

## **OPINION**

by Prof Violeta Gorcheva, PhD

for the dissertation work of Dragomir Yordanov,

full-time doctoral student

in the Department of Choreography at Faculty of Musical Folklore and Choreography – AMDFA

on the topic: **Interaction between the Bulgarian stage folk dance and contemporary dance styles**

for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree doctor

in a professional field 8.3. Music and Dance Art

doctoral program Choreography

**Academic supervisor:** Prof Zhelka Tabakova, PhD

### **Relevance of the topic**

The Bulgarian folk dance has always been a powerful catalyst and nourishing substance both for our national classical ballet productions and in the experimental handling and collaboration with contemporary styles, including those from popular dance practice. The power, the charge, the uneven musical rhythm, the unique dance elements and techniques of the Bulgarian stage dance, undoubtedly bring an attractive touch and colorfully enrich the contemporary dance style and vocabulary.

In the context of the above, the presented dissertation fits into the current searches and trends and lays new touches in our scientific thought.

The interest is understandably inspired by the personal biases and experience of Dragomir Yordanov, who has serious theoretical training, competence and practical skills as an established dance performer, choreographer, pedagogue /as evident from the presented CV/.

### **Structure of the dissertation**

The dissertation work is of the theoretical-applied type and is presented in a total of 163 pages. It consists of introduction, 4 chapters, conclusion and 1 appendix. The bibliography contains 88 sources: 76 in Cyrillic, 13 in Latin, 8 internet sites.

The abstract correctly conveys and accurately synthesizes the essence of the content.

The doctoral student has 3 publications and 3 participations in scientific conferences on the specifics of the dissertation work, the generated contributions are also presented.

### **Description and evaluation of the dissertation work**

The introduction foregrounds the personal motives of Dragomir Yordanov, which provoked the appearance of the work, specifies and clarifies the important details regarding the selection and development of the material, refers to the approach and methods used – universal and private, based on empirical experience. They are precisely formulated – the object of research, the subject, the leading goal and the specific tasks

The **first chapter** focuses on the specifics of the Bulgarian authentic *ring dance*, tracing its evolution and transformation into a stage form. The key factors of an objective and subjective nature,

which provoked the need for this process and adaptation, are brought out. The new moments in terms of placement, stage attributes and environment, dramaturgical and compositional approach are highlighted. The author emphasizes the landmark for Bulgaria innovative productions *Danube Fairy Tale* and the suite *Uralia*, and their creators - the choreographers - Kiril Dzhenev and Daniela Dzheneva.

I will also mention the interviews with contemporary Bulgarian choreographers, outlining the panoramic picture of the Bulgarian stage dance in terms of stylistics, vocabulary, new approaches, experiments, provocations, conquests.

In the **second chapter**, the ring-dance is studied in detail in its projection of a basic dance form in the Bulgarian folklore, in terms of etymology, choreographic structure, kinds and types of dances. The author describes in detail the 6 ethnographic regions in Bulgaria and outlines their specific ways of dancing and performing the dance movements and elements. Using this a basis, he searches and brings out the points of contact and intersection between the modern dances (Martha Graham technique, house dance, breakdance, hip-hop) and the Bulgarian stage dance.

The **third chapter** emphasizes on the traditional and modern dance models included in the training and more specifically on the essence and application of the *exercise* in the Bulgarian folk choreography. Their structure and construction model are outlined in detail. The doctoral candidate expands the scope of his research, bringing out the main characteristics of the street dance styles, an invention of the Hip-Hop culture, as well as the contemporary dance styles. Yordanov not only makes a parallel comparison, but he also highlights their specific characteristics, searches for and discovers the borrowings between them, in order to reach the conclusion (based on the survey conducted by him) that *an aesthetic synthesis between all these disparate dance styles is possible*. An indisputable **contribution** is the exercise conceptualized by him and applied in his practice, combining modern dance techniques and folk dance elements.

The **fourth chapter** explores the interplay between folk, classical and contemporary dance in stage forms and traces trends directly resulting from this exchange and collaboration. The author presents in detail the profile of the first Bulgarian ballets that use the folklore as a basis (*Dragon and Yana*", *Legend of the Lake*, *Nestinarka*, etc.), as well as non-ballet music (*By the River*). The dance performances *Swan Ring Dance* and *Orisia* are analyzed in their projection of representative opuses, mixing classical ballets with Bulgarian folklore, and relevant conclusions are drawn regarding these experiments.

The **conclusion** is a kind of recapitulation, it convincingly argues and confirms the conclusions and generalizations.

### **Contributions**

Based on everything said so far, I believe that the *dissertation work generates a high contribution value*. It provides up-to-date information in theoretical terms, as well as practical instructions, which could be successfully relied upon not only by trainee dancers, but also by active

teachers and choreographers.

Among the contributions I will single out:

*1. the conceptualized model for mixing different dance styles in the training of dancers and its application in practice;*

*2. the derived mechanisms for creating new choreographic productions in the spirit of the 21st century;*

*3. the proven applicability of interaction as a method in creating a new system in dance education.*

### **Conclusion**

Based on everything presented so far, I give my positive assessment to Dragomir Yordanov's dissertation work *Interaction between the Bulgarian stage folk dance and contemporary dance styles* and I confidently propose to the members of the respected scientific jury to award him the scientific and educational degree "doctor" in science specialty Music Studies and Music Art, professional field 8.3 Music and Dance Art.

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