

## **OPINION**

by

Assoc. Prof Ermila Schweitzer

NMA Prof Pancho Vladigerov

on the dissertation of

**WANG SHUAITONG**

– full-time doctoral student

in professional field 8.3. Music and Dance Art

doctoral program Music Studies and Music Art

at the Department of Classical and Pop and Jazz Performing Arts

at AMDFA, “Prof Asen Diamandiev” - Plovdiv,

with academic supervisor: Prof Toni Shekerjjeva – Novak

on topic

### **A STUDY OF THE DYNAMICS OF THE VOCAL TECHNIQUES IN THE CHINESE ACADEMIC FOLK SINGING**

for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor"

On the grounds of a decision of the Faculty Council at the Faculty of Music Pedagogy dated 24.03.2023, to open a procedure for the defense of the dissertation work of Wang Shuaitong, I was provided with the following materials: CV of the candidate, dissertation work, abstract, a reference to the contribution nature of the dissertation, list of publications on the topic, Diploma for Master's degree.

Brief biographical data for the candidate:

Wang Shuaitong is a tenor singer born in 1989 in Henan, China. He received a Master's degree from the Fujian University in 2015. In the period 2019-2023, he is a full-time doctoral student at the Academy of Music and Dance and Fine Arts “Prof. Asen Diamandiev”, Plovdiv. As a tenor, he has participated and received awards in a number of competitions: Second prize in the vocal category of the Moscow Music Competition, August 2020, Russia; Second prize at Arts Festivals, "Borovets 2020", IV International Competition for Chamber Music and Individual Artists, Bulgaria, October 2020; Second prize at the 23rd International Music Competition "Pietro Argento", Italy, November 2020; First prize at "Danubia talents International Music Competition 2020", Hungary, December 2020; First prize at "King's Peak International Music Competition", USA December 2020; Third prize at "International Instrumental and Vocal Performance Contest Oradea 2021", Romania, April 2021; First prize at "Orpheus 2021", Bulgaria, July 2021.

The presented work has relevant subject matter, dedicated to the history of the emergence of the academic folk singing, a comparative analysis of different schools and vocal techniques, as well as studies of theoretical aspects of the folk vocal music art.

The research methods include a survey of literary sources - historical documents related to the ancient Chinese vocal music and existing documents illustrating the development of the academic vocal music. Using an empirical method, through interviews and surveys with Chinese folk singers and vocal educators, the author has collected information about the preparation and organization of the learning process, teaching the concepts, methods, content and the main results of folk vocal music education, as well as their opinions and suggestions for the development of the academic folk vocal music. Through comparative research the author studies audio materials of folk vocal music from different historical periods and analyzes the development and changes in traditional folk singing, influenced by the academic singing until the adoption and the integration of the Western singing. He also makes a comparison between the passing of heritage and the development of folk vocal music in other countries, and presents the similarities and differences in the development concepts and teaching methods in China and Bulgaria.

The dissertation of Wang Shuaitong is a serious analytical study that offers a systematic review of the development of the academic folk singing in China, influenced by the introduction of *bel canto* into China's musical culture in the last hundred years. It is especially valuable that the author himself is a singer with practical experience as a performer and teacher. He studies and analyzes the peculiarities of training, performers and singing styles for each of the different periods of development of the Chinese academic folk singing. The concepts, methods and results of the teaching experience of prominent music educators, obtained through interviews, are summarized and used as basis for recommendations for improving current practices. The author also examines the concepts in the development of the folk singing in the Western countries, especially in Bulgaria, and carries out comparative studies of academic teaching methods, educational content and ways of passing the tradition and development of the traditional folk singing, which can serve as reference materials, applicable to the development of the Chinese folk vocal music.

The contributions of the work are formulated very clearly by the author in two directions – theoretical and practical. The theoretical part includes an in-depth study of the development and the changes of the Chinese academic vocal music in the period from the New Culture Movement to the present day. The practical – the dissertation can serve as a reference in the development of the Chinese academic folk vocal music, especially in building the education on traditional vocal music of different ethnic groups and regions, using the good practices of European music education.

The publications on the topic of the dissertation work are sufficient and testify to the serious research interest and professional approach of the doctoral candidate. The submitted abstract corresponds to the dissertation.

The dissertation of Wang Shuaitong is a historical-comparative scientific study, with an in-depth approach to the discussed issues and offers detailed analyzes and logically formulated conclusions. I congratulate the author and his scientific supervisor - Prof Toni Shekerdzhieva-Novak, and I propose to the respected Scientific Jury to award Wang Shuitong the scientific educational degree "Doctor" in professional direction 8.3. "Music and dance art".

Sofia, 09.04.2023

Assoc. Prof Ermila Schweitzer, PhD