

REVIEW
by Prof. Georgi Metev Petkov, PhD
Department of Music, New Bulgarian University – Sofia,
Professional Field 8.3 Music and Dance Art
regarding the scholarly contributions of the publications and citations
of
Chief Assistant Professor Peyo Trendafilov Peev, PhD
***Prof. Asen Diamandiev* Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts**

With regard to the submitted evidence of scholarly contributions of Chief Assistant Professor Peyo Trendafilov Peev, PhD, in connection with his participation in a competition announced in State Gazette, Issue No. 82 of 07.10.2025, for the academic position of ‘Associate Professor’ in Professional Field 8.3 Music and Dance Art, major ‘Fiddle and Arrangement and Orchestration of Folk Ensembles’, in accordance with the requirements of the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act, its Implementing Regulations, and the Rules and Regulations for Acquiring Academic Degrees and Holding Academic Positions at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts.

General Presentation of the Procedure and the Candidate

Pursuant to Order No. RD 27-182 of 04.12.2025 issued by the Rector of *Prof. Asen Diamandiev* Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv, I was appointed as a member of the Scientific Jury in the competition procedure for the academic position of ‘Associate Professor’, Professional Field 8.3 Music and Dance Art, major ‘Fiddle and Arrangement and Orchestration of Folk Ensembles’.

The sole candidate in the competition, Chief Assistant Professor Peyo Trendafilov Peev, PhD, has submitted a complete set of documents related to the application procedure for the academic position of ‘Associate Professor’. The following documents have been presented:

- Application addressed to the Rector for participation in the competition for the academic position of ‘Associate Professor’ in ‘Fiddle and Arrangement and Orchestration of Folk Ensembles’, accompanied by a curriculum vitae outlining the candidate’s most significant publications and projects,

- Diploma certifying the completed educational and qualification degree of Master;
- Medical certificate,
- Certificate of no criminal record,
- Certificate verifying professional experience in the respective specialty/major,
- Statement of teaching workload during the previous academic year,
- Completed scientometric table,
- Author's report on the scholarly contributions of the publications and citations,
- Extract documenting the candidate's concert performances,
- Supporting documentary evidence corresponding to the scientometric table,

I have no remarks regarding the submitted documents and materials.

Chief Assistant Professor Peyo Peev, PhD, was born in 1975 in the city of Stara Zagora. He began his training in fiddle performance at *Zagorche* Children and Youth Ensemble, after which he graduated from *Filip Kutev* Secondary School of Music in the town of Kotel. In 1999 he obtained a Bachelor's degree with a specialization in 'Conducting of Folklore Ensembles', and in 2017 he completed a Master's degree in 'Performing Arts'. In 1997 he commenced his professional career as Concertmaster of the orchestra of *Filip Kutev* National Folklore Ensemble, and since 2000 he has been a soloist-orchestral musician and section leader in the Bulgarian National Radio Folk Music Orchestra. He has participated in dozens of international music projects and audio recording productions. He has performed worldwide with various ensembles and distinguished musicians, including Theodosii Spassov and the show 'Riverdance'. He has taken part in more than 50 album productions with musicians from around the world, including two solo albums and six albums on which he served as producer. For two years he was a member of the world-renowned show 'Riverdance', participating in approximately 150 concerts. In addition to being an exceptionally popular and virtuosic fiddle performer, Peyo Peev is also the author of numerous arrangements, orchestrations, and original compositions based on folklore material. He is the recipient of dozens of awards for performing excellence and for his arrangements. He composed the music for the stage productions 'Click', 'The Dance of the Wind', and '5 x 5+1'. He has repeatedly been invited as a lecturer at international seminars and masterclasses on the harmonization of Balkan music.

The fiddle performer Peyo Peev is an emblematic figure for the entire Bulgarian folklore community and beyond. It is hardly necessary to provide an extensive review to confirm his rich

artistic and creative activity - not only as a virtuoso instrumentalist of international acclaim, but also as a composer with profound knowledge of the subtleties of Bulgarian musical folklore tradition, as well as of harmonization and orchestration for folklore ensembles.

Since 2017, Peyo Peev has been teaching the discipline ‘Major Instrument - Fiddle’ at *Prof. Asen Diamandiev* Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv. Several years ago, the Department of Musical Folklore also entrusted him with the courses ‘Arrangement and Orchestration of Folk Ensembles’ and ‘Performance in a Folk Orchestra’. Through his excellent results as a pedagogue and his impressive career as a performer and composer, he has succeeded in attracting prospective fiddle students to *Prof. Asen Diamandiev* Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv.

Contributions of the Habilitation Thesis

As the principal artistic and creative habilitation material under Section B, Candidate Peev presents his two solo authorial albums, ‘Pletenitsa’ (*Interweaving*) (2007) and ‘Sreshti (*Meetings*)’ (2019), on which he serves as composer, arranger, and producer, as well as two leading artistic appearances in the field of the arts: the concert ‘Fiddlers on the Move’ by Peyo Peev and Vladimir Vladimirov, held at one of the most prestigious European music venues in the Belgian city of Ghent (2023), and the authorial concert ‘Folklore Easter’, presented jointly with the Kapanski Ensemble (2024). The submitted materials clearly demonstrate a broad chronological scope and attest to Peyo Peev’s sustained and highly esteemed presence in the musical sphere not only in Bulgaria, but also internationally, as well as to his active compositional and performing career spanning decades and his ability to unite musicians from diverse genres.

Peev demonstrated his remarkable mastery as a brilliant orchestrator as early as twenty years ago in his first solo album, ‘Pletenitsa’. The ten pieces included in the album encompass a wide range of emotional and sonic nuances characteristic of the folk orchestra. Undeniable evidence of the album’s artistic merit is the support it received from eminent Bulgarian folklore musicians such as Stoyan Yankulov (Stundzhi), Petar Milanov, Petar Ralchev, Theodosii Spassov, Hristo Yotsov, Nedyalko Nedyalkov, among many others, as well as from the Bulgarian National Radio Folk Music Orchestra under the baton of Hristofor Radanov.

In his authorial album ‘Meetings’, Peyo Peev has included selected works composed during the period following the release of his first album. Further evidence of the high artistic quality of ‘Meetings (Sreshti)’ is the participation of distinguished singers and instrumentalists,

among them the vocalists Teodora Stambolieva, Svetla Dukateva, Vanya Valkova, Tanya Hristozova, Miglena Nikolova, and Iliana Georgieva, as well as the instrumentalists Stoyan Yankulov, Petar Ralchev, Angel Zhekov, Temelko Ivanov, Nikolay Georgiev, Nedko Bogdanov, Kostadin Kostov, the *Lira* Orchestra, and *Riko Band*.

Contributions of the Other Habilitation Materials

Following a thorough review of all activities carried out by Chief Assistant Professor Peyo Peev, PhD, as reflected in the report submitted by him regarding compliance with the minimum national requirements, and after comparing them with the officially recognized scientometric evaluation table, I consider that his candidacy in the announced competition fully meets these requirements. There is clear conformity with the established eligibility criteria, and with respect to most indicators the awarded points exceed the minimum thresholds. In many categories, the candidate significantly surpasses the required minimum score. His overall academic and artistic output corresponds to a total of 640 points according to the scientometric table, distributed as follows:

Under Indicator A – 50 points.

Under Indicator B – 170 points (minimum required: 100 points).

Under Indicator Г – 305 points (minimum required: 120 points).

Under Indicator Д – 45 points (minimum required: 40 points).

Under Indicator E – 70 points (minimum required: 50 points).

The activities listed in the scientometric table represent only a small portion of Peyo Peev's broader creative and research achievements.

His doctoral thesis entitled 'The Fiddle: Acoustic Characteristics and Contemporary Trends in Its Amplification' will undoubtedly serve as a solid foundation for future research, as it constitutes a significant contribution to Bulgarian musicology and addresses highly relevant trends in contemporary fiddle performance practice. This work has already been officially published and is accessible to all interested readers.

Without engaging in a detailed enumeration of all submitted habilitation materials and citations, I would like to draw particular attention to one of the published scholarly articles listed in Section 'Г' (Item 9), which addresses the academic clarification of the fundamental concepts in the articulation of 'bow strokes' within the string section of the orchestra of folk instruments. I

consider that the thorough examination and clarification of this subject matter represents a contribution of clear practical and applied significance, particularly beneficial for professional folk instrument orchestras. This topic is grounded in the author's profound theoretical training, as well as in his extensive experience as a performer and composer.

Conclusion

I first became personally acquainted with Peyo Peev in 1997, when I was serving as conductor of the orchestra of *Filip Kutev* National Folklore Ensemble. I had been aware of his exceptional talent since his years as a student at the Secondary School of Music in Kotel. With great satisfaction, I welcomed him into the orchestra and immediately proposed that he assume the position of Concertmaster. My observations from our joint work are more than excellent. In addition to his virtuosic technique and outstanding talent as a fiddle performer, I came to know him as an impeccable and well-disposed colleague in his professional and interpersonal relations. In the subsequent years of his professional development, I have followed with genuine admiration and enthusiasm many of his most remarkable achievements as a performer and composer, and later also as a producer and sound engineer. At a very young age, he earned the respect of his colleagues, not only within the folklore community.

I have written this review with great pleasure and deep respect for his exceptional and multifaceted musical talent.

On the basis of all the above, I express my positive evaluation and confidently recommend to the esteemed members of the Scientific Jury in the competition for Associate Professor that they elect Chief Assistant Professor Peyo Peev, PhD, to the academic position of 'Associate Professor' in the Field of Higher Education 8. Arts, Professional Field 8.3 Music and Dance Art, for the needs of *Prof. Asen Diamandiev* Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv and the Department of Music Folklore.

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Prepared by: Prof. Georgi Petkov, PhD