

REVIEW

by Prof. Toni Shekerdzhieva-Novak, PhD

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 Specialty Musicology and Music Art - Jazz Harmony, 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. The only candidate who has submitted documents for participation in this competition is Assoc. Prof. Veselin Ivanov Koychev, PhD from Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski'. 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 above-mentioned competition.

In accordance with the requirements of the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act /DASRBA/, the Rules for its implementation and the Rules for the Development of the Academic Staff of Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski', candidate Assoc. Prof. Veselin Ivanov Koychev, PhD presented a set of materials, including the following documents:

- Application form to the Chancellor of Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski' 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 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 for holding the academic position 'Professor';
- 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, as well as 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.

Assoc. Prof. Veselin Koychev, PhD is one of the brightest, most prominent and talented Bulgarian instrumentalists, a composer, an arranger, a pedagogue and a guitarist with impressive and extremely active, fruitful and productive creative activity. The reference for compliance with the minimum scientometric national requirements, submitted for review , pursuant to the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (DASRBA) and the Rules for its implementation, amended and supplemented in State Gazette No.

56/06.07.2018, all additional materials, realized in the period after the acquisition of the habilitation degree 'Associate Professor', presented as evidence in the relevant appendices, confirm my opinion.

Veselin Koychev graduated from the High School of Music 'Hristina Morfova', Stara Zagora in 1976. In 1986 he graduated from the Higher Institute of Music and Pedagogy, now Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts 'Prof. Asen Diamandiev' - Plovdiv, with academic degree 'Master', as 'Music and Singing Teacher in High School'. From 2012 to 2016 he was a doctoral student at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts 'Prof. Asen Diamandiev' - Plovdiv. Koychev 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'. Assoc. Prof. Veselin Koychev, PhD is a popular figure in the Bulgarian music society. His work is related to the development of Bulgarian jazz and is characterized by a combination of elements of rock and Bulgarian folklore. He is the founder of the ethno-jazz group 'Jazz Line', in which he plays together with Docho Panov, Radul Nachkov, Teodosii Spasov and Yaldaz Ibrahimova. Since 1987 he has been the artistic director of the International Youth Jazz Festival in Plovdiv. In 1988 he formed 'Бенд 19' /Band 19/, and in 1990 the women's vocal group 'Compact Voices'. 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. Since 2009 he has been a lecturer at Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski', and since 2011 he has been on a second employment contract at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts 'Prof. Asen Diamandiev' - Plovdiv.

His **pedagogical activity** is also extremely active, rich and fruitful, as evidenced by the huge number of people willing to study in his classes. Veselin Koychev teaches: 'Jazz Harmony', 'Arranging for Jazz and Pop Formations', 'Technologies and Software for Studio Recording', lectures and exercises on 'Music and Performing Arts', 'Technological Models of Guitar Teaching', 'Jazz Theory' and exercises in 'Special Subject – Guitar'. Lectures and exercises in 'Introduction to Sound Directing', 'Scales and Chords in Pop Music', 'Work in a Recording Studio'. The candidate teaches also the discipline of the announced competition – 'Jazz Harmony'. In his favor is the fact that many of the above disciplines are closely related to his activity. Assoc. Prof. Veselin Koychev, PhD participates also in the preparation of the curricula for the listed disciplines, included in the academic degree 'Bachelor', specialty 'Performing Arts (Pop and Jazz)'. He prepares also the curricula for the academic degree 'Master in the specialty Pedagogy of Music Education in Kindergarten and High School'. These are: 'Studio Sound Recording Technologies', speciality 'Music Performing Art', 'Arrangement', speciality 'Vocal and Instrumental Ensembles Management', 'Arrangement for Vocal and Instrumental Ensembles', as well as curricula for speciality 'Pedagogy of Music Education' Bachelor's degree: 'Music and Internet'. He also prepares the curricula for the doctoral programs 'Theory of Musical Elements' - full-time, part-time mode of study and self-study.

When we talk about the **dissertation** on the topic 'Interaction between Jazz and Folklore', a product with undeniable contribution and relevance, we should not forget Veselin Koychev's affinity to the interaction between jazz and folklore, which led to the creation of this study. The large number of compositions in the field of jazz, popular, theatrical and symphonic music, orchestrations and arrangements he makes, combined with his vast concert practice at national and international forums in collaboration with prominent names on the big stage find their complex realization in the completed artistic and creative doctoral studies. As a colleague who experienced the birth of this work, witnessed the search for a synthesis between jazz and folklore, I appreciate Veselin Koychev's achievements. He builds his character as a musician with extensive theoretical knowledge, intellect and stage charm.

These are qualities that help him in the formation of aesthetic criteria and in the achievement of high professionalism, culture of interpretation and stage behavior.

The high level of his teaching activity is evidenced by the significant achievements and active concert activity of many of his students. For this competition he offers us the achievements of Vladimir Voloshtuk, Petar Koychev and the doctoral student V. Velichkov, through evidence and reviews. Assoc. Prof. Koychev is the scientific supervisor of successfully defended doctoral students.

The published collection of sheet music to the album 'Yo-ho' of 'Acoustic Trio 3000' by Veselin Koychev and Tsvetan Nedyalkov (Balkanota edition, 2011) and the teaching aid 'Guitar Impressions', sheet music edition with pieces from the albums 'Music Springs' and 'Super Nova', composed by Veselin Koychev from 2019 are contribution to the aesthetic and artistic growth of the students and in support of the educational process. These two teaching aids are also used in the school network. In group of indicators **C**, in indicator **4** Veselin Koychev presented a total of **17** realized author's products. Among them are 'The Bremen Town Musicians' based on Grimms' Fairy Tales, (dramatization - Leo Kapon, music - Veselin Koychev, Drama and Puppet Theatre 'Dimitar Dimov', Kardzhali, 17.02.2019), 'War in Times of Love' by Jeton Neziraj (director - Leo Kapon, music - Veselin Koychev, University Theatre of Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski', Plovdiv, 04.02.2019), 'The Magic Shop', based on ideas from Donald Bisset fairy tales (directed by Leonard Kapon, music and arrangement - V. Koychev, 'Konstantin Velichkov' Theatre, Pazardzhik, 17.05.2018), 'Веселата Коледна чакалня' /The Merry Christmas Waiting Room/ by Stefan Stoyanov (directed by Yanko Mitev, music and arrangement by V. Koychev, Drama and Puppet Theatre 'Dimitar Dimov', Haskovo, 05.12.2017), 'Копче за сън' /Sleep Button/ by Valeri Petrov (director - Leonard Kapon, Drama and Puppet Theatre Yambol, music - Veselin Koychev, 4.03.2015) and others.

His leading creative performances in the field of art are remarkable (from his numerous appearances he pointed out 4 significant events), among which 'Veselin Koychev Ethno Project', presented at the International Festival 'Plovdiv Jazz Evenings' (2009), in partnership with Antoni Donchev, Stoyan Yankulov, Vladimir Velichkov, Aleksandar Lekov, 'Veselin Koychev Trio', concert with the participation of Aleksandar Lekov and Nacho Gospodinov in Fabric Bar, Plovdiv (2011), participation in 'STRUMIN' concerts at the University of Malta, at the invitation of Yamaha Music (2015) and the concert 'Veselin Koychev Hot Strings', performed at the Stara Zagora Jazz Forum (2016).

The candidate leads numerous **master classes** and art workshops. Indicator **F** of the scientometric indicators includes a workshop 'Fusion and Improvisation' (28-1) within the Guitart Fest, Veliko Tarnovo (2017); the master class 'Improvisation in Pop and Jazz Music' (28-2) within the 'Danube Strings' Guitar Festival, Silistra (2019); Veselin Koychev - Jes Psaila Guitar Workshop (28-2), Plovdiv Guitar Fest (2017); Jazz Guitar Workshop (28-4), Kapana, Club VOID (2017), as well as master classes held at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts 'Prof. Asen Diamandiev' - Plovdiv, 2013 and 2014

There are 270 points collected in indicators 12, 13, 14 from group of indicators **D**, where are presented the creation (composition, arrangement and sound recording) of original music for the e-book of Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski', realized for University Scientific Seminar 'Together we can do more' (held from 1 to 10.09.2015), as well as four concerts, three of which with Teodosii Spasov and Veselin Koychev, Exposition Center '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' in Sofia (2015).

I highly appreciate several events, including the concerts of the duo Veselin Koychev and Tsvetan Nedyalkov. The creative preferences in the program of the guitar duo are towards original music, in which Bulgarian folk sound and its connection with fusion, jazz and flamenco, dominate as well as the processing of Bulgarian folk music. I would like to highlight the concert 'Improvisations' in the club 'Studio 5', Sofia (2012); concert at 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, Veselin Koychev and Tsvetan Nedyalkov duo, in Veliko Tarnovo, Flamenco Project at the Guitart Fest, 2017, 'Kokerlek' concert by Veselin Koychev, Vladimir Karparov, Aleksandar Lekov, Chamber Stage, Studio 1 of Radio Plovdiv (2017), 'Jazz Panorama Blagoevgrad 2011' and a concert by Marina Gospodinova, Veselin Koychev, Aleksandar Lekov, Dimitar Dimitrov, Viktor Benev in 2011.

In the reviews of the realized author's products and creative performances of Assoc. Prof. Koychev the combination of brilliant performing talent, active concert activity, authoring and arranging skills, rich recording activity with teaching and pedagogical experience is appreciated in a definite way. I have witnessed the creative and pedagogical development of Assoc. Prof. Veselin Koychev, PhD, which gives me reason to appreciate the contribution of his high activity, achievements and professional realization. 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, published 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/.

His participation in national and international projects deserves special attention. The national ones are specified in group of indicators F, item 22 and are seven in number. Participation in the jury for the competition program 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), 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), 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 Guitar 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).

Assoc. Prof. Koychev is the leader of two projects under group of indicators F, indicator 24. These are the 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.

Assoc. Prof. Veselin Koychev, PhD 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). One of them is the award for original music for performances: IV International Theatre Festival 'PIERROT, 2005', Stara Zagora (2005), as well as 2 awards at the National Puppet Theatre Festival 'Mihail Lakatnik', Yambol (2009 and 2015). 2006 was a particularly productive and successful year. 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 brings Koychev 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. He was also awarded the prize for 'Best Instrumental Album of 2011' for the album 'Yo-Ho' of 'Acoustic Trio 3000' at the competition 'The Indie Acoustic Project', USA, in section 'Instrumental Music' (F31).

I will let myself define as an exceptional contribution the active creative, academic, pedagogical and research activities of Assoc. Prof. Veselin Koychev, PhD. The practical results he has achieved are of high value, and the professional experience gained over the years is a valuable basis and an important prerequisite for his fruitful further development. Dozens are the successfully prepared by him performers and teachers. I have direct impressions from his work with the students from the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts 'Prof. Asen Diamandiev' - Plovdiv. Assoc. Prof. Veselin Koychev, PhD not only builds their technical skills, but provokes their interest in music and art in general, he shapes their culture of behavior, their attitude to different styles and genres in music, he guides their stage behavior, encourages their creative initiatives. Students value him as a teacher and a person with whom they can talk and discuss what excites them. I am convinced that the activity of Assoc. Prof. Veselin Koychev, PhD is closely related to the announced competition for the academic position 'Professor' in 'Jazz Harmony'. The materials presented contain to the fullest extent important and applied contributions, which make me give my positive assessment in support of 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.

06.10.2021

Reviewer:
(Prof. Toni Dimitrova Shekerdzhieva-Novak, PhD)