

OPINION

by Professor Dr. BORISLAVA TANEVA

Piano Department, IF, NMA "Prof. Pancho Vladigerov ", Sofia

on a dissertation on a topic

"CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATION PROBLEMS

IN PIANO CHAMBER AND SOLO MUSIC "

by Milko Doychev Milkov

PhD student at the New Bulgarian University

for obtaining the educational and scientific "Doctor's" degree in the professional field 8.3 Music and dance

Milko Milkov graduated from the Music School in Varna and the National Academy of Music "Prof. Pancho Vladigerov" - Sofia, in the piano class of professors Julia and Konstantin Ganevi. Between 1993-1995 he specialized in the Master Classes of the Santa Cecilia Academy of Music in Rome with Sergio Perticaroli (piano) and Felix Ayo (chamber music). Professors Marcello Abado (Italy), Germain Munier (France) and Lev Naumov (Russia) also played a role in his formation as a musician. Milko Milkov has performed as a soloist with symphony orchestras in Bulgaria and Italy, has toured successfully in Austria, Italy, South Africa, South Korea, Greece and Russia. He has made recordings for BNT, BNR, for the "Golden" fund of Radio Varna, as well as released four CDs. Milko Milkov has won numerous awards from various piano competitions. He has participated in a number of prestigious music festivals, including the International Music Festival "Trinita 'dei Monti" in Rome, the International Music Festival "Varna Summer", the European Music Festival, the International Music Festival "Sofia Music Weeks" and others.

Over the years, Milkov has collaborated and implemented many joint projects with leading names in our instrumental art. In 1998 he was invited to become a professor of piano at Kwangju University - South Korea. Since 2001 Milko Milkov

has been a lecturer in piano and chamber music at the New Bulgarian University - Sofia. Between 2006 and 2011, together with professors Adam Vodnitsky (USA), Josef Banovets (USA) and Joseph Stanford (South Africa), he led the annual International Piano Master Class, organized by the Canadian music agency „Symphonic Workshops “. He has also taught master classes in Seoul and Quangju (South Korea), as well as in music schools in Varna and Pleven.

The dissertation presented for defense by Milko Milkov is 109 pages long. It contains an introduction, three main chapters, an epilogue, a list of concerts given as part of the dissertation, three publications in scientific journals, as well as numerous music forums ("You Tube", "Bandcamp", "SoundCloud", "Twine"). The bibliography used for writing the paper, the contribution moments in the research, as well as other appendices, reviews, announcements of concert performances realized in the period 2013-2016, as well as the scores of the analyzed works are attached.

In the **introduction** the PhD student argues the thesis of the work, specifies the main purpose and object of the study, explains the methodology used, lists the tasks and describes in detail his own experience with the works. My remark here is that the topic of the dissertation thus announced in the title puts for consideration an extremely broad global a space that presupposes a very extensive study of the fundamental questions facing each interpreter.

I would recommend the PhD student to include in the title the specification that these are specific works by Beethoven and Poulenc, because otherwise the title implies that the question of contemporary interpretation problems in piano chamber and solo music is set, in principle, which would be a rather difficult, large-scale and responsible task.

The first chapter deals in principle with the questions concerning the theoretical and terminological basis: What is interpretation; What is chamber music; Specific features of chamber music; What is performance and the main goals and objectives facing the contractor. The extremely important issues for the preliminary preparation and organization of the rehearsal process are also addressed.

A valuable contribution here is that the PhD student shares his own experience, derived entirely from practice.

The second chapter, entitled "Interpretive Problems in Chamber and Solo Performance", provides an extensive professional performance analysis of the piano part in a concerto for piano, violin, cello and orchestra by Ludwig van Beethoven and the problems and challenges.

facing the pianist - performer of the first piano in a concerto for two pianos and orchestra in D minor by Francis Poulenc.

I would like to emphasize again that it is especially valuable to systematize and share personal experience in the approach. It could be used successfully by young musicians facing the task to interpret the indicated works.

Without belittling what is written in the **third chapter** - "Classical

performance and interpretation approach in the performance or recording of pieces of popular music "I would like to note that in no way does the title of the work imply that a whole of the three main chapters of the work will address issues related to recording.

In this sense, I find the title of the paper not quite correct and I recommend that it be specified if possible. Otherwise the conclusions and recommendations made in the chapter are entirely professional, in-depth and useful.

In **the epilogue**, the main conclusions are made. We can assume that the tasks set in the doctoral thesis have been successfully completed, and also the goal that the PhD student sets at the beginning has been achieved. And namely, to present the creation of a model for the interpretation of piano solo music as an approach to performing concerts with more than one solo instrument. "A model for solo and chamber interpretation piano playing "refers to" one's own interpretation path and work process such as preparation, rehearsals, distribution of creative activities in the realization of highly artistic performance of a chamber or solo work and its approbation on the concert stage".

The choice of the two main works considered in the dissertation - the Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra by Francis Poulenc and the Concerto for Piano, Violin,

Cello and Orchestra by Ludwig van Beethoven was not made by chance. On the one hand, the selection was made as a result of the Doctoral Student's activities in the field of chamber and solo music in recent years, and on the other hand, a comparison in the role of piano parts is clearly sought.

What is common and different in them? The general thing is that instead of the usual soloist - pianist, the composers (Beethoven and Poulenc) choose solo ensembles of the orchestra to be chamber ensembles. But while in one case (Beethoven's work) the solo ensemble is composed of sound-diverse instruments - (keyboard and two strings), in the other work (the Poulenc concerto) the solo is a piano duo, ie a homogeneous sound composition. I myself have played hundreds of times with an orchestra both as a soloist and as a member of a chamber ensemble, including the two concerts in question.

I share the PhD student's thesis and I firmly claim that the preparation and processes related to the stage realization of the piano part in these works are radically different from the processes of preparation for the realization of the piano part, when you are the only soloist at a concert with an orchestra.

I find this comparison professionally interesting, thought-provoking and I admire the choice of the Doctoral Student.

The reference for the activity shows the significant experience of the candidate in chamber music, and in the specific analyzes made in the work - detailed knowledge of the solo parts and scores of the two main works: The Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra by Francis Poulenc and the Concerto for Piano, Violin Cello and orchestra by Ludwig van Beethoven.

The topicality of the scientific development is determined by the object and the tasks of the research, the clarification of the processes and the thorough analysis of the artistic and expressive means used by the composers.

Definitely Milko Milkov has extensive professional experience and this justifiably gives him the right to demonstrate knowledge on the subject. I admire the use of scientific expression, presenting the existing approaches to the analysis of the considered works. The developed theory is protected by the arguments of the conclusions made, by the sincere intentions and realization of the practical

application of the analysis. The selected works are repertoire for many active pianists.

They are also in the interest of a number of established music researchers, so bringing a new reading to the presentation of these works is a serious professional challenge. The candidate obviously knows the mentioned scores very well and uses the material according to the requirements and standards for writing dissertation work.

In conclusion, I can't help but mention that I have known Milko Milkov personally for decades - with him we belong to the same generation and we are graduates of the same school.

Although I observe a certain imbalance and discrepancy between the title and the content of the work with this opinion, I confirm that the candidate fully meets the minimum national requirements set out in the Regulations for the implementation of ZRASRB and giving his positive assessment I suggest the esteemed Scientific Jury to award Milko Milkov scientific "Doctor's" degree in the field 8.3. "Music and dance art".

Sofia, October 30, 2020

Prof. Dr. Borislava Taneva