

OPINION

by Prof. Dr. Milena Shushulova-Pavlova, New Bulgarian University
regarding the contributions of the proposed activities and habilitation work

of Krastin Nastev Nastev, PhD

for participation in a competition for occupying the academic position of **Associate Professor**
(Interpretation with Conducting)

at the Faculty of Musical Pedagogy, *Department* of Classical, Pop and Jazz Performance Art
at *Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts* – Plovdiv,

professional field 8.3. *Music and Dance Art*,

announced in the *State Gazette*, issue 57 / 15 July 2025

Biographical Information

Krastin Nastev was born in 1980 and began his musical development in the Plovdiv Boys Choir. He continued his education at *Dobrin Petkov National School of Music* in Plovdiv, specializing in oboe and advanced theoretical disciplines. He is a conductor at the Varna Opera, head of the annual Creative Laboratory for Choral Music *Krikor Chetinyan* in Plovdiv, and a lecturer at the Higher Conservatory of Music of Castilla-La Mancha. He studied conducting at the Music Academies in Plovdiv (Assoc. Prof. Krikor Chetinyan), Sofia (Prof. Miroslav Popsavov, Prof. Plamen Dzhurov), Barcelona (Prof. Lutz Köhler), Basel (Prof. Raphael Immoos), and the Summer Academy in Siena (Gianluigi Gelmetti). He took conducting lessons with conductor Georgi Dimitrov and later attended the conducting courses of Alan Hazeldine, Mark Shanahan, Bruno Aprea, Gianluigi Gelmetti, Donato Renzetti, Prof. Lutz Köhler, Frieder Bernius, Raphael Immoos, Georg Grün, Prof. Vassil Kazandzhiev, as well as the vocal masterclasses of Rayna Kabaivanska, Montserrat Caballé, Darina Takova, Raúl Jiménez, Kaludi Kaludov, and Ramón Vargas. He was awarded a special prize at the *Europa Cantat Choral Conducting Competition* in 2013 in St. Petersburg, Russia, and in 2007 reached the final round of the *Mariele Ventre Choral Conducting Competition* in Bologna, Italy. In 2000 he won Third Prize at the Academic Bach Competition for Pianists organized by the Music Academy in Plovdiv, and in 2024 the vocal ensemble *Capella Arte*, under his guidance, received the *Crystal Lyre* of the Union of Bulgarian Musicians and Dancers in the category 'Choral Art'. He made his debut on the stage of the Sofia Opera with Mascagni's *Cavalleria rusticana*, has conducted the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra and the National Philharmonic Choir, and has completed studio recordings with the Bulgarian National Radio Symphony Orchestra. As a guest conductor he has led the Plovdiv Opera, the Pleven Philharmonic, the Shumen Symphony Orchestra, the orchestras of Antalya, Bursa, and Eskişehir (Turkey), the Ankara Radio Choir, the Netherlands Symphony Orchestra in Enschede, the Malaga Youth Orchestra (Spain), and Sinfonietta Berlin (Germany). He has served on the juries of international choral festivals in St. Petersburg (2014), Hong Kong (2015), and Paralia, Greece (2022). As a choral conductor he has worked at the Plovdiv Opera, the Antalya State Opera, the *Teatre del Cercle* in Barcelona, and with the Regional Symphony Choir of Madrid. In 2018 he received an invitation to assist in the preparation of Wagner's *Der fliegende Holländer (The Flying Dutchman)* for the opera festival in Selzach, Switzerland. Between 2011 and 2018 he conducted various choirs in Spain, Germany, and Switzerland and led the choirs of the Antalya Conservatory and the Barcelona School of Music. In early 2022 he taught a masterclass for choral conductors for the Choral Federation in Valencia, Spain. In 2024 he delivered a masterclass at the Higher Conservatory of Music in Valencia. In 2023 he made his debut at the *Teatro Bellini* in Catania (Italy) with seven performances of the ballet *Giselle*. In 2023 he conducted an opera gala featuring Sonya Yoncheva at the Summer Theatre in Varna. His artistic collaboration with the renowned singer continued the following year with productions of *Tosca* at the Ancient Theatre with the Plovdiv Opera and *La Bohème* at the Summer Theatre in Varna with the ensemble of the Varna Opera. (<https://www.krastin.com/>)

Assessment of Compliance with the Minimum National Requirements under the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (DASRBA)

Group A Indicators

Indicator 1. Dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree 'PhD'.

Title of the dissertation: *The Choir and the Choral Conductor in Opera. Aspects of Opera Choir Preparation: Vocal, Linguistic, and Dramaturgical-Musical Issues in Working with an Opera Choir.*

Date of public defense: 10.04.2023.

Diploma No. 172 of 11 April 2023.3.

Points awarded – 50.

Group B Indicators

Indicator 5. Leading (independent) creative achievement in the field of the arts.

5.1 Giuseppe Verdi – *Aida* – opera in 4 acts, 7 scenes. Varna Opera, 05.12.2024, 19:00. Conductor of the performance.

5.2 Giacomo Puccini – *La Bohème* – opera in 4 acts, 06.08.2024, 7:00 pm, Summer Theatre – Varna, 15th Festival *Opera at the Summer Theatre*. Conductor of the performance featuring opera prima Sonya Yoncheva and the Varna Opera.

5.3 Concert on the occasion of the Liberation of Varna with Varna Opera, 27.07.2024, 7:00 pm. Conductor of the celebratory concert.

5.4 Giacomo Puccini – Tosca – opera in 3 acts, 04.06.2024, 9:00 pm, Ancient Theatre – Plovdiv. Conductor of the performance featuring opera prima Sonya Yoncheva and the Plovdiv Opera.

5.5 Gioachino Rossini – Petite messe solennelle. Concert marking the 80th anniversary of Assoc. Prof. Krikor Chetinyan, 30.03.2024, 6:00 pm, Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts - Plovdiv. Conductor of the concert, together with the Vocal Ensemble *Capella Arte*.

5.6. Symphony Concert Soloist: Stoyka Milanova – violin, 08.11.2019, 7:00 pm, Varna Opera (Beethoven – Violin Concerto; J. Brahms – Symphony No. 3). Conductor.

5.7 Giuseppe Verdi – Il trovatore – opera in 4 acts, 19.10.2022, 7:00 pm, Varna Opera. Conductor of the performance featuring guest soloist Concetta Pepere (Italy).

Points awarded – 245 (7 x 35 points)

Group Γ Indicators

Indicator 7. Published book based on a defended doctoral dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree 'PhD' or the scientific degree 'Doctor of Sciences'.

Monograph: *The Choir and the Choral Conductor in Opera. Aspects of Working with an Opera Choir*. 200 pages. Printing and layout – Janet 45 Printing Complex. ISBN 978-619-04-0068-4. Sofia, 2023.

Points awarded – 75.

Indicator 9. Articles and reports published in specialized journals in the field of the arts.

Nastev, Krastin. *The Relationship Between the Stage Director and the Choral Conductor in the Opera House. Reflections*. In: 'Musical Horizons', issue 3/2025, pp. 23–25. ISSN: 1310-0076

Points awarded – 15.

Indicator 13. Leading (or independent) artistic performance in the field of the arts that is not the main habilitation work.

- **Seven performances of the ballet Giselle at the Opera in Catania, Italy**, 06-14.05.2023. Venue: Teatro Bellini.
- **Symphony concert:** Mozart – *Requiem*; Beethoven – *Piano Concerto No. 4* at Varna Opera with soloist Galin Ganchev, 13.04.2023, Venue: Drama Theatre – Varna.
- **Concert of Svetoslav Obretenov National Philharmonic Choir**, Bulgaria Hall - Sofia, 24.02.2023, Programme: *Misa Tango* by Martín Palmeri (first performance in Sofia).
- **Giuseppe Verdi – Macbeth** – conductor of the performance at Varna Opera, 03.02.2023, 7:00 pm. Venue: Drama Theatre – Varna.

Points awarded – 140 (4 x 35 points)

Indicator 14. Supporting artistic performance or participation in a collective artistic product.

Participation in concerts of the Symphony Orchestra and Choir of the Higher Conservatory of Music of Castilla-La Mancha as chorus master:

- **Concert – Coronation Mass by W. A. Mozart**, 14.03.2024, at the Cathedral of Albacete. Choir conductor.
- **Concert – Requiem by L. Cherubini**, 02.04.2025, at the Cathedral of Albacete. Choir conductor.
- **New Year's Concert of Antalya Opera**, 28.12.2010, *Haşim İşcan* Cultural Center, Antalya. Choir conductor.
- **Opera: W. A. Mozart – Zaide**, 16–17–18.07.2010, Topkapi Palace, Istanbul. First Opera Festival, Antalya Opera. Choir conductor

Point awarded – 40 (4 x 10 points)

Total points awarded in the group: 270

Group Δ Indicators

Indicator 17. Citations in monographs and collective volumes with scholarly peer review.

- Nastev, Krastin. *Aspects of Working with an Operatic Choir*. In: *Musical Horizons*; 2022, No. 1; ISSN: 1310-0076; p. 19.

Cited in: Decheva, Kalina. *Some Specific Features of Foreign Language (English) Instruction for Art Students at the Art Academy in Plovdiv. Yearbook 2024 of Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv*; ISBN: 1313-6526, pp. 166–172, **cited on p. 168.**

- Nastev, Krastin. *The Choir and the Choral Conductor in Opera. Aspects of Working with an Opera Choir*. Sofia: Janet 45; 2023; ISBN 978-619-04-0068-4; total length: 200 pages.

Cited in: Decheva, Kalina. *Some Specific Features of Foreign Language (English) Instruction for Art Students at the Art Academy in Plovdiv. Yearbook 2024 of Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv*; ISBN: 1313-6526, pp. 166–172, **cited on p. 170**

Points awarded –20 (2 x 10 points).

Indicator 19. Reviews of realized authorial products or creative performances in specialized publications in the field of arts.

- **Review by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Georgi Patrikov** of the concert of the Vocal Ensemble *Capella Arte*, published on the peer-reviewed website *musicology-bg.com* *Miscellaneous* Section: <http://www.musicology-bg.com/>, ISSN 2534-9279.
- **Spring Concert of the Vocal Ensemble Capella Arte**, author: Valeria Dimitrova. In: *Musical Horizons*, Issue 4/2025, pp. 12–13, ISSN: 1310-0076,
- **Soloists from Turkey Visiting the Opera and Philharmonic Society – Plovdiv**, author: Magdalena Andonova. Review of the guest performance of soloists from the State Opera – Antalya (Turkey) at the Opera and Philharmonic Society - Plovdiv, conducted by Krastin Nastev. In: *Musical Horizons*, Issue 2/2010, pp. 16–17, ISSN: 1310-0076
- **'Krastin Nastev Conducts the National Philharmonic Choir'**. Author: Eliana Mitova. In: *Musical Horizons*, Issue 2/2023, pp. 10–11, ISSN: 1310-0076.

- **'Easter Concert in Varna'**. Author: Tatyana Kapricheva. Review of the Easter concert of the Varna Opera with conductor Krastin Nastev. In: *Musical Horizons*, Issue 4/2023, p. 12, ISSN: 1310-0076.
- **'With Love and Gratitude. In Memory of Krikor Chetinyan'**. Author: Kristina Venkova. Review of the performance of Gioachino Rossini's *Petite messe solennelle* at the Concert Hall of Prof. Pancho Vladigerov National Music Academy – Sofia, conducted by Krastin Nastev. In: *Musical Horizons*, Issue 3/2024, pp. 10–12, ISSN: 1310-0076.

Points awarded –60 (6 x 10 points).
Total points awarded in the group: 80

Group E Indicators

Indicator 28. Leadership of a master class, atelier, or workshop in the field of arts.

1. Leadership of a masterclass for choral conductors at *Dobrin Petkov* National School of Music and Dance Arts, Plovdiv (29.07 – 02.08.2015)
2. Leadership of a masterclass for choral conductors at *Dobrin Petkov* National School of Music and Dance Arts, Plovdiv (02.07 – 08.07.2016)
3. Leadership of a masterclass for choral conductors at *Dobrin Petkov* National School of Music and Dance Arts, Plovdiv (22.07 – 29.07.2017)
4. Leadership of a masterclass for choral conductors at *Dobrin Petkov* National School of Music and Dance Arts, Plovdiv (01.09 – 08.09.2019)
5. Leadership of a masterclass for choral conductors at *Dobrin Petkov* National School of Music and Dance Arts, Plovdiv (26.07 – 31.07.2021)
6. Leadership of a masterclass for choral conductors at *Dobrin Petkov* National School of Music and Dance Arts, Plovdiv (25.07 – 30.07.2022)
7. Leadership of a Conducting masterclass organized by the Federation of Choirs of Valencia, Spain (January–February 2022)

Points awarded –140 (7 x 20 points).

Indicator 29. Creative performance in a masterclass, studio, or workshop in the field of arts.

World Youth & Children's Choir Festival – Hong Kong (2015). Participation in the workshop '*Looking Like the Music: Gestural Expression of Music to Choristers*' within the framework of the festival, duration 1.5 hours.

Points awarded –5.

Indicator 30. Awards from competitions for creative work and performance, granted by national professional forums and organizations.

- Third Prize at the Academic Competition for the Performance of Works by J. S. Bach, 2000, Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv;
- *Crystal Lyre 2024* in the category 'Choral Art' with the Vocal Ensemble *Capella Arte* - Plovdiv; Points awarded - 20 (2 x 10 points);

Points awarded –20 (2 x 10 points).

Indicator 31. Awards from competitions for creative work and performance, granted by professional forums and organizations abroad.

- Special Prize from the Choral Conducting Competition *Europa Cantat*, 2017, held in Saint Petersburg, Russia.
- Award from the Rheintal Choral Festival, Switzerland, 2018, with the Women's Choir – Pratteln (Basel, Switzerland).

Points awarded – 40 (2 x 20 points).
Total points awarded in the group: 205

Group of Indicators	Content	Points Required for the Academic Position 'Associate Professor'	Points in the Self-Assessment
A	Indicator 1	50	50
B	Sum of indicators 3 to 5	100	245
Г	Sum of indicators 6 to 15	120	270
Д	Sum of indicators 16 to 19	40	80
E	Sum of indicators 20 to 31	50	205

The presented activity is serious, significant, and sufficient to warrant the academic position of 'Associate Professor' (specialization in Conducting) at the Faculty of Music Pedagogy, Department of Classical, Pop, and Jazz Performing Arts, in the professional field 8.3. Music and Dance Art. The data provided by the candidate demonstrate that Krastin Nastev, PhD meets the required scientometric criteria and maintains an active creative, scientific, and teaching career.

Significance of the Scientific Activity

In his monograph *The Choir and the Choral Conductor in Opera: Aspects of Working with an Opera Choir*, Nastev traces the origins of the opera choir, its evolution, and its role within the operatic genre across different eras of European musical art: from the earliest significant examples in Monteverdi's works to Wagner's achievements in the choral scenes of *Der fliegende Holländer* (*The Flying Dutchman*) and *Parsifal*. He identifies a central problem: musical-dramaturgical stagnation, expressed in the choir's inability to integrate into the dynamics of operatic action. Nastev typologizes choral scenes according to the French model into three categories: 1) conspiratorial

choruses (almost always performed by a male choir), 2) ceremonial festive scenes, which are often dramatically 'interrupted' (the most tension-filled type of choral scene), and 3) emotionally charged religious or patriotic hymns. He proposes methods to address linguistic and phonetic challenges in studying choral works in the three most frequently used languages of the operatic repertoire: Italian, French, and German.

In his other publications, Nastev examines the organization of the opera theatre and the challenges faced by the opera chorus master in daily work with the opera choir. He emphasizes the specific nature of the relationship between the opera director and the choral conductor, offering updated information on the role of the opera director in the context of working with the opera choir. He clarifies the issues involved in arranging the opera choir from both dramaturgical and vocal perspectives. Nastev systematizes the work of the choral conductor in stages - before rehearsals and during the rehearsal process - and examines the conductor's relations with the principal conductor and director.

Regarding his creative activity as a conductor, one of his reviewers - also a conductor - notes: *'The listener experiences profound aesthetic pleasure and a sense of sonic softness when encountering a carefully selected repertoire, interpreted with high mastery. Such an effect was also achieved in the concert of the vocal ensemble 'Capella Arte' under the baton of Krastin Nastev, held on March 23, 2025, in the Aula of St. Kliment Ohridski Sofia University.* (Georgi Patrikov)

Administrative and Public Activity

Krastin Nastev is the conceptual director of the film about the creative path of conductor Krikor Chetinyan, produced by a team from BNT - Plovdiv in 2024 on the occasion of Chetinyan's 80th anniversary, which was awarded the 'Plovdiv' prize. He is a member of the Spanish Association of Choral Conductors. His organizational activity also includes programming and conducting not only nine Creative Laboratories (2015–2025), but also the orchestral conducting competition 'Borislav Ivanov' – Varna (2023 and 2025), and the choral conducting competition 'Krikor Chetinyan', which is scheduled to take place at AMDFA between October 23–26, 2025. In addition to these two competitions and the Laboratories, he organized a Masterclass for choral conductors led by Prof. Dr. Fred Stoltzfus from the University of Illinois and Prof. Miroslav Popsavov from *Prof. Pancho Vladigerov* NMA – Sofia in 2002, as well as a Masterclass by Frieder Bernius, which will take place at AMDFA between October 23–26, 2025.

Teaching and Academic Activity

The candidate's biography demonstrates his active role as an educator, not only at AMDFA – Plovdiv, but also at other institutions across Europe.

Personal Impressions of the Candidate (if any)

I do not have personal impressions of the candidate.

I conclude my opinion with the following evaluation:

Based on all of the above, as well as on the conclusions drawn from the proposed scientific and teaching activities of Krastin Nastev, PhD, taking into account his activity and the contributory nature of his proposed creative works as part of the habilitation, scientific publications, creative performances, and projects, I **provide a positive assessment**. I recommend to the esteemed members of the Scientific Jury for the competition for the academic position of 'Associate Professor' (Interpretation with Conducting) at the Faculty of Music Pedagogy, *Department* of Classical, Pop, and Jazz Performing Arts at *Prof. Asen Diamandiev* AMDFA – Plovdiv, in professional field 8.3. Music and Dance Arts, to propose to the higher academic instance to **appoint Krastin Nastev, PhD to the academic position of 'Associate Professor'**, in accordance with the requirements of the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act.

Date: October 14, 2025

Signature:

Prof. Milena Shushulova-Pavlova, PhD