

OPINION

by

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of

the Thesis for the award of the PhD educational and scientific degree Professional field 8.3

"Music and Dance Art", doctoral programme

"Music"

PhD student: Hristo Ivanov Dimitrov, doctoral student on a separate schedule with the Master department, scientific specialty *Music theory and music art of*

NEW BULGARIAN UNIVERSITY

Theme: **National Folklore Ensemble Bulgare. Managing and creative approaches**

Scientific supervisor: Prof. Georg Kraev, PhD

This thesis review is made based on Order №3-PK-284 from 26.07.2022 of the Rector of the NEW BULGARIAN UNIVERSITY concerning the approval of the members of the scientific jury and the submitted thesis, thesis outline, excerpt of the contributions in the thesis, publications on the theme of the thesis, in accordance with the requirements of the Act on the development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ADASRB) and the Ordinance on the application of the ADASRB for the award of the PhD educational and scientific degree and the scientific degree Doctor of Science.

I. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS AND EVALUATION OF THE THESIS

After the completion of his secondary education, Hristo Dimitrov continued his studies with the Academy of Music, Dance and Visual Arts "Prof. Asen Diamandiev" Plovdiv, major Choreography and directing. He graduated in 1994 in the class of prof. Petar Lukanov. Till 2000 his professional realization was directed towards the entrepreneurship, publishing and advertising. In 2002, together with his sister Elena Anderson and the financial support of British citizen Jan Charles Anderson, he founded the National Folklore Ensemble Bulgare. As a choreographer, director and manager of the ensemble Bulgare, the PhD student Hristo Dimitrov skilfully combined a large scale creative and producing activity. He is the organizer and co-author of various patriotic initiatives and festivals. In January 2015 in Plovdiv, on his initiative, the Association of Choreographers in Bulgaria" was started and he was elected chairman. On his proposal, the Annual awards in the field of dance art "Golden Muse" were created and awarded on International Dance Day 29 April, each year since 2017 in an official ceremony at the National Palace of Culture. For his overall activity Hristo Dimitrov was awarded numerous prizes, some of which are: Honorary badge "Golden Century" (seal of the Tsar Simeon the Great) and diploma from the Ministry of Culture for his great contribution to the development of Bulgarian

culture, on the occasion of 24 May 2014, Order of "St. St. Cyril and Methodius" - first degree by Decree No 103 of 1 June 2020 of the President of the Republic of Bulgaria Rumen Radev.

The biography and the professional path of the author of the thesis in review Hristo Dimitrov clearly suggest the reason for which he chose the surveyed theme: **The National Folklore Ensemble Bulgare. Managing and creative approaches** This theme matches a large creative and managerial experience with the doctoral studies as the follow-up of the student's professional and personal interests.

The formal indicators of the thesis fully meet the requirements for this type of scientific surveys. It has 232 pages, of which 150 are the main text. The bibliographical reference includes 220 titles in Cyrillic – listing titles from recent years and titles of some of the first authors in the field of Bulgarian dance folklore, there are 15 interviews conducted with specialists in the field of stage performance of Bulgarian folklore, 4 annexes.

The introduction explains the relevance of the theme with the need for a more comprehensive and in-depth interdisciplinary study and analysis of folk art in the context of the management of the cultural institutions and of the production of artistic products of high-value. So far, the focus of scholarly research was laid mainly on the artistic specificities in the stage adaptation of folklore tradition. The contemporary socio-cultural reality also requires a serious analysis of the management and financing of folklore performing arts under market orientation. The exploring part of the thesis presents systematically its goal, subject, object, significance of the research problem, tasks.

In the **first chapter** of the thesis Hristo Dimitrov makes a general description of the origin and the development of Bulgarian folklore based dance art, outlining two main periods - until 1989 and after. The emphasis is placed on the prerequisites for the emergence of professional folklore ensembles, on their management and artistic dependencies, on the financing and the concert activity. Examined is the role of the Principal Artistic Director in the context of the periods under consideration. Screened is the gradual accumulation of factors which historically and organisationally prepared the emergence of the private management projects, one of which is the object of the study.

The **second chapter** presents the managerial approach in the creation of the private folklore ensemble Bulgare. Comparing it both structurally and artistically with the other professional folklore ensembles in the country, the PhD student outlines the main similarities and the main differences and brings arguments for the need that this type of formations exist. A particular attention is paid to the structure of the ensemble Bulgare, as a representative of the private formations of a similar type, as well as to the specific methodology of training the professional performers of the ensemble.

In chapter **three**, the doctoral student examines the specific creative approaches in the carrying of the repertoire policy of the ensemble. His author's idiosyncrasy traces an affinity for the performance as the form of stage presentation of the traditional Bulgarian folklore. There is a special attention paid to the performance The Eighth Wonder, exemplifying the creative principles of the doctoral student.

The final part of the thesis sums up the obtained results and formulates specific conclusions, related to the specificity, both in creative and managerial terms, of the activity of folklore ensembles.

II. SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS AND EVALUATION OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE DOCTORAL STUDENT

The thesis of Hristo Dimitrov is a carried scientific work, with up-to-date content and with theoretical and applied value. This is attempt, first of its kind, to study and analyze the managerial and the creative approaches in the development of the private formations in the field of Bulgarian folklore. The highlights of the thesis are chosen following the study of the main characteristics in the activity of the ensemble Bulgare, presenting the personal position and conclusions of the doctoral student. They result from the specific survey and outline a number of scientific and applied achievements. The professional experience of Hristo Dimitrov as a choreographer and manager further contributes to the objective character of the obtained results and to their significance in the contemporary landscape of folklore culture in the country.

I would address the following recommendations:

- Having a logical and goal-driven structure of the survey
- Having a compositional unity of the different parts, driven by the common goal
- Presenting after each paragraph academically written and scientifically reasoned specific conclusions

The PhD candidate indicated three publications on the theme of the thesis. The number and the content of the publications fully meet the requirements for admission to public defence.

The thesis outline of 24 pages fully reflects the thesis content. It was drafted in accordance with the academic requirements and presents the main points and the own views presented in the thesis.

III. CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing, I express my **positive** evaluation for the thesis **National Folklore Ensemble Bulgare. Managing and Creative Approaches** and I propose to the esteemed scientific jury to award to Hristo Ivanov Dimitrov the PhD educational and scientific degree in Professional field 8.3 Music and Dance Art, Doctoral Programme Music.

Thesis review made by Assoc. Prof. Katya Gineva Kayryakova, PhD

Varna

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