

## **OPINION**

by

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Place of work: Department of Music, New Bulgarian University – Sofia,

**on the dissertation to obtain the educational and scientific degree Doctor  
(Major 8.3 Music and Dance Arts) of**

**PAULO RICARDO SOARES ZEREU**

entitled

**“Characteristic aspects of the Brazilian Waltz: The national musical language of the Valsa de Esquina No. 8, Valsa de Esquina No. 12, and Valsa-Chôro No. 5 by Francisco Mignone”**

*Study Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Milena Shushulova-Pavlova*

Department of Music, NBU – Sofia, 2020

I have been requested to provide an opinion on a dissertation written in **English** language which contains 185 pages (of which there are 105 pages containing text in accordance with BDS + numerous illustrations and musical examples: I examined it in its entirety).

Most importantly was provided the **autobiography** of the doctoral candidate:

**Paulo Zereu** was born in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in the family of a female piano professor, who was also his first tutor. After high school he studied at the Institute of Arts of the State University of Rio Grande do Sul, graduating with a bachelor's degree in music; and then he became a lecturer there. He was subsequently awarded a scholarship by the Polish government and pursued a postgraduate study at the Academy of Music in Kraków, where he won awards and also graduated. From 1990 he lived in Karlsruhe (Germany) where he studied at the University of Music Karlsruhe, and from 1994 - at the Cologne University of Music, graduating with Künstlerische Abschlussprüfung (Final Artistic Examination, equivalent to the degree of Master of Arts, which

if conferred to the performers in the German universities, performing high schools, note: Ya.K.), and after that continued his music education in Akademie für Musikpädagogik in Mainz (Germany).

Paulo Zereu attended master classes and conducted piano courses in Germany, Poland, Russia, Brazil, Asia... He won piano competitions in Europe and Asia (but it is not specified which ones and when, Ya.K.). Since 2005, Paulo Zereu has lived in Bangkok (the capital of Thailand), and began teaching piano in the Department of Music of Assumption University of Thailand. At the same time, he collaborated culturally with the Embassy of Portugal and the Embassy of Brazil in Bangkok. He made recordings for various radio stations as well as on CDs. He also performed with orchestra in Brazil, Europe and Asia.

With Google I found his recordings on the Internet during the years 2009-2012 – both for piano solo and piano duo (see <[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=adswFua3\\_aE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=adswFua3_aE)>, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HVBb0dDGwgY>>, and <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qoaScEID8hM>>).

And now – my own opinion, in accordance with the *requirement to evaluate*, but not to **repeat the dissertation**.

This **doctoral study** is of the **performer's** type. It is **dedicated** to one of the **most famous Brazilian composers** (from their second generation) - Francisco Mignone (1897-1986, pianist, conductor, theorist, educator, writer): and to his famous, beloved, and played **waltzes** (and, in particular, 4 of them are studied in depth, out of a total number of 61), which the doctoral candidate investigates and presents not only as standalone, but also in the context of historical and socio-cultural conditions that influenced the development of the genre in Brazil (and, specifically, during the 1940's and 1950's of the 20th century). This is a **multifaceted research** - about the Brazilian culture considered as South American but also as European (influenced by both its classical but also its folk and popular cultures), as well as Indian and African (slaves in Portuguese Brazil were mostly from Angola)...and, with the huge distribution of the piano in the country, the piano repertoire is original as well as of various transcriptions...

This is a multifaceted and panoramic research, and in it there is a concrete detailed presentation of the 4 Mignone waltzes mentioned in the title of the dissertation (with comments

from the doctoral candidate on the musical form and piano details - fingering, dynamics, flows, pedaling, interpretation...).

The dissertation is structured in Summary, 4 chapters, Conclusion and Significance of the Research, including the contributions of the dissertation.

Following is its table of contents, which illustrates and clarifies the temporal and thematic scope of the study, its structure and complexion:

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### **APPENDIX**

It is clear that the dissertation research has its object and subject of study (piano waltzes by Francisco Mignone and, in particular, the 4 waltzes mentioned in the title of the dissertation), purpose (identification of the characteristics of the Brazilian waltz - in their evolutionary accumulation), and general tasks (historical and cultural, but also practical and performance related), and specific research (also theoretical and practical, and with purposefully specified terms for the correctness of the research!) - all of them fulfilled and achieved within the dissertation study.

It was very interesting and pleasant for me to get acquainted with this dissertation, because I have listened many times to recordings of a great pianist Arthur Moreira Lima - including the waltzes of Francisco Mignone, they are also available on the Internet: <[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DXFWNl0\\_W-c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DXFWNl0_W-c)>, and in the provided link they are performed by Francisco Mignone himself, his wife, and other pianists of that epoch: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qadHKOAmqww>>, which I listen to right now, while reading the dissertation and the abstracts and writing my text. A pleasure!

In every chapter of the dissertation there is a list of references. At the end of the dissertation, there is a list of the figures included in the text, as well as a Bibliography, including 106 references written in Spanish, Portuguese, and English languages. Then there is a list of Zereu's 3 publications related to the dissertation (1 in an issue of NBU and 2 in issues of Chulalongkorn University; all of them appeared in 2017), a list of 6 concerts performed by the doctoral candidate related to his dissertation (of which 2 piano recitals and 4 as piano duo, in Bangkok, Thailand), and his 3 master classes, workshops and seminars (also held in Thailand). This is followed by a Curriculum Vitae (CV) of Paulo Zereu and an Appendix including the notes of the 4 Mignone waltzes, discussed in detail in the dissertation (and cited in the title): 15 pages of notes in total.

The history and evolution of a culture, including also its music, is of immediate relevance. Ergo, this dissertation as a research is current (due to the growing interest in the Brazilian culture and music around the world), significant, with historical, artistic, scientific and applied nature. The doctoral candidate knows the problem perfectly - in its rich multifacetedness; this is shown by the large number of references and their citations in the text of the dissertation, in which there are also

research models - theoretically conceived and conducted, and then practically fulfilled: I reiterate that this dissertation is of the performer's type.

The abstract (the file has 22 pages, but the actual size is about 30 pages according to BDS) is presented in both English and Bulgarian languages. It sufficiently reflects the dissertation, both structurally and in substance.

Congratulations to the study Supervisor Prof. Dr. Milena Shushulova-Pavlova.

I generally accept the doctoral candidate's contributions to his dissertation study. They are numerous and multifaceted: in terms of general and musical history and culture (intercontinentally and internationally) - folk, popular and classical; in terms of presenting and revealing the evolution of the waltz, and in particular, that of the piano and the Brazilian style, and specifically the waltzes of Francisco Mignone, (4 of them studied in the greatest detail); and the comments of the doctoral candidate concerning music form, genre, piano approaches, and skills, techniques (fingering, pedaling), in the name of the best possible achievement of the whole: the interpretation. The contributions are historical and theoretical, cultural and stylistic, and applicable in practice.

### **In summary**

The material used in the dissertation research is reliable. It is evident that the doctoral candidate has the required historical and theoretical knowledge in this field and sufficient ability for independence in conducting research. Let me say again that the personal participation of the doctoral candidate in this performer's type-theoretical doctoral study is indisputable. The publications and concerts of the doctoral candidate related to his dissertation have made it publicly available to the extent necessary.

### **CONCLUSION**

**Based on the above, I support the motion to award the educational and scientific degree Doctor to PAULO Ricardo Soares ZEREU for his performer's type-theoretical doctoral study entitled "Characteristic aspects of the Brazilian Waltz: The national musical language in the Valsa de Esquina No. 8, Valsa de Esquina No. 12, and Valsa-Chôro No. 5 by**

**Francisco Mignone ” (NBU - Sofia, 2020). I hope that such will be also the evaluation of the other colleagues in the study committee.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Konov', written in a cursive style.

(Yavor Konov, Dr., D.Sc., Professor,  
Department of Music, NBU)

Sofia, 20 October 2020