

**REVIEW**

**By**

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for the dissertation work for awarding  
educational and scientific degree Doctor  
(professional field 8.3 Music and dance art)

**of Aliya Sahl Hanse**

on the topic:

**THEORETICAL AND ANALYTICAL ASPECTS OF THE UNITY BETWEEN  
POETRY AND MUSIC IN THE SOLO ART SONGS OF IVAN SPASOV**

**Academic supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Plamen Parvanov, PhD**

Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts

„Prof. Asen Diamandiev” – Plovdiv

Faculty of Music Pedagogy

Department of Classical, Pop and Jazz Performing Arts

2021

The dissertation work submitted to me for review is consists of 242 pages with a text volume about 1/3 larger than the required according to BDS.

The dissertation is structured in: introduction, four chapters, conclusion, contributions bibliography, scientific publications related to the work (up to page 163), appendices: (interviews with Vasilka Spasova, Roxana Bogdanova and Zornitsa Petrova; as well as scores of 6 cycle of songs for soprano and piano/ chamber orchestra by Prof. Ivan Spasov).

The chapters of the work are the following:

1. Review of the literature (both of the epoch and the music in it - around the world and in Bulgaria, and specifically of Ivan Spasov, and in particular of his vocal and vocal-instrumental works - choral and solo).

2. Portrait of the artist (biography, artistic views, periodization of his works).

3. Analyzes of the poetic material in the solo art songs of Ivan Spasov.

4. Musical analysis of the songs for voice and accompaniment in the works of Ivan Spasov (overview of his solo art songs, structural analyzes, evolutionary review).

The doctoral candidate and her supervisor have opted to provide conclusions for each chapter, which were subsequently summarized.

The quoted literature consists of 106 titles of printed books, dissertation, studies, articles (in specialized and general editions), scientific reports, annotation to CD, etc. (of which 105 in Bulgarian and 1 in English), as well as 7 internet-based (of which only 1 in English - demo version of a set of 2 CDs of Naxos *Discover Music of the Twentieth Century* with 30-second excerpts from the recordings and with 400-words excerpt from the included essay of 25,000 words). I would recommend for future the candidate to use of a larger amount of information from different languages.

I read carefully the whole dissertation and the author's abstract, which in its 47 pages sufficiently and fully presents the dissertation.

The highlights in the biography of the doctoral candidate Aliya Hanse:

She was born in 1993 in Razgrad. In 2012 she graduates National School of Art „Panayot Pipkov” in Pleven with a professional qualification musician - vocalist. In the same year she starts studying conducting at Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts in Plovdiv, which she graduates in 2017 with Master degree. At the same time she is a post-graduate student and later an actress in children's and youth theater performances at the theater studio A'part. In 2016 she starts conducting with the Academic Opera Theater of AMDFA. In the same year, at the XVI Academic Competition “Johann Sebastian Bach and his Contemporary” she wins First Prize in the category "Chamber Ensembles" (conducting the Vocal Ensemble Pro belcanto), and Second Prize as a pianist ("compulsory instrument"). She has also conducted the Symphony Orchestra of the National School of Music and Dance in Plovdiv, in the realization of the productions of the one-act operas *Bastien and Bastienne* by W A Mozart (2017) and *The Gambler (Il Giocatore)* by Luigi Cherubini, staged also in Sofia), *Ba-ta-clan* by Jacques Offenbach (2020).

In the academic year 2020/21 Aliya Hanse is appointed as an assistant lecturer at the AMDFA at the Department of Classical, Pop and Jazz Performing Arts.

Currently, she is conductor of the Evmolpeya Girls Choir and the Boys' Choir „Stefka Blagoeva“ in Plovdiv, and Male Chamber Choir „Panagyurtsi“ in Panagyurishte.

Since her student years until now, Aliya Hanse has participated as a musicologist with reports in the Spring Scientific Readings, International Scientific Conference at AMDFA “Prof Asen Diamandiev” and others, she has also published articles in the academic cultural-information periodical Art Spectrum.

The topic of the dissertation is relevant. Not only because of the research interest in contemporary and Bulgarian music, but also because of the especially iconic for AMDFA Plovdiv (and not only) role of the composer and lecturer at the Academy, also its rector, Prof Ivan Spasov. Author of a large and diverse work - the candidate has chosen as the focus of her research his solo art songs, opuses with a central place in his work. In particular, the question of the unity in them between poetry and the music inspired by it, examined and presented in theoretical and analytical manner (compositional means and techniques, song drama, role and meaning of the timbre, unity of vocal and piano parts, text-vocal synthesis, stylistic characteristics - these are the main directions of insight and the resulting conclusions to the dissertation. The fact is that “This work is the first attempt at a larger-scale research of the composer's solo art songs” (dissertation, p. 4). It is also true that “The work provides a perspective for further performing, artistic and theoretical work in various aspects” (ibid., p. 160).

The candidate Aliya Hanse convincingly describes her motivation for choosing the topic of her dissertation, made an impressive review of the life and professional biography of Ivan Spasov (against the background of global and European processes, which she also knows) and her research. She has precisely formulated the object, the subject, the goals, the tasks and the methods of her research. The selected research methods correspond to the goals and objectives of the dissertation. The abstract is available on the website of AMDFA (along with this and other reviews and opinions on the dissertation), and all this can be seen there.

The candidate knows sufficiently well the state of the problem, in accordance with the literature used, but also of her personal knowledge and experience as a musician performer (vocalist and conductor), historian and theorist, and lecturer.

The quotations and their authors are presented correctly.

Congratulations to the supervisor Assoc. Prof. Plamen Parvanov.

I generally accept the contributions of her work as indicated by the candidate.

The material used in the study is reliable. The dissertation work and the author's contributions prove that she has deep historical-theoretical knowledge in the specialty and a high ability for independence in conducting research. The personal participation of the candidate is indisputable. The publications on the dissertation have made it public.

I would be happy if, either on AMDFA's website or elsewhere, there is a collection of as many as possible audio and video recordings of Spasov's works and their digitized scores, and access to them is provided in one way or another - for storage and distribution of his work. In particular, I would have been happy if with this dissertation we were provided with recordings of the songs commented on in it - I don't know if the candidate had them.

Based on the above, I am IN FAVOUR of awarding the educational and scientific degree DOCTOR to Aliya Sahl Hanse on the basis this review of her dissertation on topic "Theoretical and analytical aspects of the unity between poetry and music in the solo art songs of Ivan Spasov".

Prof Yavor Konov, PhD

Department of Music, NBU

Sofia, 29 May 2021