

## OPINION

by Prof. Dr. Tsvetan Milchev Nedyalkov, NAM "Pancho Vladigerov",  
for the dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor"  
in the field of higher education 8. Arts  
professional field 8.3 "Music and Dance Art"  
doctoral program "Musicology and Musical Art"

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**Title:** Electronic sound design and its applications in DJing

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As I do not know the Ph.D. student personally, his biography shows a rich and successful career in the field of sound design, sound engineering and computer music. I will only mention some of the awards Teodor has been honored with:

- First Prize in the Sixth Review of Achievements in Sound Design at the International Forum-Festival "Computer music space 2020", Sofia, June 2020;
- In 2021, he was part of the team of students that were awarded the prestigious "Crystal Lyre";
- Nominated individually for the Union of Bulgarian Music and Dance Artists' "Crystal Lyre" Award in 2019 and 2021 in the "Sound and Sound Design" category.

The subject of the presented dissertation with the title "Electronic sound design and its applications in DJing" has, in my opinion, a relevance stemming from the rapid introduction of innovations in technical equipment, technology and musical arts. This work can serve as a basis for future research in the field and help specialists to systematize and summarize the accumulated experience and the results of empirical and practical material in research activities.

From the very beginning, a very clear and specific idea that the Ph.D. student has regarding the **purpose and objectives** set in this research is evident, namely: to explore the relationship and dependencies between electronic sound design and its means of creating rich soundscapes using various specimens of electronic musical instrumentarium, digital devices, computer technology and the nature of DJing as a practical, creative and musical reality. In order to achieve this purpose, the author focuses his attention on the nature of electronic sound design and DJing as components of contemporary music, and explores their development and the interrelationship between them.

The scientific hypothesis put forward in the thesis suggests the existence of a relationship and

interaction between electronic sound design and DJing in the process of scientific and technological revolution as well as their influence on the evolution of creative musical activity of the DJ.

The research toolkit used in the dissertation is multifaceted and integrated in nature, which is determined by the use of the general logical methods of analysis and synthesis, abstraction, generalization, deduction and induction.

In terms of its structure, the thesis contains an introduction, five chapters, a conclusion, a statement of main contributions, a bibliography, two appendices, a list and location of figures, and a list and location of tables. The dissertation consists of 333 pages, of which 325 are main text, and uses 42 sources in Cyrillic, 6 sources in Latin, and 180 Internet-based sources. Two appendices, and two interviews are included.

*Chapter one* discusses the methodological system in the thesis and its guiding principles applied in the process of scientific cognition such as determinism, correspondence and complementarity. According to the author, their application in the process of scientific cognition is a condition for realizing the purpose and objectives of scientific research and for obtaining new scientific knowledge. The methodology used in this study is presented in two ways: logical-theoretical and practical-applied. In the theoretical one, logical means are leading in the process of constructing the reasoning, evidence, and drawing objectively true conclusions; and in the practical-applied methodology, the emphasis is on the organization of human activity in musical art. Finally, it is logically correct to conclude that the unification of theoretical and practical principles and methods in a logical and practical rationality guarantees the creation of a scientific picture of the problem under study.

Before presenting his analysis on the conditions for the emergence and development of electronic sound design and its applications in DJing, in *chapter two* the author begins by clarifying the concepts used in the research process, in this case electronic sound design and DJing. At the end of this part of the work, the relevant conclusions are drawn quite logically and precisely:

- The study of technical equipment and technology implemented in electronic and computer music instruments and systems reveal the relationship and dependencies between them.
- There is a direct positive relationship between technical equipment and technology in musical instrumentarium.
- With its essential characteristics and manifestations, DJing appears as a new musical practice in which the diverse manifestations of electronic sound design find application.

The focus of the research in *chapter three* is on the concepts of electronic sound design and DJing and their boundaries as seen from two different perspectives, namely as forms of

scientific knowledge or in other words a theoretical derivation of essential and distinguishing characteristics and as forms of practical activity. Here the Ph.D. student proves in an undeniable way his thesis that, linking concepts to the defined activities of practice is a means of deriving the precise meaning of words and revealing the logical dependencies between them.

In *chapter four* the author in an original and creative way offers us his perspective on the evolution of EMI and technical devices in electronic sound design and DJing realized in three parts:

- An empirical study of the evolution of electronic musical instrumentarium as a result of scientific and technical progress.
- A diachronic study of the relationship between scientific-technical revolution and electronic musical instrumentarium.
- A study of the DJ instrumentarium through the prism of a comparative analysis of two of the common DJing set-ups.

What is interesting in *chapter five*, besides the analysis of modern technical equipment and technologies for DJing, is the experience of the applied technologies for radio DJing at the Bulgarian National Radio shared in two interviews on the topic "Elements and technologies of radio DJing in Bulgaria" as seen through the eyes of some of the first participants in the activities of the radio in Bulgaria – the chief engineer at Bulgarian National Radio – Regional radio station Plovdiv – Eng. Minko Krastev and the coryphee of radio DJing in Bulgaria Toma Sprostranov.

I fully agree with the scientific and applied contributions of the thesis presented as follows:

- The developed systematic procedure for revealing the nature and development of DJing as a creative musical activity and sound art with an integral character enriches the scientific insight into the applications of electronic sound design in DJing.

- The results of the research can serve as a basis for further development of scientific and practical research on the problem and in the elaboration of future methodologies, curricula, tools, etc., related to computer music education and in the field of DJing.

- The conducted analysis of the approach to the realization of DJing with actual equipment and the shared practical experience can facilitate and assist DJs in their creative and practical activity.

Teodor Popov has presented a serious and in-depth scientific study that meets all the criteria for a dissertation. The set purpose and objectives have been achieved. Important conclusions directly related to the topic have been drawn. The methodology used is up-to-date and meets the modern requirements for conducting research work. The thesis is well structured and presents the problems under consideration with maximum clarity.

In conclusion, I give my positive assessment of the presented dissertation and propose to the esteemed scientific jury to award the scientific and educational degree of "Doctor" to Teodor Todorov Popov.

17.08.2020.

Sofia

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