school songs. The presented projects are also supported by rich photo evidence.

5.2. *Scientific publications* – after defending his doctoral dissertation, Chief Assistant Dr. Zhan Pehlivanov published the textbook “*History, Theory and Styles in Pop, Rock and Jazz Music. Digital Sound Technologies. Digital Audio Workstations*”, as well as three articles and reports published in specialized publications in the field of arts. They emphasize his professional commitment.

5.3. *Citations* – The scientific value of the musical and creative activity, its quality and application are confirmed by the eight citations of Zhan Pehlivanov by authors in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review.

*Contributions* – I accept the precisely made author’s reference of the scientific contributions of the works and citations, presented by Chief Assistant Dr. Zhan Pehlivanov. I realize that it is very difficult to judge one’s own creative achievements, but this is a matter of procedure that cannot be ignored.

## 6. Artistic and creative activity:

The teaching and research activity of Chief Assistant Dr. Zhan Pehlivanov at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – City of Plovdiv, leave no doubt about the availability of sufficient employment and research, but make a strong impression on the scale and scope of the artistic and creative activity. Already popular and sought-after specialist, lecturer and artist, Chief Assistant Dr. Zhan Pehlivanov is a concert performer, artistic director, arranger, and producer of the Intro Quartet. The beginning dates back to 2001, when an idea of interpreting classical music in a modern arrangement dawned on him. He called it Intro. Over the

years, he has increasingly experimented boldly in styles, sound, and stage presence. Trying to avoid an analogue with similar formations on the world stage, in 2005 the Intro Quartet began working with a brass section, including vocals in their pieces. The musical ideas, their arrangements, orchestrations, and realization are the work of Chief Assistant Dr. Zhan Pehlivanov – Artistic Director and Producer of the Intro Quartet. His performances followed quickly: the recordings of two singles in the Noculan Studio – Rotterdam, the Netherlands, commissioned by Universal Music – Berlin, as well as an original audio CD with participation of two representative groups of Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts: the Intro Quartet and Lamico Band, in which he acted as an arranger and producer of the 5 pieces performed by the Intro Quartet, on the one hand. On the other hand – the numerous concert performances, proof of the active artistic and stage activity, as well as the professional competence of Dr. Zhan Pehlivanov, not only on Bulgarian, but also on world stages: 2003 – 2006: concert tours in Germany, the Netherlands, Dubai, Djibouti – Africa; 2007 in Vienna – “*Days of Sofia in Vienna*”; 2011 in Edirne; 2012 “*10 years INTRO & ELIKA*” – Ancient Theater – Plovdiv, where the concert began with a unique laser show and the unification of two arts – music and dance, as well as the inclusion of Stefka Blagoeva Choir of Plovdiv Boys and Youth; 2014 at the Bulgarian Embassy in Rome; 2018 – in Paris, a concert related to the Bulgarian EU presidency, organized jointly with the Embassy of the Republic of Bulgaria in France and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of our country (due to the great interest, the concerts were two – for official guests from abroad and for the Bulgarian community); 2019 – concert-performance “*There is Such Country*” – Plovdiv, Complex-Hall SILA, with the participation of: the Intro Quartet and the Elika Representative Dance Ensemble, with the inclusion of musicians living among Bulgarian folklore from the Nazdravitsa Formation, who through music and dance fascinatingly told the story of a journey, boldly combining experience and our musical heritage and traditions; 2019 – the same concert-performance “*There is Such Country*” in an ancient castle of Barcelona; 2020 – concert at the Warsaw University.

The diverse in terms of genre creative and stage activity of Chief Assistant Dr. Zhan Pehlivanov – individual and joint, speaks of high professionalism. I would like to admit that I am pleasantly surprised by the level of artistic and creative thought and realization, the wealth of ideas and convincing authorial presence in each performance. A presence that stands out with its unique author’s contribution!

From the presented videos and photos of spectacular concerts-performances, the creative inspiration and realization, with which Chief Assistant Dr. Zhan Pehlivanov skillfully masters the audience, are evident. It shows how much energy and empathy it infects and how deep it is in each stage performance. This is an indicator of mature professionalism and masterful mastery of the profession. This is evidenced by the wide range of teaching and artistic and creative activities.

Having accumulated enough scientific and theoretical, scientific and practical, and artistic and creative experience and performances, Dr. Zhan Pehlivanov is ready for the next step in his academic growth.

### **Conclusion**

The analysis of the production with which the candidate applied, his professional biography, and personal qualities, give me enough reasons to confidently propose to the specialized Scientific Jury to choose Chief Assistant Dr. Zhan Stefanov Pehlivanov for the academic position of “Associate Professor” at the Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv, Faculty of Music Pedagogy, specialty “History of Pop and Jazz Music”, Higher Education field 8. “Arts”, Professional field 8.3. “Music and Dance Arts”, at the Music Pedagogy and Conducting Department.

29.06.2021

Signature:

(Prof. Dr. Sevdalina Dimitrova)