

## **REVIEW**

**from**

**Assoc. Dr. Angel Angelov Zaberski, Department of Music, NBU,**

professional field 8.3 "Music and Dance Art"

on the doctoral dissertation

**by**

**Etien Herzl Levy**

**"Music Singing Contests in Bulgaria: *Music Idol, X Factor, and Like Two Drops of Water*"**

for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor"

Professional field: 8.3. Music and Dance

**Scientific supervisor:** Prof. Milena Shushulova-Pavlova, PhD

The exceptional professional experience and musical career of Assoc. Etienne Levy are indisputable and I am aware of that. I know that after graduating from the Conservatory, his professional career is that of active solo performances and participant in vocal groups. He is also the creator of the famous vocal group "Trick", he has numerous awards at home and abroad. For many years he has combined his performances on stage with teaching activities, passing on his experience to young talents at both the Music Academy and New Bulgarian University. Because of his popularity, since 2007 he has also participated in various music formats.

It is to these formats that his work is dedicated and presented. The various aspects and incarnations allow him to explore, compare and justify his practical activities on a theoretical level. In this sense, empirical observations, analyzes, conclusions, as well as the principles, rules and results of the application of these musical forms can be used as a starting point for the dissertation.

The numerous formats in different televisions, the viewers' interest and performance achievements of the participants, the tasks of the juries and mentors, the importance of these formats for the development of the artistic career and qualities of the singers, show the **meaning of this research.**

The dissertation has a volume of 139 pages and is logically structured with an introduction, four chapters, conclusion, contributions, bibliography, sources and two annexes. Of these, 122 pages are basic text, contain 377 footnotes, 10 pages of bibliography, which includes 125 literary and Internet sources. The annotation contains 31 pages, includes essential points of the dissertation, corresponding to the basics and contributions.

In the **introduction**, the author sets out the reasons for his interest in the topic and presents its problems. The main objectives, tasks and methodology are well explained. It traces the history of television singing formats. Explores and describes the formats realized in Bulgaria and the participants in them. It tracks the effect of the vocal training of the performers from the *Music Idol* and the *X F Factor* to improve their vocal skills. Follow what the winners of *Music Idol* and *X Factor* have achieved as vocal performers after participating in these formats. Tracks the importance of vocal training for performers in *Like Two Drops of Water* to improve their performing skills and improve the quality of their vocal performances.

**The first chapter** is devoted to the historical development of music singing formats. The author shows excellent awareness of the topic – when considering the prerequisites for the emergence of formats, their distribution around the world and their appearance in Bulgaria.

The **second chapter** examines the characteristics of the formats *Music Idol* and *X Factor*, as well as the realization of the winners after the completion of the formats. As a result of his research, the PhD student came to the conclusion that the winners of both formats are realized professionally. According to him, the *X Factor* is more successful in the development of the careers of young artists thanks to the contract with Virginia Records, who produced their first appearances.

In the **third chapter**, the author describes the vocal work with the participants from *Music Idol* and *X Factor*. In it, he examines the nature of vocal performance and specific to

the performance of pop and rock music. The author clearly exposes his theoretical knowledge in the field of vocal pedagogy. He accurately and clearly describes the methodical steps in the vocal training of performers and explores their vocal performing skills.

The **fourth chapter** describes the television singing format for imitations *As Two Drops of Water* - the jury, the participants, their vocal preparation, and its results. The author uses the same research methods in the preparation of imitations of songs of the participants as in *Music Idol* and *X Factor*.

### **Contributions:**

- A historical overview of the famous singing formats in Bulgaria is made. The formats of *Music Idol*, *X Factor* and *Like Two Drops of Water* are described in detail. The appearance of television formats for singing shows in Bulgaria is examined.
- For the first time in Bulgaria, a study is made on the effectiveness of vocal training during the participation of performers in singing formats.
- The work with the participants is described and results are derived to confirm the effectiveness of their vocal training. Subsequently, the participants successfully apply the acquired knowledge, skills, and competences in their performances.
- The realization of the winners of *Music Idol* and *X Factor* after their participation in the formats is over.
- The vocal work with the participants in *Like Two Drops of Water* is important for developing their skills and improving the quality of their vocal performances.
- The doctoral dissertation offers a large collection work with a serious review of the active and most attractive artists (singers and not singers) – on the stage in Bulgaria in the last 20-30 years, who show the face of popular culture in our country.
- The doctoral thesis clearly proves that these music formats not only provide an opportunity for new performers, but also form new standards and trends in the Bulgarian music

industry. Many of the former participants continue their successful careers after participating in these shows, which contributes to the diversity and quality of music culture in the country.

- Another contribution to the development of the thesis is that the PhD student definitely proves that music formats not only create music stars, but also have a social impact, stimulating public interest and support. They gather viewers, regardless of age, and provide an opportunity for public discussion of musical culture.

### **Conclusions:**

And finally, let me summarize - the research by Etien Levy skillfully combines research and practical aspects in his goals and objectives, demonstrates professional competence in the written and research part. The dissertation works meet the requirements for a dissertation, make significant contributions and show that the candidate has knowledge and experience, able to process and analyze a large volume of materials.

I believe that the dissertation gives me reason to propose to the scientific jury to award the educational and scientific degree of "doctor" to **Etien Herzl Levy**.

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