

REVIEW

by

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Dissertation: "MUSICAL SINGING FORMATS IN BULGARIA: MUSICAL IDLE, X-FACTOR AND LIKE TWO DROPS OF WATER"

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The huge educational and musical and performing professional experience of the doctoral student is beyond doubt and I am well aware of it. I have the honor and pleasure to know Etienne Levy from our high school years, when he was a pianist and vocalist of the jazz & rock band of the Sofia Music School "6+3", in which I also worked later. Already after graduating from the Bulgarian State Conservatory (now the National Academy of Music "Prof. Pancho Vladigerov") with the degrees of Bachelor and Master (1991), his professional path has been of an active solo performance and participant in vocal groups such as the emblematic "Trick", marked with numerous awards at home and abroad. But for 25 years he has happily combined the stage and recordings with a teaching activity in which he applies and passes on his vast experience to young talents successively at the National Academy of Music and New Bulgarian University, and he has successfully dealt with this to this day. This has led him to participate as a jury member and a mentor in various music formats since 2007. It is to these formats that the presented work is dedicated, and the various aspects and incarnations allow him to analyze, compare and argue at a theoretical level its practical activities and observations. In this sense, empirical observations, analyzes and conclusions, as well as the principles, rules and results (positive and negative) in the conduct of these music formats, can be drawn equally as starting points of the dissertation.

The numerous formats in different televisions, the viewers' interest and performance achievements of the performers, the tasks of the juries and mentors, the importance of these formats for the development of the artistic career and qualities of the singers, determine the **relevance of this research**. The proposed dissertation contains a total of 139 pages, is structured in an introduction, four chapters and a conclusion with 2 annexes in tabular form. The contributions of the development are separated, there are also 10 illustrative diagrams and 377 footnote explanations. A reference list of 10 pages (in Bulgarian, Russian, Romanian, Spanish and English) is attached. The annotation 31 pages of concise text, concisely presented are all the essential moments of the dissertation, it corresponds to the main points and contributions, and I have no comments to it.

The role of the **Introduction** is to introduce us to the issues, including by noting the reasons for the author's interest in it. Here I can say that the tasks set are performed successfully. And they are:

1. To trace the history of television singing formats.
2. To study and describe the formats realized in Bulgaria and the participants in them – presenters, jury, performers.
3. To monitor the effectiveness of the vocal training of the performers in "Music Idol" and "X-factor" to achieve optimal development of their vocal and performing skills.
4. To track the realization of the winners of the formats "Music Idol" and "X factor" as vocal performers after their participation in the formats.
5. To trace the importance of the vocal training of the performers in the format "Like two drops of water" for improving their performing skills and improving the quality of their vocal performances.

Chapter One exhaustively presents the context of the study and traces the essence and history of the original international musical singing formats. The prerequisites for the emergence of musical reality formats; musical singing formats around the world – *Pop Idol*, *X-Faktor*, *The Voice*, *Tu kara me suena* (Like Two Drops of Water) are examined, and finally the birth and development of singing formats in Bulgaria.

The second chapter is dedicated to television **singing** formats aimed at discovering new talents. The essence and specific features of the *Music Idol and X-factor formats are discussed*, and the realization of the winners is also traced.

The third chapter based on the available experience of the doctoral student examines vocal work with the participants from the formats *Music Idol and X-factor*. The essence of the vocal-performing activity and the vocal preparation of the participants are

described. The results of the vocal work are presented, a comparative analysis of the results of the two formats is made.

Chapter Four presents the essence of the TV format *Like Two Drops of Water* - the jury, the participants, their vocal preparation and its results.

In the research, the separate contributions of the development logically follow, with which I fully agree:

1. A historical overview of our famous music singing formats is made, according to the sequence of their appearance over time. The prerequisites for their occurrence are analyzed. The formats "Pop Idol", "X-factor", "The Voice" and "Like Two Drops of Water" in Bulgaria are described in detail. The editions of the formats are systematized according to the number of seasons in different countries. The appearance of television singing formats in Bulgaria is justified.
2. This is the first study in Bulgaria to establish the effectiveness of vocal training during the participation of performers in the formats "Music Idol" and "X-factor".
3. The vocal work with the participants is described step by step and results are derived that confirm the effectiveness of their vocal preparation. The participants' acquired knowledge, skills and competences are subsequently successfully applied in their musical performances.
4. The realization of the winners of "Music Idol" and "X-factor" after the end of their participation in the formats is traced, which proves the role of the show for their

subsequent successful career.

5. The results of the conducted vocal work with the participants in "Like Two Drops of Water" prove its importance in improving their skills and improving the quality of vocal incarnations of the participants.
6. The doctoral work offers great collecting 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.

My recommendation to the development is: since some of the formats under consideration are still on active, the interruption of the study in time until 2020 does not give us an idea of the current dynamics in their development and here there is a field for continuing the research.

In conclusion - the development skillfully combines research and practical aspects in its set goal and tasks, demonstrates professional competence in the descriptive and research part. The development meets the requirements for dissertation, has significant contributions and shows that the candidate has in-depth knowledge and experience, being able to process and analyze a large volume of materials.

In view of the above, I believe that the dissertation presented gives me grounds with full confidence to propose to the venerable scientific jury to award the educational and scientific degree of "Doctor" to **Etien Herzl Levy**.

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Prof. Dr. Momchil Georgiev