

REVIEW

**by Borislav Aleksandrov Yassenov, PhD -
Professor in the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts 'Prof. Asen Diamandiev',
Plovdiv**

regarding the materials submitted for participation in the competition
for occupation of the academic position 'Professor'
in Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski'
in Area of Higher Education 8. Arts,
Professional Field 8.3. Music and Dance Arts,
Scientific Speciality Musicology and Music Art - Jazz Harmony

By Order No. P33-4300/10.08.2021 of the Chancellor of Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski' I was appointed as a member of the Scientific Jury of the competition for occupation of the academic position 'Professor' in Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski' in Area of Higher Education 8. Arts, Professional Field 8.3. Music and Dance Arts, Scientific Speciality Musicology and Music Art - Jazz Harmony, announced for the needs of the Department of Music within the Faculty of Pedagogy.

One candidate has submitted documents for participation in the competition, announced in State Gazette No. 40/14.05.2021 and on the web page of Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski' for the needs of the Department of Music within the Faculty of Pedagogy, namely Assoc. Prof. Veselin Ivanov Koychev, PhD from Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski'.

The set of materials, in paper and electronic format, submitted by the candidate comply with all the requirements of the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act, the Rules for its implementation and the Rules for Development of the Academic Staff of Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski' and include the following documents:

- Application form to the Chancellor for admission to the competition;
- CV in European format;
- Diploma of Higher Education with acquired academic degree 'Master' - original with supplement;
- Diploma for educational and scientific degree 'Doctor';
- Diploma (Certificate) for academic position 'Associate Professor' (copy);
- Certificate from NACID for holding the academic position 'Associate Professor' (original);
- Reference for compliance with the minimum national requirements;
- Declaration of originality and authenticity of enclosed documents;
- Document (certificate) for work experience;
- Annotations of the materials under Article 76 of the Rules for the Development of the Academic Staff of Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski' including a self-assessment of contributions; concert programs (in Bulgarian and in English language);

The set of documents includes 4 copies in paper format from item 1 to item 14 and documents on digital data storage device - 8 CDs.

Subject to the review is the overall many-sided and related to the announced competition activity of Assoc. Prof. Koychev, expressed in high achievements in pedagogical, artistic, compositional and research activities, accompanied by evidence presented in the relevant appendices.

Veselin Koychev graduated from the High School of Music 'Hristina Morfova', Stara Zagora (now National High School of Music and Stage Design) in 1976, and in 1986 Higher Institute of Music and Pedagogy (now Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts 'Prof. Asen Diamandiev'), Plovdiv, with qualification 'Music and Singing Teacher in High School' - academic degree 'Master'. In the period 2012-2016 he is a doctoral student at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts 'Prof. Asen Diamandiev', Plovdiv. He successfully defended a dissertation on the topic: 'Interaction between Jazz and Folklore', for which he was awarded the educational and scientific degree 'Doctor of Musicology and Music Art'.

The work experience of the candidate is related to artistic, creative and pedagogical activity. From 1988 to 1989 he was an artist-member of an orchestra at the Concert and Art Centre, Sofia. In the period 1990-1999 he was the leader of the jazz formation 'White, Green, Reds' within the Department of Culture in the Municipality of Plovdiv. In 2009 he started working as a lecturer at Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski', and currently he holds the academic position 'Associate Professor'. Since 2011 he has been on a second employment contract at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts 'Prof. Asen Diamandiev' - Plovdiv.

The educational and pedagogical activity of Assoc. Prof. Veselin Koychev, PhD is extremely active, rich and fruitful. The candidate teaches the academic disciplines - Jazz Harmony (the discipline of the announced competition), Arranging for Jazz and Pop Formations, Technologies and Software for Studio Recording; lectures and exercises in Music and Performing Arts, Technological Models of Guitar Teaching, Jazz Theory and exercises in Special Subject - Guitar, Introduction to Sound Directing, Scales and Chords in Pop Music, Work in a Recording Studio. In favour of the candidate is the fact that he teaches the discipline of the competition, as well as the fact that many of the above disciplines are closely related to that of the announced competition.

It is essential to prepare curricula for the above-described disciplines in the academic degree 'Bachelor', speciality Jazz and Pop Performing Arts, as well as for academic degree 'Master': speciality Pedagogy of Music Education in Kindergarten and High School - Studio Sound Recording Technologies, speciality Music Performing Art - Arrangement, speciality Vocal and Instrumental Ensembles Management - Arrangement for Vocal and Instrumental Ensembles, speciality Pedagogy of Music Education, Bachelor - Music and Internet; speciality Methodology of Teaching Music, Doctoral Degree: Theory of Musical Elements - full-time, part-time mode of study and self-study.

The candidate has high achievements in his teaching work, in support of which is presented the active artistic and creative activity of his students - Vladimir Voloshtuk, Petar Koychev and the doctoral student Vladimir Velichkov in the period 2017-2019, reviews are attached.

Assoc. Prof. Koychev is the scientific supervisor of doctoral students, who has successfully defended their dissertations - two of them in Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski' and one in the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts 'Prof. Asen Diamandiev', Plovdiv.

Contribution to his pedagogical work is the development of two teaching aids described in indicator F, item 27, namely: a collection of sheet music to the album 'Yo-ho' of 'Acoustic Trio 3000' by Veselin Koychev and Tsvetan Nedyalkov, BALKANOTA publishing house, 2011 and 'Guitar Impressions' - sheet music edition with pieces from the albums 'Music Springs' and 'Super Nova', composed by Veselin Koychev, 'MU Plovdiv', 2019. They will help the educational process, the aesthetic and artistic growth of students.

Koychev's activity in pedagogical work includes the successful management of master classes or workshop in the field of arts specified in indicator C, item 28 - four in number: workshop 'Fusion and Improvisation' within the festival 'Guitart Fest', Veliko Tarnovo (2017); master class 'Improvisation in Pop and Jazz Music' within the 'Danube Strings'

Guitar Festival, Silistra (2019); Veselin Koychev - Jes Psaila Guitar Workshop, PLOVDIV GUITART FEST, Plovdiv (2017); Jazz Guitar Workshop, Kapana, Club VOID (2017), as well as master classes held at Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts 'Prof. Asen Diamandiev' - Plovdiv, 2013 and 2014

From the above it is evident that Assoc. Prof. Koychev purposefully works and develops his competencies in pedagogical and methodological activities and achieves excellent results.

The topic of the dissertation 'Interaction between Jazz and Folklore', has an indisputable contribution due to its relevance, in direct connection with contemporary trends in music art. The depth of the research is determined by Koychev's affinity for jazz music and folklore, by the routine accumulated during his many years of artistic, creative and teaching work. Apart from research, this daring is inevitably connected with the performing practice, as well as with the compositional activity and the improvisation that completes the jazz piece.

The artistic and creative work of the candidate is impressive, with its activity - concert and compositional. A popular jazz guitarist, a pedagogue, a composer and an arranger, Veselin Koychev is a famous person with a contribution to jazz music. In search of a specific musical expression and style, he has reached interesting artistic solutions through a synthesis between the two genres (jazz and folklore). The above is inconceivable without a deep knowledge and mastery of jazz harmony, which is in support of Assoc. Prof. Koychev's application for the announced competition. A reference for his artistic and creative activity, as well as reviews are attached.

As a proof of a realized author's product in the field of arts, group of indicators C, item 4, seventeen appendices related to compositional activity are listed: two CDs 'Yo-Ho' of 'Acoustic Trio 3000' (2010) and 'Folklore and Jazz' - Mario Stanchev and Veselin Koychev with the Academic Folk Choir at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts with conductor Kostadin Buradzhiiev and Vasil Vasilev, released by Riva Sound (2014); music for theatrical productions in the period 2009-2019 - fifteen in number, for Drama and Puppet Theatre 'Dimitar Dimov' - Kardzhali, University Theater of Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski' - Plovdiv, Theatre 'Konstantin Velichkov' - Pazardzhik, Drama and Puppet Theatre 'Ivan Dimov' - Haskovo (6 productions), Drama and Puppet Theatre Yambol, Drama and Puppet Theatre Burgas, Drama and Puppet Theatre Pazardzhik, Drama and Puppet Theatre Silistra, Drama and Puppet Theatre Plovdiv.

For indicator C, item 5 - Leading (independent) creative performance in the field of arts, the candidate describes four performances: a concert of 'Veselin Koychev Ethno Project', presented at the International Festival 'Plovdiv Jazz Evenings' (2009), 'Veselin Koychev Trio', Fabric Bar, Plovdiv (2011), participation in concerts 'STRUMIN' at the University of Malta, at the invitation of Yamaha Music (2015) and a concert of 'Veselin Koychev Hot Strings' performed at Stara Zagora Jazz Forum (2016).

Indicator D:

- item 12 - As a realized short author's product in the field of arts is indicated the production (composition, arrangement and sound recording) of original music for the e-book of Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski', University Scientific Seminar 'Together we can do more' (01-10.09.2015).

- in item 13 - A leading (or independent) creative performance in the field of arts, which is not the main habilitation work, there are four events listed, of which three concerts - Teodosii Spasov and Veselin Koychev, Exposition Centre 'Flora', Burgas (2014), 'Veselin Koychev Quintet' within the 'July Jazz Thursdays' in The King's Stables, Plovdiv (2012) and Veselin Koychev - Riccardo Chiarion Quartet within the International Festival 'Plovdiv Jazz Evenings', Plovdiv Drama Theatre Hall (2012), as well as Multimedia Art Project of NBU with the participation of Teodosii Spasov, Veselin Koychev and students from different

departments of NBU, presentation of the poetry collection of Ventsislav Yordanov 'Silent Nights' in the club 'Studio 5' - Sofia (2015).

- in item 14 - Supporting creative performance or participation in a collective product in the field of arts, ten events are described: concert 'Improvisations' of the duo Veselin Koychev and Tsvetan Nedyalkov in the club 'Studio 5', Sofia (2012); Apollonia Arts Festival, PlaYIS Trio, Jes Psaila from Malta, Elvis Stanić (Croatia) and Veselin Koychev (Bulgaria), Apollonia Club, Sozopol (2018); Anniversary concert in honor of the 70th birthday of the 'Detska Kitka' Choir in the House of Culture 'Boris Hristov', Plovdiv (2017); concert 'Koychev-Nedyalkov Project' at the jazz festival 'Holidays in the valley of the Thracian Kings', Kazanlak (2016); French gypsy swing with Para Hot Jazz and Hot Club de Plovdiv with special guest V. Koychev, Ancient Theatre, Plovdiv (2019); concert of 'Acoustic Trio 3000' at the International Guitar Festival, Pleven (2016); concert of Veselin Koychev and Tsvetan Nedyalkov - duo in Veliko Tarnovo, Flamenco Project at the Guitart Fest (2017); KOKARLEK Concert, Veselin Koychev, Vladimir Karparov, Aleksandar Lekov, Chamber Stage, Studio 1 of Radio Plovdiv (2017); concert 'TWO GUITARS JAZZ LIVE' - Veselin and Petar Koychevi, 'Autumn Salon of Arts' in the concert studio of Radio Varna (2018); 'Jazz Panorama Blagoevgrad, 2011' - a concert of Marina Gospodinova, Veselin Koychev, Aleksandar Lekov, Dimitar Dimitrov, Viktor Benev (2011).

The above-described artistic and creative activity of the candidate, demonstrative of its contribution character and proving his high activity and achievements, professional orientation and innovation in art, closely related to jazz harmony, support Assoc. Prof. Koychev's application.

Vesselin Koychev participates in national projects of various nature. Seven are presented in indicator F item 22, namely: participation in the jury for the competition programs of the National Competition for Guitar and String Instruments 'Pop, Jazz, Ethno', Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts 'Prof. Asen Diamandiev', Plovdiv (2016), as well as at the International Guitar Festival, Pleven (2017), Academica Youth Guitar Festival, Plovdiv (2015), concert 'Bagpipe Fusion: Music From The Future', Sofia (2017), concert of 'Acoustic Trio 3000', SOFIA GUITAR FEST, Sofia Live Club (2017), project cycle Guitar Master Classes at Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts 'Prof. Asen Diamandiev' - Plovdiv, project 'Development of key competencies through the application of electronic educational resources' - № FP21-PF-007 to the Science Research Fund at Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski' (2021-2022).

The international projects are referred to in item 23 - PLOVDIV GUITART FEST, concert of the duo Jes Psaila and Veselin Koychev in Bee Bop Café (2017), concert of the Academic Folk Choir at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts with conductor Kostadin Buradzhiev, Mario Stanchev and Veselin Koychev, Musée des Confluences, Lion, France (2018).

As a project manager for indicator F, item 24, two events are indicated: National Competition for Guitar and String Instruments 'Pop, Jazz, Ethno' (2016) and a series of 'Guitar Master Classes at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts' (2013) and two projects held in the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts 'Prof. Asen Diamandiev' - Plovdiv.

The candidate has received wide recognition and has been awarded a number of prizes in competitions for creativity and performance by national professional forums and organizations (F 30). Award for original music for performances: IV International Theatre Festival 'PIERROT, 2005', Stara Zagora, as well as 2 awards at the National Puppet Theatre Festival 'Mihail Lakatnik', Yambol, 2009 and 2015 In 2006 at the VI National Competition 'Symphonic Piece in 7/8', Plovdiv, Veselin Koychev received three awards: Second Prize and Audience Award for the composition of the Symphonic Piece 'Bulgarian Jazz', as well as the

Orchestra Award. Fourth European Children's Song Festival 'Golden Sparks', Varna - First prize for children's song 'Song for the teeth', and in 2018 at the festival 'Plovdiv Jazz Evenings', 'Award for Overall Contribution to Jazz' of the jazz formation 'White, Green, Reds' with leader Veselin Koychev.

Veselin Koychev was awarded the prize for 'Best Instrumental Album of 201' for the album 'Yo-Ho' of 'Acoustic Trio 3000' at the competition 'The Indie Acoustic Project', USA, in section 'Instrumental Music' (F 31).

For indicator E, item 19 - Reviews for realized author's products or creative performances in specialized editions in the field of arts there are eleven listed: in the magazines 'Guitar' - quarterly edition for guitar (2), 'Art Spectrum' of the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts 'Prof. Asen Diamandiev', Plovdiv (3), 'Musical Horizons', Sofia (4), 'Nula 32' (1) and the specialized site 'Gallery of Words' /galerianadumite.bg/.

Indicators for minimum national requirements are covered, even to a greater extent than necessary.

Other activities practiced by Assoc. Prof. Koychev such as the organization of national and international music festivals, seminars and courses for the improvement of jazz musicians, concerts of prominent Bulgarian and leading foreign performers, management of the formations 'Джаз линия' /Jazz Line/, 'Compact Voices', 'Бенд 19' /Band 19/, etc., work with recording equipment, are also important.

From the described activities, supported by evidence, it is evident that the candidate for professor has enviable achievements in pedagogical, artistic, creative and research activities, proving his great contribution to the theoretical, practical and aesthetic development of young musicians and the enrichment of jazz music art, in particular the methodological practice for jazz guitar. Making connections between the different styles in music and other arts, as well as the synthesis between them are of great importance in Koychev's work. His artistic and creative contributions, which have received international recognition, are original, as well as the collections of artistic and educational nature, which will help to improve students' competencies. Their practical applicability is directly oriented to the educational work.

I find that the activity of Assoc. Prof. Koychev is closely related to the announced competition for Jazz Harmony professor.

The educational, artistic and creative results of the candidate are fully in line with the specific requirements of the Faculty of Pedagogy, adopted in connection with the Rules of Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski' for the implementation of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (DASRBA).

After getting acquainted with the materials presented in the competition and analysis of their importance, and applied contributions, I find it reasonable to give my positive assessment before the Honorable Scientific Jury and to support the application of Assoc. Prof. Veselin Ivanov Koychev, PhD for occupation of the academic position 'Professor' in Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski' in Professional Field 8.3. Music and Dance Arts, Scientific Speciality Musicology and Music Art - Jazz Harmony.

23.09.2021

Reviewer:
(Prof. Borislav Yassenov, PhD)