

REVIEW

by

by Prof Daniela Petrova Dikova, PhD

National Academy of Music "Prof. Pancho Vladigerov"

of the dissertation work of

Dimitar Yuliyarov Nakov

for acquisition of educational and scientific degree Doctor

in Professional Field 8.3 Music And Dance Art

on the topic:

THE PIANO IN THE SOLO PIANO AND CHAMBER-ENSEMBLE WORKS OF IVAN SPASOV

(THEORETICAL AND INTERPRETATIVE ASPECTS OF THE KEYBOARD ARTICULATION)

Scientific adviser: Prof Roxana Bogdanova

The dissertation of Dimitar Nakov is developed in accordance with the normative requirements for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor". It consists of 168 pages and contains: introduction, three chapters, conclusion, contributions, bibliography and two appendices (Appendix 1 - interviews and Appendix 2 - programs of 6 concerts with works by Ivan Spasov, an integral part of the artistic form of doctoral studies). The cited literature includes 95 titles (17 in Cyrillic and 78 in Latin). The author's abstract is 57 pages. The dissertation was discussed and referred for public defense at a meeting of the Department of Piano and Accordion at the Faculty of Music Pedagogy at AMDFA "Prof Asen Diamandiev", Plovdiv, held on 29.10.2021.

Dimitar Nakov's biography outlines a creative person with diverse interests in his musical development. Having graduated his secondary musical education and later received Bachelor's and Master's degree in his hometown of Plovdiv, D. Nakov is not only a solidly prepared instrumental pianist (knowing well the qualities of his piano teachers), but he also has basic knowledge of composition and music pedagogy. D. Nakov's choice of his specializations abroad (composition - Bucharest and piano - Vienna) is interesting – a clear sign of his desire and ability to combine and develop in both areas. **I find interesting his successful concert work, both as a solo performer and as a partner pianist (chamber performer and accompanist). The activity of the young pianist in the field of contemporary music performance (Bulgarian and foreign) is commendable. His**

biography speaks of a person with excellent upbringing, high intellectual abilities and indicates a disciplined ability to work.

My comments on the dissertation will be brief:

In the **introduction** D. Nakov clearly describes the **subject** of research: “Piano articulation in the solo piano and chamber ensemble of Ivan Spasov, and the specific ways of writing it and the **object**: his research is on the works performed in six concerts, including all solo piano and most of the chamber piano works, as well as some of the songs for soprano and piano by Ivan Spasov.”

The **objectives of the study** are clearly defined:

- emphasizing the role and importance of keyboard articulation in the artistic interpretation of the works of Ivan Spasov.
- theoretical clarification and synthesized generalization of the articulation in the musical text, based on the established world scientific experience.
- formation of a personal position in the interpretation of the means of articulation in I. Spasov, on the basis of the performing experience acquired during the concerts.
- identification of important aspects in the technical part of the performance of the piano articulation.

The **tasks** required to achieve the objectives of the research are defined:

- formal structural analysis of all performed works of I. Spasov and consideration of some features of the musical elements.
- theoretical argumentation of the main types of articulation - legato, non-legato, staccato.
- analysis of the different types of articulation from an interpretive and technical point of view. Indications spelling in the notation of I. Spasov. Visualization of the analyzes with attached musical examples.
- - the interrelation of articulation with other musical elements.
- caesuras as an articulatory tool and a way to structure musical thought.

Empirical and analytical methods were used to reach the conclusions of the study.

I appreciate the decision of D. Nakov "for specificity and maximum focus on the research topic. As a result, the dissertation does not contain biographical information about the composer, nor notes on the reflection of his life in his music".

First chapter – “Formal-structural analysis of works for piano and chamber ensembles by Ivan Spasov. Some features of the means of expression” contains brief information about the history of the works and analysis of their musical and structural elements, means of expression and compositional techniques. It describes the essence and the main characteristics of the researched works in four genre directions, arranged in chronological order: works for

solo piano, concerto for piano and orchestra, chamber music and songs for soprano and piano. The musical analyses help to understand the conclusions made in the next two chapters regarding articulation techniques developed entirely from the point of view of a performer. **The text of this chapter benefits from the fact of a personally planned, prepared and experienced complete rehearsal process with a concert presentation to the public, with an analysis of joint performance sensations and good theoretical music and composition training.**

The second chapter, *Keyboard articulation in the music of Ivan Spasov and its basic forms*, has contributions. It clarifies in detail the concept of articulation, as the analyses are based on the knowledge of various sources on the subject from the 18th century to the present day. **D. Nakov's young age is not an obstacle and he skillfully and comprehensively describes the technical ways of its instrumental realization in the form of a key touch.** He traces the characteristic features and main problems of the piano articulation in the works of I. Spasov. The author also offers interpretative solutions, and they are illustrated with examples of musical texts for the different aspects of the keyboard articulation.

The third chapter, *Relationships of piano articulation with other musical elements*, outlines the theoretical and practical interaction of articulation with accentuation, caesura, dynamics. It also studies some specific interpretive problems related to the implementation of clusters.

The **conclusion** describes in detail the work done on the broad and complex topic of piano articulation and the amount of the analyzed work, and outlines the unexplored important aspects of performance in the works of Ivan Spasov – issues related to building the temporal organization of the musical material, ways of interpreting and understanding the notation characteristic of the composer, with the attitude of the performer to the rhythm, to the pedaling, the dynamics and the morphology.

I agree with the indisputable contributions of the dissertation work, well presented in two separate groups: theoretical (6) and executive (4). I would like to add my respect for the hard work of the young pianist D. Nakov, his admirable stage behavior. I admire his dedication to contemporary Bulgarian music and his purposeful interest in the valuable piano music of the icon Ivan Spasov! In his work I find a convincing claim that he has formed musical qualities (theoretical and performing) and is constantly developing what he has achieved with the support of his renowned teachers. The language in which the study is written speaks of a

highly erudite person, fully prepared to share his knowledge and energy with younger musicians. The interviews in Appendix 1 are with prominent performers of I. Spasov's music and complement his creative image. In my opinion, parts of the dissertation are interesting to be used as a description and preface to the musical editions of the studied works. I recommend that the thesis be published after editing. I am convinced that people like Dimitar Nakov are rare in our time and my advice is to use his talent in the field of higher music education.

I confirm that the dissertation is relevant, original and contributing and meets the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

I propose to the esteemed scientific jury to award to Dimitar Yuliyarov Nakov, for his dissertation titled *The piano in the solo piano and chamber-ensemble works of Ivan Spasov (theoretical and interpretative aspects of the keyboard articulation)*, educational and scientific degree **Doctor** in professional field 8.3 Music and Dance Art.

6 Feb 2022

Prof Daniela DIKOVA, PhD