

PEER REVIEW
BY PROF. DR. ADRIYANA BLAGOEVA
ON THE DOCUMENTS PRESENTED BY ASSOC. PROF. DR. VESELA GELEVA
FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE COMPETITION FOR THE OCCUPATION OF THE
ACADEMIC POSITION “PROFESSOR”
IN PROFESSIONAL FIELD: 8.3 MUSIC AND DANCE ARTS,
SPECIALTY “CHOIR CONDUCTING”
AT THE MUSIC PEDAGOGY AND CONDUCTING DEPARTMENT OF PROF.
ASEN DIAMANDIEV ACADEMY OF MUSIC, DANCE AND FINE ARTS – CITY OF
PLOVDIV

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vesela Geleva is a candidate in the competition for the academic position “Professor”, Specialty “Choir Conducting” at the Music Pedagogy and Conducting Department of Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – City Of Plovdiv.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. V. Geleva presents as documents for the competition a report on the contributions of the artistic and creative activity proposed as a habilitation work, a report on her overall pedagogical and creative activity for the period from 2010 to 2019, and a report on the implementation of the minimum national requirements with relevant evidence.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vesela Geleva completed her secondary education at Dobrin Petkov National School of Music and Dance Arts in Plovdiv with specialties “Piano” and “Music Theory”, and then a specialty “Choir Conducting” at Prof. P. Vladigerov National Music Academy in the classes of Prof. V. Arnaudov and Prof. V. Atanasova, Doctor of Arts.

She gained serious practical experience in various choir compositions and church choirs. V. Geleva is the author of articles in specialized publications and the monograph “*Petar Dinev and his Church Choir Legacy*”. She defended her doctoral degree in 2006 and has been an Associate Professor of Choir Conducting at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts since 2010. In 2006, Geleva created the Gaudeamus Academic Mixed Choir as a formation with the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts.

The artistic and creative activity of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vesela Geleva, proposed as a habilitation work, includes ten concerts with the Gaudeamus Academic Mixed Choir at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, performed in the period from 2010 to 2019. Six of these concerts were held in Bulgaria and four abroad.

The performances of the Gaudeamus Choir in Bulgaria can be divided into two groups – solo concerts and participations in festivals.

A. Solo concerts:

- Christmas concert at the First Studio of the Bulgarian National Radio – 14.12.2012. The program included Church Slavonic works by contemporary Bulgarian, Russian, and Ukrainian composers, including first performances in Bulgaria.
- Concert “Masterpieces of the German and French Baroque” – 08.04.2017. The program included premiere for Bulgaria performances of Cantata No 140 by J.S. Bach and the opera “Richard the Lionheart” by André Grétry.
- Concert and recording for EuroRadio – at the invitation of the Bulgarian National Radio – 09.03.2019. The program was dedicated to Church Slavonic music.

B. Participations in festivals:

- Concert within the festival “Balabanov House Music Days” – 06.06.2015. The program was composed of Church Slavonic music; there were also premiere performances.
- Joint concert with a guitar quartet from Minneapolis, USA within the GuitArt festival – 28.10.2018. Premiere performance of the choir cycle “Music of Love and Stars” by Jeffrey Van. The performance was also a premiere for Europe.
- Concert within the festival “Days of Chamber Music” in Gabrovo – 14.09.2019, with the program “Bulgarian and Russian Spiritual Music”.

Four of the six concerts in Bulgaria featured orthodox music by Bulgarian and Russian composers. There were first performances in four of the concerts. Among them were especially the major works – Cantata No 140 by Bach, the Opera “Richard the Lionheart” by André Grétry – premieres for Bulgaria, and the choir cycle “Music of Love and Stars” by Jeffrey Van – European premiere.

The performances of the Gaudeamus Choir abroad for the specified period were:

- Concert tour in Belgium – November 2013 – with a program of Bulgarian and Russian Orthodox music;
- Participation in the 35th International Choir Festival for Church Slavonic Music “Hajnowka”, Poland – May 2016, entirely with an orthodox program;
- Participation in the Christmas Choir Festival in Prague, Czech Republic – 02.12.2017, with a program of orthodox and church music by foreign composers;
- Participation in the spring festival in Paris, France – 11.04.2018. Solo concerts were performed with a program including orthodox and contemporary music, as well as participation of people in joint performances of “German Requiem” by J. Brahms and “Missa Brevis” by Karol Beffa.

On the basis of the ten concerts with Gaudeamus Academic Mixed Choir presented as habilitation work, the following can be noted as contributing moments in the conducting activity of V. Geleva:

- the active popularization of the Bulgarian and Russian Church Slavonic music;
- the priority performance of contemporary Bulgarian and foreign music;
- the impressive number of first performances in concert programs, including a European premiere.

Another contributing moment is the fact that in 2019 the Gaudeamus Academic Mixed Choir was chosen by the Bulgarian National Radio to present Bulgarian choir art on EuroRadio through its recordings.

Another important contribution is that through its various activities the Gaudeamus Academic Mixed Choir under the direction of Vesela Geleva goes beyond its institutional framework – Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv, and is established as a group that worthily represents the Bulgarian choir art at home and abroad.

The entire creative and artistic activity of Vesela Geleva in the period from 2010 to 2019 shows that she is an active and challenging artist. Her conducting work during the period is associated not only with the Gaudeamus Academic Mixed Choir, but also with the church choir to the St. Trinity Church in Plovdiv and with the choir of the Plovdiv Opera.

In her work with the Gaudeamus Academic Mixed Choir, the numerous solo concerts and the participation of the Choir in a number of national choir festivals – in Yambol, Pomorie, Blagoevgrad, Gabrovo, Sofia, and others, also deserve attention. The international activity of the Choir is extremely active. It participates in festivals in Macedonia, Greece, Italy, Hungary,

Poland, and the Czech Republic. Its three participations in concert projects in France in 2010, 2012 and 2018, deserve special attention.

An important form of performance of the Choir is its participation in performances of the Educational Opera Theater of the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, where it also performs premiere titles for Bulgaria – the Operas “Semele” by Handel and “The Fairy-Queen” by Purcell.

Vesela Geleva’s conducting work with the choir of the Plovdiv Opera is related to the realization of opera and operetta titles – “Nabucco”, “Troubadour”, “The Bat”, and of cantata-oratorio works – “Magnificat” by Bach, “Requiem” by Mozart , “Carmina Burana” by C. Orff.

The summarization of the overall creative and artistic activity of Assoc. Prof. V. Geleva necessitates mentioning again the realized premiere performances under her conducting or with her participation. Among them, her participation with the Gaudeamus Choir in 2010 in France in the world premiere of the Opera “The Castle” by Karol Beffa and the recordings for DVD and Mezzo TV, occupies an important place.

The pedagogical activity of Assoc. Prof. Dr. V. Geleva at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts is no less active. Since 1994, she has been teaching choir conducting, score reading, course choir, and others. In addition, she is the author of curricula, the leader of art projects, a mentor in the program “Teaching Practices”, and a member of scientific juries.

There are a number of graduating students under her guidance working as choir conductors.

The attached documents of Vesela Geleva for participation in the competition convincingly prove that she is an erudite musician with rich conducting and pedagogical experience.

Having in mind the above, I propose to the esteemed scientific jury to support the candidacy of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vesela Geleva for the academic position “Professor” in Choir Conducting in Professional Field: 8.3 Music and Dance Arts at the Music Pedagogy and Conducting Department of Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – City of Plovdiv.

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Sofia

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