

## OPINION

by **Assoc. Prof Milena Ivanova Bogdanova**, PhD – lecturer at  
Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts "Prof Asen Diamandiev"

for the dissertation work of Edward Sarafyan

for the awarding of an educational and scientific degree "doctor" in the field of higher education 8.  
Arts, professional direction: 8. 3. Music and dance art, scientific specialty: Music Studies and Music

Art

Academic supervisor: Prof Toni Shekerdzhieva-Novak

Title: **FORMATION AND BUILDING OF CLARINET EMBOUCHURE**

The dissertation work of Eduard Sarafyan is developed at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts "Prof Asen Diamandiev" - Plovdiv. It has been discussed and referred for defense at a meeting of the department of Classical, Pop and Jazz Performing Arts of the faculty of Musical Pedagogy.

The presented dissertation work, the author's abstract and the three scientific publications published in support of the theoretical research cover the minimum national requirements.

The author of the dissertation has professional qualification "musician-instrumentalist", educational and qualification degree Bachelor and Master in the specialty "Instrumental art - Clarinet". As a solo and chamber performer and a soloist of wind and philharmonic-opera orchestras, Eduard Sarafyan participates an active concert and recording activity. He is a prominent clarinet teacher, master class leader and member of a number of national and international competition juries. Eduard Sarafyan is currently a clarinet teacher at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts "Prof Asen Diamandiev" and at the National School of Music and Dance Art "Dobrin Petkov" in Plovdiv.

### **Relevance of the work**

In the exposition of the dissertation, the focus of attention falls on the clarinet embouchure, defined by the author as a production problem "*inextricably linked to the quality of sound production, responsible for the degree of acoustic precision in reproduction and one of the key elements of the production system when playing wind instruments*" [p. 9]. Connecting the problems in musical performance practice with the achievements in the field of music psychology and cognitive musicology, the author of the present work motivates the choice of topic by emphasizing the importance of the interaction between the instrumentalist's motor experience and the quality of musical perception. In this context, the problem of the formation and building of the clarinet embouchure as a means of optimizing the practical mastery of the various means of musical expressiveness, as well as its role in the formation of musical-auditory representations, is of high relevance.

### **Structure of the dissertation**

The dissertation has a total of 215 standard pages and is structured in an introduction; four chapters with their accompanying sections, a conclusion and a list of references.

The number of sources used is 85 (books and articles). Of these, 48 in Cyrillic and 37 in Latin.

### **Content Features**

The dissertation work is broadly developed in musical-historical, theoretical, psychological and didactic-pedagogical terms, and each of these is specifically and clearly defined in separate chapters. Another merit of the present research is the possibility to follow and present the subject referred to in it through the eyes of the performer, the educator, the leader of master classes, the member of competition juries, and last but not least the researcher, such as the author of the work Eduard Sarafyan is. I accept that the text has two main constituent parts – theoretical and practical.

The first covers an in-depth historical-theoretical study and analysis of specific information directly related to the main subject of the study, thereby preparing and introducing the content of the second component. The conducted and detailed results of the semi-structured interviews, as well as the diagnostics and the forecasts from the individual lessons - master classes, based on a thorough preliminary analysis and supported by photographic material, are a key point in understanding the contribution of the proposed effective system of exercises, accompanied by methodological notes suggesting the in-depth theoretical knowledge and psychological-pedagogical skills acquired in the long-term teaching practice of the doctoral candidate.

For me, as a music educator and the author of the course "Methods and psychological techniques for development of ear training", the content related to sound production through the prism of psychology, as well as the psychological-cognitive processes in music performance analyzed in the third chapter, caused the greatest interest. The author discusses the psychological aspects of sound production, skillfully interweaving musical perception, presenting and proving its optimizing impact on the process. Analyzing the musical-performance activity, Eduard Sarafyan examines specific mechanisms of interaction with auditory attention, emphasizing its important role in achieving "*efficiency in the educational process, in particular, that related to achieving good sound production*" [p. 129]. I particularly admire my colleague for the content of section five in chapter two, devoted to the fundamental importance of a well-developed musical ear in achieving "*tonally accurate and artistically sound production*" [p. 105]. With enviable competence, the doctoral candidate presents the symbiosis and balance between the internal musical-auditory representations, visual and motor processes necessary for the instrumental performance. Referring to the findings of important researches, he logically deduces that "*musical perception, musical auditory representations, musical thinking, and musical memory all stand to be identified as important and indivisible components optimizing the process of sound production.*" [p. 108]"

### **Conclusion**

In general, Eduard Sarafyan's dissertation shows an author's attitude, professional competence and meets the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its implementation. Along with the contributions highlighted in this opinion, the exposition demonstrates striving for comprehensiveness and accuracy in relation to the analysis of the content in the reviewed scientific works and didactic aids, as well as to key concepts clarifying the topic. In this line of thought and based on the above, I propose to the Honorable Scientific Jury to award Eduard Magardich Sarafyan the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the scientific specialty "Musical studies and Musical Art".

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