

OPINION

by Prof. Vladimir Vladimirov, PhD

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regarding the competition for the academic position of

Associate Professor in the professional field 8.3 Music and Dance Arts,

Major: Fiddle and Arrangement and Orchestration of Folk Ensembles

for the needs of the Department of Musical Folklore

at the Faculty of Musical Folklore and Choreography

at *Prof. Asen Diamandiev* Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts - Plovdiv

In the announced competition for the position of *Associate Professor* in the major: Fiddle and Arrangement and Orchestration of Folk Ensembles, the only candidate is Assistant Professor Peyo Trendafilov Peev, PhD, a lecturer at *Prof. Asen Diamandiev* Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts - Plovdiv, within the Department of Musical Folklore. He has submitted all required documents and materials in accordance with the provisions of the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act and its implementing regulations, as well as the Regulations on the Conditions and Procedure for Obtaining Academic Degrees and Holding Academic Positions at *Prof. Asen Diamandiev* Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts - Plovdiv. The Scientific Jury was appointed by Order No. RD-27-182/04.12.2025 issued by the Rector of the institution.

Assistant Professor Peev, PhD, is a distinguished fiddler, composer, arranger, and researcher in the field of traditional instrumental music, with clearly defined scientific interests related to organology, acoustics, and contemporary trends in performance practice. His scholarly and creative activities are consistent, thematically coherent, and fully aligned with the profile of the announced competition.

The biographical information submitted by Peyo Peev, PhD, is extensive and diverse. He began his musical journey as a member of *Zagorche* Children and Youth Ensemble in Stara Zagora. He completed his studies at *Filip Kutev* Secondary School of Music - Kotel, and subsequently at *Prof. Asen Diamandiev* Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts - Plovdiv, majoring in Fiddle, earning a Master's degree in 2017. His professional career started at *Filip Kutev* National Folklore Ensemble, and for nearly a quarter of a

century he has served as a soloist-orchestral musician in the Folk Music Orchestra of the Bulgarian National Radio. This experience has allowed him to gain substantial stage experience and to further develop his professional skills.

The materials submitted by the candidate for the competition exceed the minimum requirements for scientometric indicators in most categories:

- **Group A:** 50 points;
- **Group B:** 170 points (minimum required: 100);
- **Group Г:** 305 points (minimum required: 120);
- **Group Д:** 45 points (minimum required: 40);
- **Group E:** 70 points (minimum required: 50).

The candidate has earned the educational and scientific degree of **Doctor (PhD)** with a dissertation thesis entitled '*The Fiddle: Acoustic Characteristics and Contemporary Trends in Its Amplification*', which represents an independent and current study in the field of traditional performance practice. The work demonstrates a thorough analytical approach to the specifics of the instrument under study, contributing both to organology and to an understanding of its acoustic properties. Based on the dissertation thesis, a standalone book was published, further consolidating the scholarly value and visibility of the results, with practical relevance for both academic teaching and the work of performers and sound engineers.

As habilitation works, the candidate presents two solo music albums ('*Meetings*' and '*Pletenitsa (Interweaving)*'), in which he served as composer, arranger, producer, and performer, along with two leading stage performances. These achievements portray him as a multifaceted musician with diverse creative pursuits. It can be confidently stated that, through his virtuosic compositions, Peyo Peev has established himself as one of the emblematic performers of contemporary fiddle art, exploring new creative directions and horizons.

Within the candidate's scholarly output, a notable publication appears in a specialized arts journal, addressing issues of orchestration and performance practice in folk orchestras. This text demonstrates both theoretical depth and a clearly articulated practical application. The citations listed under Group Д indicate that Peev's scholarly contributions have generated tangible interest within the professional community.

Alongside his remarkable work as a composer and arranger, Asst. Professor Peev, PhD has demonstrated an impressive creative activity as a performer - fiddler - collaborating on stage with prominent Bulgarian musicians (T. Spasov, P. Ralchev, M. Turiyski, and others) as well as with international artists (Jordi Savall, Christina Pluhar). The number of his stage performances with the world-renowned show *Riverdance* (nearly 150 performances over two years) and with the Folk Orchestra of the Bulgarian National Radio is also significant.

Based on my direct impressions of Peyo Peev's concert activity, it appears that part of it is not reflected in the scientometric table, which lists only three leading and six supporting performances. The candidate presents four short original works, and a possible omission is the recent musical album *Project Tambura* by the distinguished tambura player Nikolay Todorov, for which Peev served as the sole arranger.

The candidate's teaching activity is consistent and closely linked to his scholarly and creative interests. Since 2017, he has been actively involved in the educational process at *Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts*, as well as in leading masterclasses and workshops both in Bulgaria and abroad, creating opportunities to introduce contemporary approaches to the instruction of traditional instruments.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that Peyo Peev, PhD, is one of the most recognizable figures in contemporary Bulgarian musical folklore. He is a highly valued and sought-after arranger and composer with an original creative signature, an undisputed authority in our fiddle art, pushing the boundaries and breaking stereotypes, and inspiring the younger generation of folk musicians. I have personally witnessed his professional growth from the very beginning of his career and, in recent years, his development as a researcher.

Based on the above, I confidently give my full positive evaluation of the candidate in the present competition - Peyo Trendafilov Peev, PhD. I propose that the esteemed Scientific Jury support his election to the position of *Associate Professor* in the major *Fiddle and Arrangement and Orchestration of Folk Ensembles*, professional field 8.3 Music and Dance Arts, and recommend that the Faculty Council confirm his appointment.