

## **OPINION**

on the dissertation of

**Milko Doychev Milkov**

(PhD student in self-study in the doctoral program "Music", NBU, with supervisor  
Prof. Dr. Milena Shushulova - Pavlova)

on the topic

### **"CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATION PROBLEMS IN PIANO CHAMBER AND SOLO MUSIC "**

for awarding the educational and scientific "Doctor's" degree (professional field:  
8.3. "Music and dance")

**by Prof. Dr. Evgenia Mihailova Simeonova**

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Milko Milkov's research work, according to its focus as "artistic" doctoral studies, contains two main and complementary components - the performer and the theorist. Without quoting in detail the creative achievements and development of the doctoral student's artistic career, I will summarize that he already has a solid biography of an artist, pianist and pedagogue, ready to share his personal performing experience from the concert podium. The analyzed works are presented through the eyes of an interpreter, and the conclusions are based exclusively on his own path to these works. This is an important point in his research, because the conclusions are *tested* and *evaluated in practice* / instead of using the foreign verb "*approve*" /.

The presented doctoral dissertation on "CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATION PROBLEMS IN PIANO CHAMBER AND SOLO MUSIC " is structured in an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, a reference to the contributing moments,

bibliography, 1 volumes (4 for dictionaries, encyclopedias and articles), musical examples, appendices / old rare editions /, located on 109 pages.

In the **Introduction** of his dissertation Milko Milkov clearly and precisely defines the subject, object and purpose of the study. "The method of active and direct participation in concert activities was used, as well as a comparative and analytical approach to certain works for chamber ensemble with more than one solo instrument."

In the *First Chapter* of the dissertation / "*THEORETICAL AND TERMINOLOGICAL BASIS*" / in 5 subchapters the etymology of the terms interpretation and artistic interpretation, chamber music is traced, the preliminary preparation and the rehearsal process are analyzed - well-known but important topics. of the complex nature of artistic and creative searches. I read with interest the doctoral student's opinions and thoughts, derived from his experience as a performer on the concert podium. However, I would note that in some places the language is more narrative than scientific-analytical /p.16, 22, 23, 24 /. It seems to me that interesting events and conversations would have a better place below the line.

For the center of the research I define the second chapter - "*INTERPRETATION PROBLEMS IN THE CHAMBER AND SOLO PERFORMANCE*".

In subchapter 2.1. M. Milkov discusses Performance Problems and Approaches in the Pianist's Work on a *Concerto for Piano, Violin, Cello and Orchestra (Triple Concerto)* by *Ludwig van Beethoven*. As a performer of this work, I can confirm the accuracy of the historical facts, the pianist's detailed approach to mastering the piano part in the context of the ensemble's difficulties with other instrumentalists, conductor and orchestra. The performing analysis of the work shows the experience and erudition of the dissertation, which easily introduces the instrumental imagery, recommends different dynamic nuances, fingers, strokes, author's instructions, organization of the musical fabric and elaboration of the balance between the instruments on the score. The dissertation is well acquainted with the best examples of performance in the world concert practice and competently comments on the differences in interpretations.

The given musical examples from the selected publishing house would be clearer and more useful in support of the analytical judgments, if they are applied to the bars or phrases referred to in the text / these requirements are regulated in the referenced music editions /.

In subchapter 2.2 Performance and Interpretation Problems for the Soloists in Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra in D Minor by Francis Poulenc Milko Milkov makes the stipulation that in “the analysis I will concentrate primarily on the performance and interpretation problems through the prism of the first piano part. as in the performance of the Concert, which took place on March 15, 2014 in the hall of the State Opera - Varna, I played the part on the first piano. /p.48/

This thesis is theoretically wrong, as playing in a piano ensemble must always be "through the other's part", after which the dissertation somewhat refutes itself, including a partial analysis of the second piano. The performer's thoughts are interesting, associative, colorful and emotional. The valuable thing is that they are derived from the concert performance of the work. The doctoral student offers his solutions to the interpretive tasks in the Concert, related to sound extraction - a very detailed study, which I appreciate. Sound balancing, dynamic modeling, rhythmic and stroke character, choice of tempo and use of pedal, fingers, climaxes, excellent knowledge of the partner's part and the score, lines between soloists and orchestra, the role of the conductor and so on - similar thoughts and searches that have occupied me in his performance.

It is noteworthy that in the relatively scarce (from the literature) bibliographic reference Milko Milkov does not mention / probably does not know / about the existence of the defended dissertation in Bulgaria "*Interpretation problems in the works of piano duo of Francis Poulenc*" in 2015 by the writer of these lines; even fewer articles published on the subject in accessible electronic and paper editions. The basic literature for this author is missing. I also looked for an interesting moment for the use of the ringing melody of the gamelan gongs in the Concerto, which is mentioned / on p.46 /, but is not indicated with a musical example and cited sources.

In the **third chapter**, CLASSICAL PERFORMANCE AND INTERPRETATION APPROACH IN PERFORMANCE OR RECORDING OF PIECES FROM

POPULAR MUSIC, I could not find the "dissertable" moment of development in the section RECORDING PIECES FROM POPULAR MUSIC. I do not understand what are the "difficulties in determining the order of the plays and their sequence" ?! / t. 3.3. page 80 /. This large "mix" of pieces is really aimed at amateur circles who love "light" classics, rather than addressing "classic", professionally educated pianists. Even so, I respect the colleague's desire to share another aspect of his performing experience. It's great when a good musician registers his performances on a disc / recording team, publisher, copyright? For me, the place of this disc is in the LIST OF CONCERTS as №7 of the concert activity of the dissertation.

Only in subchapter 3.6. The specifics and peculiarities of the recording of a digital piano in MIDI format intrigued me as an experiment "the inclusion of synthetic orchestration" and obtaining a "new, completely different and modern sound", as well as item 3.7. Technological description of the process of recording piano and synthetic orchestra. The abstract / located on 16 pages / presents the dissertation in good faith. Attached is a list of required publications on the topic / three / in the period 2014-2017 / 2018.

As a higher form of aesthetic music making, I agree with Milko Milkov's conclusion that chamber music "is a specific form of emotional and interpretive expression, a way to show yourself as a performer, but also to lend a hand to your partner. Chamber music always gives opportunities, knowledge and growth to the player.

I accept the derived contributions of the dissertation work, partly with reservations for item 6 and item 7 / p. 102 /.

/ Publications on the Internet are a matter of personal choice and good advertising. Many "likes" are a compliment for the performer, they are a recognition of his performing achievements, but in no case can be accepted and equated as contributors to a dissertation thesis /.

In conclusion:

Remaining with some critical remarks on the text, but convinced of the artistic value of the musical performance presented in connection with it, I propose to the

esteemed scientific jury to award Milko Doychev Milkov the educational and scientific degree "Doctor".

28.10.2020

Signature: