

PEER REVIEW

by **Prof. Dr. Evgeniya Simeonova**

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regarding

competition for occupation of the academic position of “*Professor*” in specialty “Piano (Piano Accompaniment and Piano)” at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv, announced in State Gazette, Issue 44 dated 19.05.2023 /Professional field 8.3. “Music and Dance Arts”/

with a single candidate **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zornitsa Dimitrova Petrova**

1. General presentation of the application and the candidate

/brief biographical data, pedagogical experience, scientific research, and creative performances of the candidate/

Born in the family of musicians in Plovdiv, the presence of several great creative personalities, who trace her professional training, musical formation, and excellent academic training with upward development, makes a strong impression in the biography of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zornitsa Petrova, namely the notable educators Prof. Georgi Petrov /under the mentorship of whom she graduated from Dobrin Petkov National School of Music and Dance Art with a gold medal/, Prof. Lili Atanasova, and Prof. Vladimir Avramov at Prof. Pancho Vladigerov National Music Academy in Sofia, as well as the composer Simeon Pironkov. I think that invention, intelligence, energy, erudition, scope, and depth of inquiry underlie all her conceptual creative designs. With a purposeful organization of her entire activity as a solo and partner pianist, as well as a chamber performer, she occupies her rightful place in the country’s concert life.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zornitsa Petrova offers a wide-spectrum artistic, creative, scientific, and pedagogical activity covering the period from 2013 until 2023 (after acquiring the academic position of Associate Professor).

Her creative interests have a wide stylistic range – from Baroque music to the latest works of Bulgarian composers. She has implemented interesting projects with national resonance as a mature interpreter. She has been a participant in a number of prestigious music forums, as a soloist and chamber artist and has performed a series of concert cycles. Since 2014 date a series of recitals with famous fellow singers under the title “Masterpieces of the Small Vocal Genre,” in which she presented the most valuable in the field of song creation.

For 32 years now, Zornitsa Petrova has been a piano teacher in the Piano and Accordion Department at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, and since 2000, she has been a teacher of piano accompaniment with active pedagogical activity. She is also the author of significant artistic and creative projects that brought additional prestige to the Academy in Plovdiv and enjoyed the participation of young musicians from Bulgaria and abroad: "Piano Art at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts" (2014), Sixth (2019), Seventh (2020) and Eighth (2021) National Academic Competitions "Johann Sebastian Bach and His Contemporaries," and the First International Competition "Johann Sebastian Bach Soli Deo Gloria" (2022).

In 2022 Assoc. Prof. Petrova restored the activity of the academic club "Contemporary Piano Culture" and managed the organization of its events.

She is currently the Head of the Piano and Accordion Department and teaches the disciplines: "Piano," "Piano Accompaniment," "Chamber Music," "Methodology and Pedagogical Practice of Piano Accompaniment." Assoc. Prof. Petrova is also a member of the musical editorial board of the online magazine "Gallery of Words – Musical Logos."

The candidate has submitted all the necessary documents and materials that the procedure requires according to the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

2. Brief presentation of the materials received for review according to the various indicators from the scientometric table in the relevant higher education field

According to the submitted report on scientometric indicators with activities that I assess as valuable professional manifestations, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zornitsa Petrova meets the national minimum requirements for the academic position of "Professor." The numerical indicators in some groups are significantly more than the required number of points, as follows by sections:

GROUP A, item 1: *Dissertation work for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" – "The Songwriting of Franz Liszt," Diploma No 0002, issued on 11.11.2011, with professional field: 8.3. "Music and Dance Arts."*

GROUP C, INDICATOR 4: *Realized author's product in the field of arts.* Assoc. Prof. Dr. Z. Petrova presents: Author's concert Retrospection "Sans Résonance" on 26.11.2022, Plovdiv (Hall of the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts) and 12.12.2022, Sofia – New Bulgarian University (UniArt Gallery), where she performed her own solo and ensemble compositions.

INDICATOR 5: *Leading (independent) creative performance in the field of arts.* Four serious and stylish performances with multifaceted creative activity are specified as habilitation work, which exceed the mandatory points of the minimum requirements in field 8. "Arts."

1. Piano recital "The Big World of Mikrokosmos" (on the occasion of the 140th anniversary of the birth of Béla Bartók), 15.06.2021, Ethnographic Museum Hall, Plovdiv;
2. Piano recital "Fr. Chopin – Nocturnes," 11.08.2021, Art Gallery in the City of Kazanlak;
3. Chamber concert with Jamie Damon (tenor, USA) and Zornitsa Petrova at the piano – "Troubadours of Love," 05.07.2019, Concert Hall of Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts;
4. Opera Con Pianoforte – Christoph Willibald Gluck, "Orpheus" Opera – concert performance of the Paris version from 1774. For the first time in Bulgaria. Soloists: Tsvetelina Maldzhanska, Andrey Naydenov, Hristina Vencheva. Piano accompaniment and interpretation: Zornitsa Petrova, 12.05.2015, Hall of Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts.

During this period, the activity of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zornitsa Petrova to perform concert performances, structured with good musical taste and with works of various styles, including a premiere, should be mentioned.

GROUP D, INDICATORS 7, 11, 13 and 14 present Assoc. Prof. Petrova in exceptional upsurge and creative activity, as a writing and playing artist.

- **Indicator 7.** "The Songwriting of Franz Liszt" – a book based on a protected dissertation work, Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, Plovdiv, 2019, ISBN: 979-0-707681-63-3, 130 pages.
- **Indicator 11.** "Anatoly Konstantinovich Lyadov and his Pianistic Work. Significance in the Traditions of Russian Piano Culture," Yearbook of the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, 2018, ISSN 1313 – 6526, pp. 59-79.
- **Indicator 13:** Leading (or independent) creative expression in the field of arts, which is not a major habilitation work:
 1. Chamber concert: Paul Hindemith – Four Sonatas for Violin and Piano (Integral), performance of the 1st and 3rd sonatas (together with the violinist Nedyalcho Todorov), 13.12.2013, Prof. Vladimir Avramov Hall; 18.12.2013 – Filip Kutev Hall – Union of Bulgarian Composers.
 2. CD "Amédée-Ernest Chausson – Poem, Opera 25 for Violin and Piano" with Momchil Enchev (violin) and Zornitsa Petrova (piano), Orange Factory Edition, 2014, No 56771/29.09.2014
- **Indicator 14:** Supporting creative performance or participation in a collective product in the field of arts, the candidate presents 7 creative performances in the field of chamber music and chamber and vocal creativity, performed with prominent singers and instrumentalists.

GROUP E: Citations or reviews in scientific publications referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes.

Among the most quoted author's texts of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zornitsa Petrova are:

INDICATOR 16: 1 citation from "Anatoly Konstantinovich Lyadov and his Pianistic Work. Significance in the Traditions of Russian Piano Culture."

INDICATOR 17: Citations in monographs and peer-reviewed collective volumes – 2 citations from “The Songs of Franz Liszt. For the Standards of the Accompanying Vision to a Non-Standard Vocal Lyric.” “Gallery of Words – Musical Logos,” e-magazine, 2016, ISSN: 2534 – 89731 and from “The Songwriting of Franz Liszt,” Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv, 2019, ISSN: 979-0-707681-63-3.

INDICATOR 18: Citations or reviews in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals – 2 citations of two authors from “The Evolution of Art Song to Romanticism.” Musical Horizons, 2008, ISSN:1310-0076, Issue 4.

INDICATOR 19: Reviews of realized author’s products or creative performances in specialized editions in the field of arts, 6 reviewed performances of Assoc. Prof. Petrova by respected authors are indicated.

GROUP F also impresses with great activity. As part of Z. Petrova’s teaching activity, I would like to highlight the master class and workshop, in which she has participated in various forums in Bulgaria /**Indicator 22, 28, 29**/, as especially impressive is **Indicator 24** with prestigious projects /5 academic competitions in the period from 2014 until 2022/, carried out in the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts in Plovdiv with international participation.

3. Contributions of the habilitation work/leading creative performances

In her candidacy for “Professor” as a *leading (or independent) creative expression in the field of arts*, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Z. Petrova presents 4 stylish concerts in a wide range – from the great sound world of Bartók’s “Mikrokosmos” through the emblematic Chopin Nocturnes to the song world of Schubert, Massenet, Williams, P. Hadzhiev, and the Parisian version of the “Orpheus” Opera by Gluck, in its original decision to be performed with a piano – a premiere for Bulgaria. From the accompanying live recordings of her material, one can hear her high level of performance both as a soloist and as an accompanying pianist, with her special search for a varied and textured piano sound. Z. Petrova’s author’s concert adds another respectable touch to her creative essence – to write her own music for piano, vocal and other instruments, as well as to arrange for piano songs by Schubert.

4. Contributions of the other habilitation materials and citations

The candidate presents extensive evidence of her activities outside of her habilitation work. I have carefully read all the scientific articles of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zornitsa Petrova, which I appreciate for their merit. They are of a contributing nature and examine little-known issues by Bulgarian authors. They are written in good academic language, with in-depth knowledge and are an interesting reading for professionals. She has established herself as an author who has her own presence in the field of piano issues of lesser-known works from Russian and European classics.

I would also like to emphasize the fact that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zornitsa Petrova is a sought-after author of numerous opinions and reviews on doctorates and habilitations under Professional field 8.3 for various higher schools in the country.

5. Critical notes and recommendations – I do not have any.

6. Personal impressions

I know Zornitsa Petrova from her excellent studies at the Bulgarian State Conservatory, now Prof. Pancho Vladigerov National Music Academy in Sofia. We have been communicating professionally for many years. I believe that there is a gratifying upward creative development that has built her as a brilliant professional. She is a searching, thorough, and extremely responsible person, both in creative and executive terms, as well as in the pedagogical sphere and teaching and methodical activity, where she achieves numerous successes with students.

7. Conclusion

The overall activity of the candidate, her scientific, applied, significant teaching and artistic-creative achievements and contributions, presented in the competition documentation, show that the colleague Zornitsa Petrova is a worthy candidate in the announced competition for the position of “Professor.” This gives me grounds for a high assessment of **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zornitsa Dimitrova Petrova** and convinces me to propose to the scientific jury that they support her candidacy for occupation of the academic position of **“Professor” in specialty “Piano (Piano Accompaniment and Piano)”** under Professional field 8.3. “Music and Dance Arts” at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv.

21.08.2023

Prof. Dr. Evgeniya Simeonova