

PEER REVIEW

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of the materials submitted for participation in the 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 “History of Pop and Jazz Music”

By Order No ПД-27-029 of 27.05.2021 of the Rector of Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv I have been appointed a member of a scientific jury in relation to a competition for occupation of the academic position “Associate Professor” under Higher Education field 8. “Arts”, Professional field 8.3. “Music and Dance Arts”, specialty “History of Pop and Jazz Music”, announced for the needs of the Music Pedagogy and Conducting Department at the Faculty of Music Pedagogy. For participation in the competition, published in State Gazette, Issue 26 of 30.03.2021, one candidate submitted documents, namely Chief Assistant Dr. Zhan Stefanov Pehlivanov from Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv. The submitted documents and materials, in electronic media, 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.

Zhan Pehlivanov graduated from the Dobrin Petkov Music High School in Plovdiv (now National School of Music and Dance) in 1984 with a degree in Piano, and in 1997 acquired his Master’s Degree in the Academy of Music, Dance and Arts in Plovdiv (now Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts), majoring in Music Pedagogy.

His pedagogical work is mainly related to Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv, where he has worked since 2000, reaching the academic position of Chief Assistant and the scientific degree “Doctor” (2020). He teaches the following disciplines: History and Theory of Jazz and Pop Music, Contemporary Electronic Music Systems, Synthesizer, and Computer Music Technologies. His professional work is also related to sound recording and sound processing, arranging, sound directing, mastering, as well as audio project management.

Of an important nature in the pedagogical and scientific activity of Chief Assistant Dr. Zhan Pehlivanov are issues related to the role of music education, building good aesthetic taste and criteria for assessing the perceived and performed music, knowledge of stylistic diversity in music, as well as the desire of students to participate in music events.

In his theoretical and practical activity the candidate adapts and uses the innovations and possibilities of the modern electronic music systems in the education of the students and in his concert activity.

The creative and artistic activity of Chief Assistant Dr. Zhan Pehlivanov is mainly associated with the Intro Quartet, of which he is the Artistic Director. The formation was established in early 2001 in Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts

– Plovdiv with the idea to perform classical music in a contemporary, modern arrangement. There followed a long period of intensive creative and concert activity, experiments in different styles, in the interpretation of sound, rhythm, leading to building one's own image and bright presence on the stages in Bulgaria and the European Union. Concerts were performed in Germany and the Netherlands (2002 – 2003), Austria (Vienna, 2006), the United Arab Emirates (2006), a tour in Hong Kong – Macau (2006), Africa (Djibouti, 2006), Greece (2009), the Republic of Turkey (Edirne and Keşan, 2016), Italy (Rome, 2017), Paris and Berlin (2018), at the University of Warsaw (2020) on the occasion of the National Holiday of Bulgaria – March 3rd, participation in a concert program in Barcelona, Spain (2019), as well as numerous appearances on the Bulgarian concert and media scene.

It is extremely important for the work of the candidate to make connections between the different styles in music and the individual arts, as well as a synthesis between them.

He also develops scientific and journalistic activity.

The indicators for the minimum national requirements are covered, in the following order:

For indicator A, item 1, the candidate includes the dissertation on the topic “*Modern Electronic Music Systems in the Preparation of Students of Pop and Jazz Music*” (public defense on 07.10.2020). Subsequently, the study was used as a basis for the publication of the book “*History, Theory and Styles in Pop, Rock and Jazz Music. Digital Sound Technologies. Digital Audio Workstations*”, Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv, 2021, FastPrintBooks, 2021, ISBN: 978-954-2963-73-8, marked in group of indicators D, item 7.

The topic of the dissertation “*Modern Electronic Music Systems in the Preparation of Students of Pop and Jazz Music*” is undoubtedly contributing due to its relevance, in direct connection with the digitalization of musical art and the peculiarities of our time. The depth of the research is determined by the routine accumulated during the long-term teaching and artistic work of Zhan Pehlivanov. On the one hand, the history and styles of pop and jazz music, and on the other, the application of modern electronic music systems, are traced.

In group of indicators C, item 4, the following performances are included, in which the candidate participated in the capacity of artistic director, arranger, and producer:

1. Concert-performance “*10 years of INTRO & ELIKA*”, 17.09.2012, 8:30 PM – Ancient Theater – Plovdiv.

2. Concert-performance “*There is Such Country*” – Plovdiv, Complex-Hall SILA on 18.12.2019, 7:30 PM. With the participation of: Intro Quartet, Elika Representative Dance Ensemble, with the special participation of Tsvetana Maneva, Boyko Krastanov, Ivaylo Gyurov, and others.

3. Concert with the Intro Quartet on the occasion of the National Holiday of the Republic of Bulgaria – March 3rd and the 142nd anniversary of the Liberation. University of Warsaw, Kolumnowa Hall – organized by the Embassy of the Republic of Bulgaria in Poland and the Bulgarian Cultural Institute, 03.03.2020, 7 PM.

4. Concert with the Intro Quartet, related to the Presidency of the Republic of Bulgaria in the Council of the European Union, Paris, Large Ballroom – 30.01.2018, 7 PM, and in front of the Bulgarian community in Paris, Large Ballroom – 31.01.2018, 7 PM.

Contributions of methodological and applied nature are:

For group of indicators D, item 9 – Articles and reports published in specialized publications in the field of arts, the following are listed:

1. *“Creation of Interest in Classical Music Through the Perception of Musical Works Arranged with the Musical Means of Expression of Popular Music”* – Science, Education, and Innovation in the Field of Art Second International Scientific Conference, 24.10.2019 – 26.10.2019, Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, ISBN: 978-954-2963-56-1, pp. 88-93.

The topic of teaching methodology to provoke students’ interest in classical music is discussed. The author defends the thesis of presenting classical musical works, arranged with the musical and expressive means of pop music, preferred by young people. A synthesis between the genres, used in the artistic activity of the candidate.

2. *“Multimedia and Contemporary Music Pedagogy”* – The Teacher of the Future – Ninth International Scientific Conference, 17.06.2016 – 19.06.2016, Durres, Republic of Albania, ISBN: 1857-92, pp. 389 – 392.

Technological progress inevitably has an impact on science and education, which requires the renewal of teaching methods. The development of electronics and the new sound recording and reproducing equipment create new opportunities for communication. The candidate defends the idea that the use of innovations in electronic technology and new computer technologies should be an integral part of the learning process, citing as an example in this regard, multimedia, uniting the various audio and visual sources. He also emphasizes the advantages and opportunities offered by modern multimedia in music education and its effectiveness in the learning process.

3. *“Music Software for Sound Recording and Processing – A New Tool That Complements and Improves the Skills of the Modern Music Teacher In High School”*, Yearbook of the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – 2012, ISSN: 1313-6526, pp. 85 – 89.

The topic of the importance and place of music computer technologies in pedagogical practice is considered. The thesis for their future more active and extended application in the creative work of the music pedagogue is defended. The specific contributions in the learning process upon the adaptation of music computer technologies for the needs of music education and music and theoretical disciplines are clarified.

In item 12 – Realized short author’s product in the field of arts, the candidate indicates the release of an author’s CD with the participation of two representative groups of Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv: the Intro Quartet led by Chief Assistant Dr. Zhan Pehlivanov and Lamico Band led by Prof. Dr. Lyudmil Petkov. Project co-authored with Prof. Dr. Lyudmil Petkov.

Group of Indicators E, item 17, contains 8 citations, and item 19 includes: *“Pop, Jazz and Rock Music in the Era of Digital Sound Effects and Digital and Audio Working Systems”* – a review by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tsvetanka Kolovska in Art Spectrum Magazine – Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv, Issue 54, ISSN: 1314-0000, p. 33, for the book *“History, Theory and Styles in Pop, Rock and Jazz Music. Digital Sound Technologies. Digital Audio Workstations”* by Zhan Pehlivanov.

For group of indicators F, item 22, the candidate in his capacity as coordinator presents a project with the topic – *“Children’s Song Festival”*, an edition that includes a

concert and a national academic competition for writing children's and school songs, and in item 24, as head of projects, the candidate includes the following:

1. *“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 (Project No 02/2010 dated 03.05.2010).

2. *“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 (Project No 08/2012 dated 08.03.2012).

3. *“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 (Project No 24/2013 dated 01.03.2013).

In group of indicators F, item 28, the candidate has noted the management of the *“Online Atelier – Workshop”* in the field of arts (05.05.2020 – 10.05.2020) – a music workshop, realized as a practical part of the classes in Music Software and Synthesizer – disciplines studied in the third year of Pedagogy of Music Teaching and Performing Arts (Pop And Jazz) at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv.

It is obvious that Zhan Pehlivanov works diligently and purposefully for the development and improvement of his competencies and achieves enviable results in pedagogical, artistic, and scientific activities. The developed ideas and the practical application of the modern electronic music systems also have a positive influence in his work.

Having in mind the above, I would like to note the high achievements and the contribution character of the overall active and rich pedagogical, artistic, and research activity of Chief Assistant Dr. Zhan Pehlivanov. The theoretical developments of the candidate have practical applicability and are oriented to the educational work. The achieved results fully comply with the specific requirements of the specialty *“History of Pop and Jazz Music”* at the Music Pedagogy and Conducting Department, Faculty of Music Pedagogy, adopted in connection with the Regulations of Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv for application of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

After getting acquainted with the materials presented in the competition and the analysis of their significance, as well as scientific and applied contributions, I find it reasonable to give my positive assessment to the esteemed Scientific Jury in support of the candidacy of Chief Assistant Dr. Zhan Stefanov Pehlivanov 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”*, scientific specialty *“History of Pop and Jazz Music”*.

14.07.2021

Reviewer:
(Prof. Dr. Borislav Yasenov)