

## **REVIEW**

**from Prof. DSc Yavor Svetozarov Konov,**  
a full-time lecturer at the Department of Music (Master's Faculty)  
of New Bulgarian University - Sofia,  
with scientific degrees and titles obtained under  
professional field 8.3 Music and Dance Art

**regarding the contribution of the artistic and creative work  
of Chief Assistant Dr. Angel Angelov Zaberski**

a full-time lecturer at the Bachelor Faculty of NBU, Department of Music,

**proposed by him as habilitation work in relation to his participation in the  
competition for the academic position of ‘Associate Professor’**

(jazz harmony, chamber ensembles, accompaniment and jazz improvisation)  
under professional field 8.3 Music and Dance Art,

announced in State Gazette No. 6/21.01.2020

### **Biography of the candidate**

Chief Assistant Dr. Angel Zaberski-son is one of the most famous contemporary Bulgarian musicians, especially in jazz and related genres, but also as a solo pianist, conductor, composer and arranger of works for piano, jazz trio, big band, large symphony orchestra...

He was born in Sofia in 1969. He is the son of the famous musician (composer and conductor) Angel Zaberski (father). He graduated from the National School of Music in Sofia with piano, and then from the National Academy of Music with major - composition and conducting. He defended his dissertation at NBU entitled ‘The Creative Work of Angel Zaberski Father’ (2012), I was its reviewer.

He founded his own jazz trio, with which he has had numerous concerts and TV shows. He worked with the Big Band of the Bulgarian National Radio with Vili Kazasyan and with the Big Band Brass Association. Orchestral music becomes his priority. He has had concerts and recordings (audio, video, for radio and TV) with famous musicians such as Vasil Petrov, Kamelia Todorova, Hilda Kazasyan, Teodosii Spasov, Hristo Yotsov and more. He has released 5 original CDs. He has won a number of prestigious awards, including the Crystal Lyre Award (the Award of the Union of Bulgarian Musicians and Dancers), the United Bulgarian Bank Apollonia Award and others.

Angel Zaberski-son has been working at NBU almost since its establishment. He has been a full-time staff member since 2002. He teaches music theory, harmony, orchestration,

accompaniment, jazz improvisation and more. He has been a senior assistant since 2012 - therefore the period I am reviewing in regards to this competition is since that year.

According to the documentation provided to me, Angel Zaberski son exceeds the minimum requirements for scientometrics according to the NACID /NATIONAL CENTRE FOR INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTATION/ standard due to having the following: his dissertation; artistic opuses and performances in the field of art presented as ‘habilitation work’, namely: finalised and published CD ‘Big Band in Action’ in 2018 with 11 of his own works; recording of the album with Big Band Brass Association using the original music of Angel Zaberski (both as conductor and soloist); 2 concerts of the Angel Zaberski Trio (on November 27 and 28, 2014 within the International Festival ‘European Cultural Days’, ‘European Cultural Days’ in Frankfurt am Main, Germany) and the whole series of 5 concerts ‘Jazz meets the classics’ (performed on 22.06.2015, 20.12.2015, 20.05.2016, 22.05.2017 and 31.05.2017), and several famous annual tours of his band; the completion (recording and publishing) of his author's CD ‘Like Jazz’ (2015); four concerts (2013-2017) from the series ‘The Music of America’ and joint performances with Patti Austin (USA) and trumpeter Rex Richardson (USA); his participation (in the year 2016 at the invitation of BNT) as a member of the Bulgarian jury for the ‘Eurovision’ Song Contest; reviews of him as an artist and performer, including his CDs, such as the reviews for the JazzIt Jazz Festival (2013), for his Project "Symphony - Jazz" on BNR (Sibila Lilova, 2014), for his CD Big bend in Action (2018) (Aneta Nedyalkova, IMPRESSIO, 2018) and others. In addition, I also said very nice words about him included in the edition of NBU ‘University Diary’ regarding his project/concert in the National Palace of Culture Hall 1 ‘Symphony-Jazz’ 2018 – which was such an impressive meeting between symphonic and jazz music ( <https://universitetski-dnevnik.nbu.bg/symphony-jazz-2018/> ).

I will take the liberty to quote myself: *‘Using his talent, Angel has brought together the popular classics, and jazz, and popular music, and film, and folklore, and symphony. Yes: classical music, film music, jazz standards and folklore in... symphonic arrangements. These were arrangements of famous, popular melodies from the world music culture. [...] ‘Symphony-Jazz’: an event suitable for our time (‘I also started playing tricks, AZ), i.e. a great hit on the local market too. But without making compromises, nor based on ‘simplicity’ (I don't want to spoil the text with the exact word...) - let alone rely on it! No.’* (End of my quote.) With his participations - numerous (6) in Apollonia, Sozopol, BNT - Eurovision 2016, Jazz in the Museum - Plovdiv, etc., and at the large-scale and prestigious international festivals - Jazz Festivals in Bansko, Nis and Kruševac. His awards from competitions (3): at the International Competition for composing a symphonic work in 7/8 (2013) and the two most valued national awards ‘Crystal Lyre’ (2014 and 2013). His participation in the project ‘Jazz meets the Classics’: 4 grand pianos with three of the best pianists in Bulgaria (A. Zaberski-son, Ivan Yanakov, Georgi Cherkin and Zhivko Petrov), performed in the National Palace of Culture Hall 1 (2015), as well as at the invitation of the Bulgarian Cultural Institute in London, in the prestigious hall ‘Cadogan Hall’, honouring of the Day of Bulgarian Literature and Culture (2016, with the participation of Theodosii Spasov, The Mystery of the Bulgarian Voices, the London Bulgarian Choir and London Chamber Orchestra).

He also wrote 4 articles for Bulgarian specialized music editions (Music Horizons magazine 2014, in the collections Young Scientific Forum for Music and Dance, NBU 2014 and 2015, Guitar magazine 2016). The average satisfaction grade of his students from the courses with lecturer Chief Assistant Professor Dr. A. Zaberski in the period was 4.94. He uploaded his own materials in Moodle and has collaborated with students in various research projects.

Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Angel Zaberski-son regularly attends the meetings of the Board of the Department of Music (NBU), he is involved in the public activities of the department,

in its candidate student campaign, preparation of information seminars, he presents well the department and its programs, works with foreign students and lecturers from the Erasmus exchange program.

He meets the requirement for Group of Indicators J by writing an extensive summary (25 pages) of the theoretical process of planning, organizing and implementing his opus.

In summary, it is more than obvious that my colleague Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Angel Zaberski-son is a talented, professional, highly versatile and very active artist (as a composer and an arranger) and performer (a pianist, a conductor, an organizer), who combines the rich characteristics of orchestral music with jazz, solo, chamber and large-scale ensemble music. It is more than clear that Angel Zaberski-son is a great teacher in many aspects - so his habilitation as an Associate Professor is not only relevant but also, in my opinion, belated.

I have been at NBU since 2010 - my colleague Angel Zaberski has always made an impression to be a responsible person, which is very important. I have no additional critical comments, recommendations and notes on the activity and achievements of the candidate – that is completely unnecessary in this case.

**IN CONCLUSION:** Based on the above, I support my colleague Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Angel Angelov Zaberski to become an Associate Professor of music at NBU. I suppose that will be the conclusion of the other colleagues from the scientific jury for the competition. Therefore, I propose to the Academic Council of NBU to appoint him as an Associate Professor of jazz harmony, chamber ensembles, accompaniment and jazz improvisation (under professional field 8.3 Music and Dance Art).

27th May 2020

Signature:  
(Prof. Dr. Yavor St. Konov)