

## REVIEW

by **Prof. Vesela Ivanova Geleva, PhD**, Lecturer in Choral Conducting at the Department of Music Pedagogy and Conducting, Faculty of Music Pedagogy, *Prof. Asen Diamandiev* Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts - Plovdiv

for **Assoc. Prof. Milena Ivanova Bogdanova, PhD**, lecturer in Solfeggio, Theory of Musical Elements, Pedagogical Practice in Solfeggio; Methods and Psychotechnics for the Development of Musical Hearing and Solfeggio Methodology in the Department of 'Musical Pedagogy and Conducting' of *Prof. Asen Diamandiev* Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts - Plovdiv, candidate in a competition for the academic position of 'Professor' in the professional field 8. 3. 'Musical and Dance Art', specialty 'Solfeggio and Theory of Musical Elements', announced in the State Gazette Issue 64 / 30.07.2024.

Milena Bogdanova began her musical education at the age of five at an experimental school at *Lyubomir Pipkov* Secondary School of Music in Sofia, where she graduated in 1989 with a degree in piano. In 1995, she graduated as a Master of Music Pedagogy at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts in Plovdiv and received the professional qualifications of a solfeggio and piano teacher, a music teacher in kindergarten, primary, secondary and upper secondary schools. In 1998, she completed a two-year postgraduate professional qualification in 'Methodology of Solfeggio Teaching'. In 2015, she defended her dissertation thesis on the topic 'Solfeggio with Piano Accompaniment' and obtained the educational and scientific degree 'PhD' in musicology and musical art. She is the author of a number of scientific articles and reports in the field of the methodology of musical hearing education, music history, theory and psychology, which have been published in Bulgarian and foreign scientific publications. She actively participates in music-theoretical forums and conferences, visits national and international scientific and cultural centers, where she gives lectures and conducts practical classes, including in France, Italy, Serbia, Montenegro, etc.

In 2012 Assoc. Prof. Bogdanova became secretary-coordinator of *Young Scientist* Academic Club at the AMDFA, where she annually manages and participates in scientific research projects. Her artistic activity as a performing pianist is also intensive, in which the works of Bulgarian composers, such as Zdravko Manolov, Marin Goleminov, etc., take priority. Since 1998 Milena Bogdanova has been a lecturer at AMDFA in the disciplines of Solfeggio, Theory of Musical Elements, Methods of Solfeggio Teaching, Pedagogical Practice in Solfeggio, Methods and Psychotechniques for the Development of Musical Hearing.

The scientific activity and publications of Assoc. Prof. Milena Bogdanova, PhD are impressive in volume and content. The total number of scientific works comprises 2 habilitation theses, one of which was submitted for the competition, a book based on a defended dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree 'PhD', 29 scientific publications, 7 of them submitted for the competition, numerous citations in monographs, studies and collective volumes with scientific review, 18 of which are described for the competition.

The **monograph 'Musical, Pedagogical and Theoretical Views of prof. Asen Diamandiev in the Field of Music and Hearing Education' /2024 /** aims to highlight the

contribution of prof. Diamandiev in the evolution and progress of Bulgarian solfeggio methodology and practice. The work is written from the position of a direct witness and active participant in the training process, who today worthily continues the work of his esteemed mentor.

In the first part, a factual background of the origin and development of the theory and practice of musical and hearing education in Bulgaria is presented. The historical significance of the key figures in music theory is presented in a fascinating and at the same time erudition way: Ivan Peev, Boris Trichkov, Dobri Hristov, Kamen Popdimitrov, Zdravko Manolov. The 'Theory' section addresses the essence and importance of the discipline 'Solfeggio'- a combination of music-theoretical and music-practical knowledge, the construction of which requires the appropriate methods for the development of musical hearing, as well as psychotechniques and forms of work for the formation and improvement of basic musical abilities. The subsection 'Practice' describes the three main activities: solfeggio, musical hearing analysis and musical dictation, as well as the methodological guidelines given on them by Prof. Diamandiev. With warmth and reverence for the beloved Master are presented personal memories of M. Bogdanova, priceless moments that have motivated her future professional path.

In the second part of the monograph, titled 'Musical, Pedagogical and Theoretical Views of Prof. Asen Diamandiev in the Field of Musical Hearing Education' and addressed the music-didactic tools of the pedagogue, classified according to their educational meaning and purpose. The contribution of the work is concentrated here, which consists in the following:

- for the first time the broad-spectrum contribution of A. Diamandiev's contribution to music theory and practice has been studied
- an attempt is made to study his compositional work in the practical mastery of the various means of musical expression
- the role of the examples he created as a means of educating musical hearing and specific musical abilities is examined
- his musical-pedagogical and theoretical views are analysed in detail, presented through his overall didactic legacy in the field of musical hearing education.
- a detailed methodological review of emblematic examples of the Bulgarian music-pedagogical heritage is made: The teaching aids 'Elementary Solfeggio', 'Intonation Etudes, Solfeggio and Dictations from the French educational literature', 'Rhythmic Exercises in Solfeggio', 'Musical Dictations based on Nationality', 'Two-voice, Three-voice and Four-voice Solfeggio', 'One-voice, Two-voice, Three-voice and Four-voice from the 16th to the 20th Century', 'Polyphonic Solfeggio', 'Sound Orders', as well as his master work going into the essence of modern compositional techniques 'Technical Exercises for Mastering Intervals'.

The monograph 'Musical, Pedagogical and Theoretical Views of prof. Asen Diamandiev in the Field of Musical Hearing Education' /2024 / gives deserved recognition to one of the greatest music educators of our time, who left a lasting mark with his erudition, talent, charismatic, creative energy and undying pedagogical enthusiasm. The methodological analysis of his didactic legacy will serve a large number of theorists, teachers, musicologists, pedagogues, and students of music pedagogy, which is the content of his major contribution.

The other complete work submitted for review is the published book based on the defended dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree 'PhD' **'Solfeggiaring (sol-fa) with Piano Accompaniment'- Psychotechnique for the Development of Musical Hearing'**, Plovdiv: Rakursi Ltd, 2022. It is important to note that the research paves a new way with its practical-applied significance of the analytically presented multifunctional system for the development of musical hearing. Innovative forms of work are classified, which are graded in stages and cover specific issues. Particularly valuable are the intonation and rhythmic exercises presented, the proposed fingerings and distribution of intonation material coordinated in the two parallel activities of solfeggio and accompaniment. Examples on original artistic samples are presented to enrich and illustrate the study, demonstrating the types of keyboard texture and its rhythmic varieties. The concept of 'keyboard accompaniment' is introduced, which includes the types of keyboard texture according to their most prominent, recurring features. The new added aspect of psychology, which deals with the problem of musical perception and its dependence on memory, musical hearing representations, and attention, should also be emphasized. The ideas of didactics of the activity of solfeggio with piano accompaniment in the content of the discipline 'Solfeggio', as well as the proposed newly developed system, represent an original pedagogical contribution and harmoniously develop the ideas of the methodology of solfeggio in the light of cognitive psychology and the ideas of didactics.

The usefulness of this work has been empirically proven by the activity "'Solfeggio with Piano Accompaniment' introduced in the academic 2009/10 year at AMDFA, which gives new opportunities for the individual development of students and optimizes their activity as future teachers. Its practice achieved results in the field of hearing tonal education, musical hearing and theoretical mastering of musical elements, the formation of additional conditional-reflexive relationships, the development of notational-reading technique of different keys, broadening and deepening the interrelations between the studied components of the musical language, a deeper understanding of the artistic content and the musical text, etc.

The presented 29 scientific publications prove the versatile interests and the aspiration for an innovative view on the music-theoretical sphere and its actual problems. Assoc. Prof. Bogdanova always focuses on topics directly related to the pedagogical process and its optimization. Priority topics are psychotechnics for the education of professional musical hearing, the problems of hearing musical education, the methods of psychological and practical-applied analysis in the initial steps of musical hearing education, the various theoretical and methodological approaches used in Bulgarian solfeggio pedagogy, updated and adapted to the new requirements of music education. In support of all this is the author's curriculum of an entirely new music-theoretical discipline, the content of which enables maximum active participation of the trainees.

The scientific-public activity of Assoc. Prof. Bogdanova's activity in the field of publications has received well-deserved recognition, which is evident from the number of citations /18/ in monographs, studies and collective volumes with scientific review. Among the highly appreciated contributions of her publications the following stands out:

- methodological and psychological approaches to support the process of musical literacy and the education of musical hearing, and those for the development of the sense of melody in the context of the perception and performance of contemporary music are justified

- Motives and arguments for building a system and preparing didactic literature for the education of musical hearing on a folk basis are presented, taking into account its value in the educational process and in the musical education of adolescents
- the activity 'Solfeggiaring (sol-fa) with Piano Accompaniment' and its positive impact on the internal musical hearing representations, visual and locomotory perceptiveness formed by the piano keyboard are confirmed
  
- the introduced activities with the profile of psychotechniques ensure harmonious and balanced development of the three sensory systems of human perception - hearing, visual and kinesthetic. The necessity of introducing psychotechniques adequate to the current situation is also justified, through which learners can be quickly and effectively adapted to the pedagogical process and the dynamism of the contemporary educational reality.

In addition to reviewing the materials provided, it should be noted that part of the candidate's pedagogical activity is the organization of workshops in a number of music schools and groups, in which she successfully applies her methodology and provides pedagogical assistance with ideas and guidance to young colleagues whose professional path is yet to come.

I have known Assoc. Prof. Milena Bogdanova, PhD since I joined *Prof. Asen Diamandiev* Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts - Plovdiv and I believe that she ranks among the colleagues on whose principles, morality, commitment and professionalism the prestige of the Academy rests. On the basis of all the above, I strongly support her candidacy for the academic position of Professor in the professional field 8. 3. 'Music and Dance Art', major 'Solfeggio and Theory of Musical Elements' and wish her success in her work as a teacher, scholar and artist.

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