

OPINION

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On a dissertation work for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "doctor"

of Rumyana Nikolaeva Petrova on the subject

"The role of ensemble playing in early learning on orchestral instruments"

Professional direction 8.3. Music and dance art

Doctoral program "Musicology and musical Faculty of Music Pedagogy"

Department "Classic and Pop and Jazz Performing Arts"

Academy of Music, Dance and Visual Arts "Prof. Asen Diamandiev" Plovdiv

Research supervisor: Associate Professor Kiril Ivanov Chaplikov

The professional biography presented by Rumyana Petrova gives information about her professional achievements. She has worked in Europe, North America and South Africa. Her music education includes two Master's degrees in Music pedagogy at AMDVA - Plovdiv and Performing Arts at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. These two profiles define the creative position of an "actively playing pedagogue".

Her performing career began with a five-year experience as an orchestra player in the symphony and opera orchestras of Pretoria, Cape Town and Durban in South Africa. In 1999 she was living the USA and working as a chamber musician and soloist. She gave 15 concerts in Carnegie Hall in New York, as well as in Washington, Boston, Miami, and other cities the east coast of the USA. She was teaching for 10 years in The Brooklyn Conservatory in New York and the Stradivari School of Music in Miami, promoting Bulgarian music abroad and receiving the Annual Award of the "Bulgarian Virtuosi" Foundation in 2003.

Between 2008-2018 she was teaching viola, chamber music and orchestral playing in National school of arts "Dobri Hristov" in Varna, hosting weekly radio show "The Festivals" in Radio Varna and working in the Directorate of Culture of the Municipality of Varna as a manager of the IMF "Varna summer". As a performer, she participated in the prestigious Bulgarian music festivals IMF "Varna Summer", IMF Sofia Music Weeks" and IMF "March music days". In 2019, she received an honorary plaque from "Sofia Musical Weeks" for implementing long-standing joint activity between SMS and "Varna Summer".

As a pedagogue at National school of arts "Dobri Hristov" she restores the activity of the Youth symphony orchestra of the school, and currently the ensemble performs over 8 concert annually. Organized a joint project between National school of arts "Dobri Hristov"

and he Municipality of Varna: a series of educational concerts "Varna summer for children" by children-performers who play in front of the audience of children with their parents. For the same project she received the Grand Prize for Overall Achievements of BAROK (Bulgarian Association of Employers in the Field of Culture) for 2019.

The pedagogical achievements of the candidate are numerous first prizes of her students from national and international competitions, as well as the academic success of the graduating students who are currently studying in the most prestigious music schools and academies in our country and around the world.

She has worked as a manager of European projects with the participation of National school of arts "Dobri Hristov" - Varna under the "Comenius" and "Leonardo da Vinci" programs in the period 2012-2014. She has two released CDs with her own music and numerous recordings for BNR.

Since December 2019, she has been holding the position "director" of NSA "Dobri Hristov" -Varna.

The dissertation is 164 pages long. It consists of an Introduction, Three Chapters, Conclusion, Contributions and Bibliography. The text contains 6 fragment images of scores, 2 reproductions of photographs, 11 tables and 14 graphs. The bibliography of the literature used includes 69 sources, of which 25 in Cyrillic, 39 in Latin alphabet and 5 internet sources. 3 appendices are included in the dissertation work: (1) Surveys with participants in the Varna Youth Symphony Orchestra, (2) Interviews with teachers of orchestral instruments from NSA "Dobri Hristov" Varna and (3) Recommended literature for working with children's orchestras.

The dissertation was discussed and proposed for public defence by the department "Classical and Pop and Jazz Performing Arts" at the Faculty of Music pedagogy" of the Academy of Music, Dance and Visual Arts "Prof. Asen Diamandiev" Plovdiv at a meeting of the department on January 24, 2023.

THE INTRODUCTION of the present paper presents adolescent musicians who study orchestral instruments in music schools with an academic perspective education and subsequent realization as professional musicians. The concept "early learning stage" is used in the exposition to describe the phase in which the young instrumentalist has acquired basic instrumental skills, but still must be built as a musician.

The subject of the study is ensemble playing at an early stage of learning and its importance in the formation of individual instrumental and personal qualities of the young musician, as well as its stimulating role for a successful academic and professional development of young people in the field of musical art.

The research method involves examining and analysing various components, relating to the subject: tracing children's orchestral practices from the Baroque to nowadays; analysis of publications by psychologists and educators on the role of ensemble playing; presenting and summarizing the results of one's own research carried out through surveys of young orchestral players and interviews with their teachers.

In her professional practice, the author of the present work is consistently experimenting with different methods of music education and upbringing from Europe, Asia and America, exploring and comparing their points of reference and good practices.

As a teacher of chamber music and orchestral playing, the author has been performing ten years long experiment that involves observation, data collection, and behaviour analysis of young musicians who attend ensembles after the fourth or fifth year of studying an instrument. With the better instrumentalists, the ensembles include chamber music and orchestral playing, and for the rest mainly orchestral playing. There is also a control group of children who do not participate in ensembles.

FIRST CHAPTER "Children's Orchestra Practices from the Baroque to the Present" has six sub-points in which are discussed professionally and in details the ensemble playing, results and achievements of the children's ensemble work. The practice of "Red haired priest" Antonio Vivaldi, which has been proven over time and the Suzuki modern method of teaching children in ensemble playing are described, along with The El Sistema phenomenon which is in itself unique as it is fully state-funded and is a volunteer-type educational program with author Jose Antonio Abreu. Here follows the history of the "Pioneer" Philharmonic, which is an example of everything mentioned so far.

SECOND CHAPTER "Publications on the topic" contains: types of publications, publications evaluating the role of ensemble playing from the point of view of psychology, the role of ensemble playing affected in some methods for training in orchestra instruments and conclusions. Comparing the viewpoints of the cited authors of methods for teaching orchestral instruments (strings, brass and percussion) the author observes different assessments about the role of ensemble playing. The imbalance between the difficulty of the repertoire and the length of the rehearsal period for its training in some school orchestras is a reason for distrust on the part of some educators regarding the orchestra as a place where sloppiness is allowed in relation to intonation and sound production. While this problem can be solved through proper planning of ensemble activities, it should be noted that the expectations of the teachers of individual training regarding the creation of a soloist from each student are not always constructive. Practice proves that the professional realization of the young orchestral instrumentalist is precisely in the orchestra.

CHAPTER THREE is the author's own research. It consists of a General Study, where quantitative and qualitative research methods are applied. "Survey" shows the types of surveys and their productiveness and results are described in detail. "Interviews" is a peculiar view of the different perspective of the study from the teacher on the one hand, and the performer on the other hand. The respondents are students playing different instruments. "Results and Conclusions of the Study" with matching opinions of students and teachers shows there is a complete overlap in their high rating of the role of ensemble playing in the early stage of training as a factor for the complete development of the overall appearance of the future professional musician. If applied adequately, with appropriate and age-appropriate art material, playing in an orchestra can be of great help to individual training in orchestral instruments in specialized music schools.

THE CONCLUSION - The present work aims to prove the important role of the ensemble playing in the early stage of orchestral instrument training and its benefits for children studying in professional music schools. The author explores the contribution of

ensemble practices to the formation of basic instrumental and personal qualities in young instrumentalists; qualities necessary for their successful future academic and professional realization in the field of music art.

CONTRIBUTIONS of the dissertation work: Regarding the theory of the musical educational process, the present work presents an up-to-date perspective on the application of ensemble playing in the early stages of training for orchestral instrumentalists.

From the point of view of personal development and growth, the author poses the question of adequately career guidance of the young musician with a view to successful professional realization.

A contribution related to the practical application of orchestral instruments is the reasoned derivation of the five important elements for proper integration of ensemble playing in the overall musical educational process.

From the point of view of didactics, the author hopes through the present work to lay the foundations for further research on the subject as well as to create a methodology for the systematic learning ensemble playing in the early stages of instrumental learning, in accordance with the modern curricula for music schools in the country.

A detailed bibliography and descriptions of all publications follow.

After getting acquainted in detail with the work and research of candidate Romyana Petrova I confidently recommend the scientific jury to award the educational and scientific degree "doctor".

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