

OPINION

by **Velislav Zaimov**, part-time professor of composition and score reading in the Department of Conducting and Composition at the Faculty of Theory, Composition and Conducting of *Prof. Pancho Vladigerov* National Academy of Music, member of the scientific jury of a competition for the scientific position of *professor* in professional field 8.3 - Solfeggio and Theory of Musical Elements, appointed by Order No. RD - 27-128, Plovdiv, 27.09.2024 pursuant to Art. 29 a, Para 1 of the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act and a decision of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Music Pedagogy at *Prof. Asen Diamandiev* Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts - Plovdiv

There was one candidate for the above-mentioned competition for professor. This is Associate Professor **Milena Bogdanova**, PhD. From the attached reference of scientific metrics, according to the requirements of the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act, it is evident that the candidate fully meets and even exceeds all the requirements.

Milena Bogdanova is a graduate of *Lyubomir Pipkov* National School of Music in Sofia, from which she graduated in 1989 with a degree in piano. In 1995, she graduated from the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts in Plovdiv with a Master's degree and with professional qualifications as a teacher of solfeggio and piano, a teacher of music in kindergartens and in schools - primary, secondary and upper secondary. In 1998 she completed a two-year postgraduate professional qualification in 'Methodology of Solfeggio Teaching'. Since then she has been teaching solfeggio, theory of musical elements, methodology of solfeggio teaching, pedagogical practice of solfeggio, methods and psychotechniques at the AMDFA - Plovdiv. In 2015 she defended her dissertation thesis on topic '*Solfeggiaring (sol-fa) with Piano Accompaniment*'.

As a habilitation thesis, Associate Professor Bogdanova has presented her monograph **‘Musical, pedagogical and theoretical views of prof. Asen Diamandiev in the field of musical and hearing education’**

The work contains an introduction, two main parts, a conclusion, two reviews for publication of the work and a list of references, including sixty-two titles in Bulgarian, two - in Russian, three - in English and one - in German.

In the introduction the author states the impetus for writing the monograph. She does not hide her pride in the privilege of being an alumna and a continuator of Asen Diamandiev’s work. The book is *‘conceived, designed and aimed at preserving the memory of the Bulgarian artist and educator Asen Diamandiev’ and ‘to highlight the contributions of Prof. Asen Diamandiev in the evolution and progress of the Bulgarian solfeggio school’.*

The first part of the work *‘Prof. Asen Diamandiev and the Bulgarian Professional School of Musical Hearing Education’* has four subchapters:

- History
- Theory
- Practice
- Memories of my solfeggio teacher.

They outline the beginning of the musical hearing education in our country, give a brief overview of the main works devoted to this education, the practical activities applied in mastering the material. Asen Diamandiev was one of the main figures in this process, along with professors Kamen Popdimitrov (1904 - 1992), Trendafil Milanov (1909 - 1999), Ivan Peev (1907 - 1981) and Zdravko Manolov (1925 - 1983). As a lyrical digression in the first part of the work, but not least in importance, comes the last subchapter, which illuminates the actual image of the teacher Professor Asen Diamandiev, presented from the author’s

personal impressions and memories in the light of his teaching activities with his methods and approaches.

The value of this first part lies in the systematic retrospective of a difficult beginning in Bulgarian professional music education, a beginning for which much hard work, professional skills and dedication were put and on which our whole later music education system in the field of hearing training is based.

The second part of the monograph *‘Musical, Pedagogical and Theoretical Views of Prof. Asen Diamandiev in the field of musical and hearing education’* is dedicated to the personal contributions of Professor Asen Diamandiev in the system of music and hearing education. Like the first one, it contains four subchapters:

- On the sense of tuning, the sense of polyphony and the grammar of the tonal major-minor system in musical hearing education
- Theoretical and methodological contributions to the formation and development of the metre sense
- Musical hearing training through the prism of Bulgarian folk rhythmic intonations
- Education of musical hearing for perception of contemporary music

Here are all *‘musical hearing didactic aids classified according to their purpose’*. All conclusions are based on the examples created by Asen Diamandiev to achieve the skills mentioned above. If for the achievement of the sense of tuning, the sense of polyphony in major and minor and the sense of metre, Asen Diamandiev refers to some extent to foreign sources, then in terms of hearing training on the basis of Bulgarian folklore, as well as contemporary music, it is purely his understanding, his achievement, thanks to his long teaching experience.

After all of the above, and taking into account the already great pedagogical experience of Associate Professor Milena Bogdanova, PhD, her musical culture, research skills, passion for preserving, continuing and developing the good Bulgarian tradition in musical hearing education, as well as her performances as a pianist, I confidently propose to the esteemed scientific jury to award her the scientific degree of **‘Professor’** in the professional field 8.3 - Music and Dance Art.

Sofia, 21.10.2024

Prof. Velislav Zaimov, PhD