

Research Article

The necessity of updating the content of the study programs at Tbilisi State Conservatoire¹

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Abstract

This article refers to the issue of updating the content of the theoretical musical subjects of the Tbilisi State Conservatory (TSC), which is very important considering the accumulated knowledge in science in general, including musicology. When the subject of discussion is musical education and innovative methods of teaching, it is no less important to review and update the content of the study programs. The Course Programs themselves should also correspond to the new epochal challenges. It will be most effective to change the content of the theoretical subjects of the TSC by including multimedia genres in the syllabus of the Music History Course Program. Why did the issue of the need to update the training program arise? The COVID-19 pandemic turned out to be the biggest challenge for Art Higher education institutions, including TSC because it was impossible to hold ensemble, orchestra, and choir rehearsals online. Despite these difficulties, it was revealed that after the pandemic, the need for rapid integration into digital reality was highlighted and students were interested in completely renewing educational courses, and their content. In this context, the renewal of the music history course with Multimedia musical genres is of outstanding importance. These genres reflect the new perception of the world, which is relevant to the student's requirements. Multi-media hybrid musical genres are inherently interactive, informative, and relevant to the challenges of the modern era. It would be appropriate to start with Georgian examples. For example, this kind of Georgian multimedia music is Eka Chabashvili's multimedia hybrid compositions. Thus, when we talk about the advancements of virtual reality and the future implementation of online learning in the educational process of TSC, updating the syllabuses of theoretical subjects, first of all with multimedia musical genres with their cross-disciplinary content, will provoke an unconscious influence on students for their better adaptation to virtual reality in the future.

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Introduction

My scientific paper refers to the issue of updating the content of the study programs of the Tbilisi State Conservatory (TSC), which is very important considering the accumulated knowledge in science in general, including musicology.

When nowadays the subject of discussion is musical education and innovative methods of teaching, so it is no less important to review and update the content of the study programs. The *Course Programs* themselves should also correspond to the new epochal challenges. We think that in the future, it will be most effective to change the content of the theoretical subjects of the TSC by including multimedia genres for example in the syllabus of the *Music History Course Program*.

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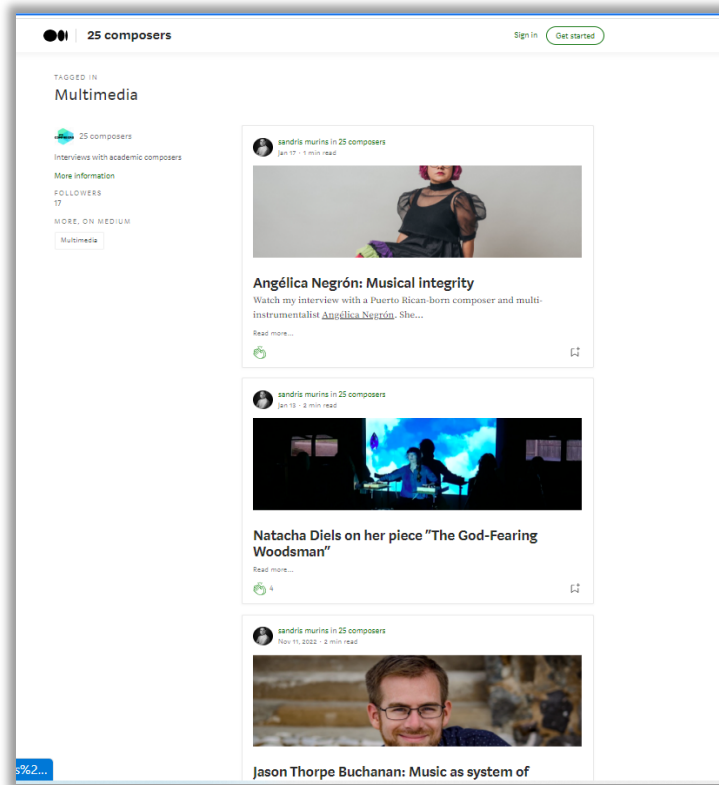


Photo 1. Multimedia composers (Web 1)

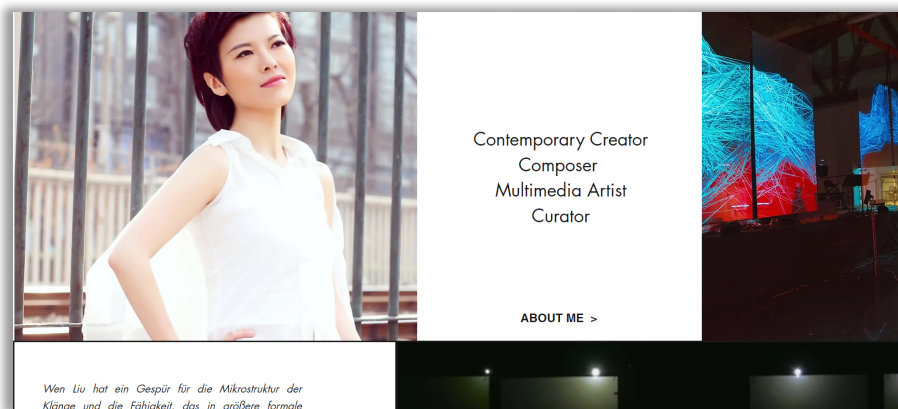
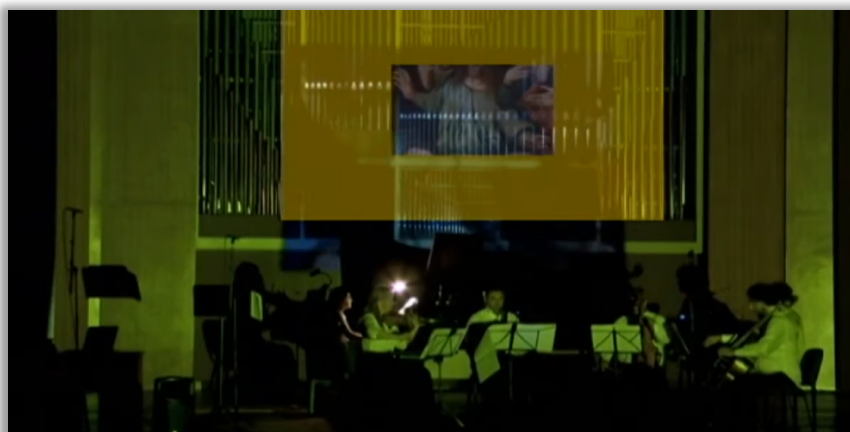


Photo 2. Contemporary Creator, Composer, Multimedia Artist: Wen Liu (Web 2)



Video 1. Eka Chabashvili Multimedia "Sounds and Colors of Seven Senses and Truth" (Web 3)

E-learning and COVID-19

Why is updating the curriculum content on the agenda? The covid pandemic turned out to be the biggest challenge for Art Higher education institutions, including TSC because it was impossible to hold ensemble, orchestra, and choruses rehearsals online. To compensate for the shortcomings of the educational process, the Conservatory actively used the fundamental component of distance learning live streaming capabilities. It is thanks to these live streams that Emergency Remote Teaching has proved to be very effective in terms of general education and raising intelligence. Despite these difficulties, it was revealed that after the pandemic, the need for rapid integration into digital reality was highlighted and students were interested in completely renewing the contents of musical subjects, in changing educational and scientific approaches. Thus, under the condition the pandemic, e-learning and the need of Updating the curriculum of theoretical subjects of music were connected to each other by a cause-and-effect relationship. Moreover, e-learning may become an increasingly proven practice in the future and the new content of the curriculum of theoretical subjects of music should be more relevant and convenient for both- the e-learning practice as well as to digital reality in which we will likely integrate into the nearest future.

The Advantages of the E-learning

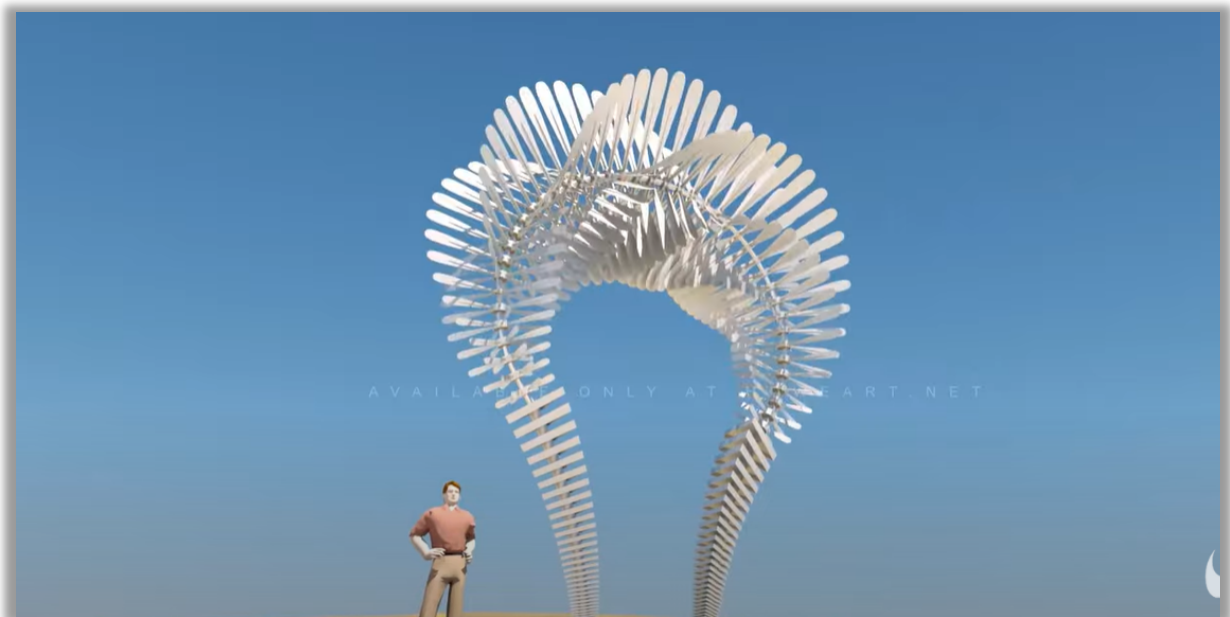
In order to discuss the issue of updating the study course for musicians with new content, it is necessary to start first of all with the problem of the advantages of the online/distance format of the teaching-learning process. It is a self-regulating and self-evolving process, directly proportional to technological progress. Synchronous (synchronous in time) and asynchronous (lost in time and space) forms of E-learning have become a successfully tested practice in the world educational space several decades before the pandemic. It is an evolutionary step towards the simplification of human life, which is why this very convenient and flexible system of teaching and learning has gathered a wide audience. Due to Covid-19, which established a new order and a kind of corona social structure of the world, E-learning turned out to be an alternative solution and its name was called also Emergency Remote Teaching, which implies synchronicity between the teacher and the student. Unlike the 20th century, when the Spanish flu spread widely in the 21st century, humanity was very lucky, because technology saved the educational system from collapse, and in the conditions of social atomization, it gave people a chance to communicate at least in virtual space. Exactly, The complete package of lockdown – Social and Physical Distancing and Self-Quarantine have been manifested in various ways in the 20th and 21st centuries but in the 21st century, it was the technologies that made cyber globalization possible, moreover, the world became even more unified and People have become even more emotionally dependent on each other. Obviously, during the first wave of the pandemic, psychological and mental problems were revealed among the students and teachers, because the transition to emergency distance education was based on the principle of shock therapy, but humanity showed resilience to challenges, and the ability to overcome resistance. Since a person is a social being, therefore, the fear of social marginalization forced the student and the teacher to be more motivated and focused on learning, to study information technologies, various platforms, and digital products better, and to improve the skills of navigating and adapting to the digital reality, to self-organize. Everyone had plenty of time to acquire knowledge and reflection on what they have read. The migration to digital reality raised the level of rivalry, as everyone could clearly see the results of others and themselves in one digital reality.

The Metaverse and Education

The velocity of scientific-technological progress suggests that E-learning will become the form of education of the future even without any viruses or other challenges and we will increasingly be integrated into digital reality. Why? Virtual reality has come a long way in recent years and at present, we are on the edge of transitional eras from reality to intensive Cyber-globalization. Kinetic sculptures, and tech-centric, projection-based exhibits are everywhere.



Video 2. German sculptor and puppet artist Christian Werdin: Automata (Web 4)



Video 3. Anthony Howe: sculptures (Web 5)

This process intensively started for example from a video game experience with primitive installation, tools, and structure, this is yet a non-immersive system where you are still in the real world in terms of bodily sensations. This is how digital technologies have developed and soon we will enter the era of the metaverse, a quantum computer. More integration into virtual reality will lead us to the immersive system of Metaverse _ an enhanced 3D Internet Network that is generated by programming codes so that with special devices - glasses, virtual reality headset, helmet, or haptic gloves you can experience everything exactly as in reality. Simulating real experiences blurs the line between what is experienced in the real world and in the Internet Network. It is clear that these perspectives will lead to a change in people's outlook. Let's remember how the European's awareness grew after traveling to distant lands during the Renaissance.

Traveling in digital reality with your own avatar, - a kind of alter ego, will also expand our horizons and sensations. This will greatly expand the sense of spiritual presence as well. Obviously, the assimilation of Virtual Reality is a gradual process. Nowadays, the following types of digital virtual realities are: Semi-immersive, Augmented; Virtual, Mixed, and Extended realities. The common thing for all these types is that digital reality increasingly blurs the lines of reality. The simulation environment gives us the opportunity to use this technology with which we can access and create

immersive online spaces for the following activities in the game industry, business, medicine, social media, and education.



Video 4. The Immersive Room Web 6

it is natural that the educational sector is growing nowadays not only specialist in any field but also as a citizen of the digital age who is on the edge of this digitally expanded reality. Therefore, online learning is not only about knowledge of technology, technology platforms, and digital products, it is a tool in our hands.

Multimedia musical genres as the best proposals for musical education

In the conditions of increasing migration to digital reality, it is necessary to prepare young people mentally, to change their way of thinking and expand their worldview. In this context, the renewal of the block of theoretical subjects, especially music history with new content at Tbilisi state conservatoire is of outstanding importance. In this case, Foreign and first of all Georgian Multimedia musical genres are one of the best proposals. Multi-media hybrid musical genres are inherently interactive, informative, and relevant to the challenges of the scientific and technological progress of the modern era and reflect the new perception of the world, which is relevant to the student's requirements.

What is interesting about multimedia and why are they relevant for the near future?

The digital age has swept the world, and with multimedia genres, the composer has changed compositional approaches and shattered certain stereotypes.

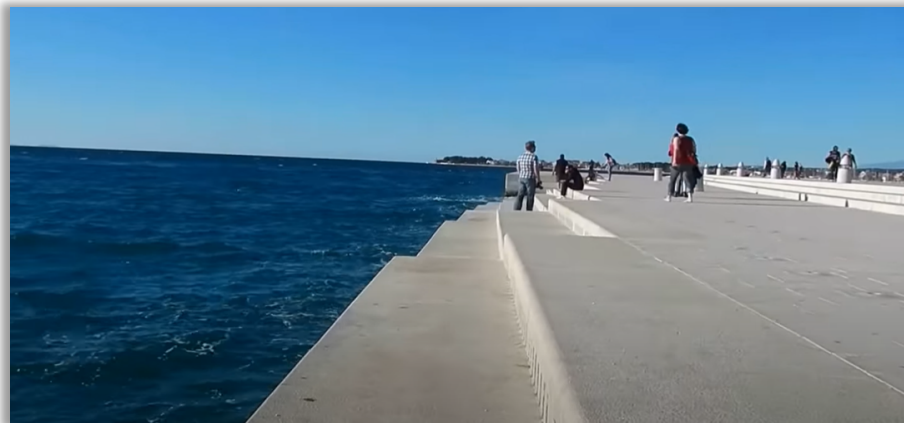
- The multimedia work first of all destroys the cliché of using stage space, which comes from ancient civilizations. It's a cliché - the action takes place on the stage and the audience sits in the *theatron* - the word referring to the hall seat area section in a Creta-Mycenaean, ancient Greek, Roman, and Byzantine theater. In multimedia work, the stage and seats can be everywhere.
- For centuries, the listener performed the score written by the composer with more or less accuracy, depending on the aleatory level), while the spectator was sometimes informed in advance thanks to a pre-written synopsis or the script.

In the music of the past, the spectator listened to the performer passively and could not interfere in the performance. therefore spectators thought mostly about the quality of the performance. In multimedia, there are great opportunities for interaction, the listener is actively involved in the performance process, maybe also in the process of making music, which creates an interaction between the composer, the performer, and the listener/spectator. Thus, Spectators are no longer marginalized observers, but they are directly involved in the process of making music. The same would happen in the Metaverse network. This is how the user's avatar will be active in the Metaverse. Users will determine the location on the virtual map and will have the right to initiative while navigating in this space.

Multimedia genres destroy another stereotype - we perceive only sounds, and noises as music, although the function of the music may be given by the composer to a graphic image, or verbal text, every item has vibrations. Multimedia genres provoke the principle of synaesthesia, and listeners may experience mixed sensations between several art fields.

Multimedia genres were born precisely from the multidisciplinary approach to art to convey an idea. Thus, A variety of interaction types are possible, e.g. Interaction of music with choreography, sculpture, verbal sound source, literature forms or genres, the plastic of letters and hieroglyphs, scientific theories, medicine, cinematography, theater, and ecology, Music is already as a system of interactions, and such interaction significantly expands the scope of information and knowledge obtained from art; Multimedia genres are very much like digital reality, they will intersect in some similarities – both are synthetic and focused on the expansion of human knowledge and perception. Hybrid multimedia genres, due to the cross-disciplinary content, will give the student verbal as well as non-verbal knowledge.

Multimedia genres destroy another stereotype - people understand music only as a composition written by a composer for voice, instruments or digital reality, while the composition can be written as a work of multidisciplinary content. Multimedia genres gave the opportunity to perceive music as the universal communication language. This we call Eco-music, we created human music by imitating nature music from ancient times. We imitate the birds singing, lions roaring, and the sound of mountings Echo, and created musical instruments, so imitating nature humankind created instruments. “A musical instrument always echoes the epoch it was created in. With its structure, tuning system, and performance techniques, it could be considered a musical chronicler that tells a lot about the musical aesthetics of the age it belongs to.” (Chabashvili, 2022:51). Then step by step we have separated ourselves from the general sound of the universe. Other creations remained in the orbit of this communication language, and the man fell behind it. All sounds of nature, human voices, instruments, also electronic sounds are part of the earth’s ecosystem. Being interested in eco-music is a chance for a person to get involved in this network again and multimedia gives the opportunity to go back to eco-music.



Video 5. Sea Organ (Morske Orgulje) and the Adriatic Sea in Zadar, Croatia (Web 7)

Multimedia musical genres in Georgian music

In Georgia, Eka Chabashvili is the composer for whom multimedia is the principle of thinking. A review of Eka’s compositions will shed light on what it means to interpret the latest scientific thought in music, new compositional approaches, the relevance of the digital age, and a renewed worldview.

Micro-Opera/Exhibition: “Wandering Wishes”

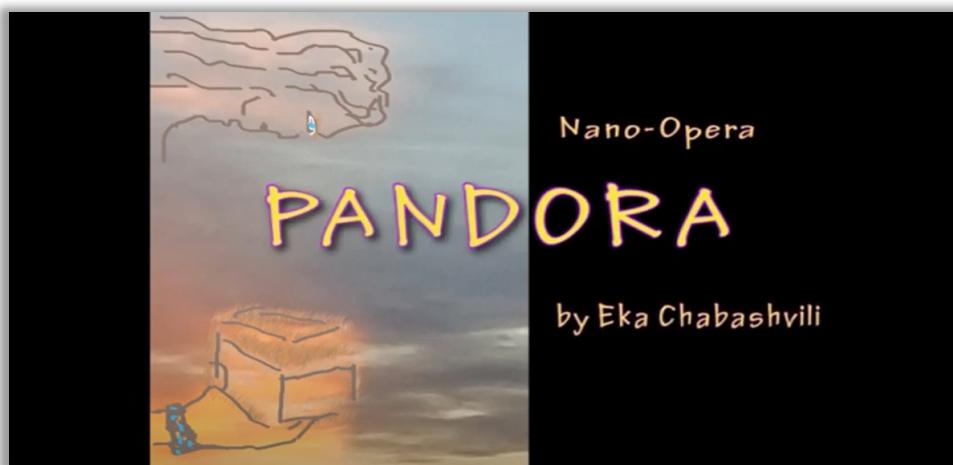
For example Hybrid genre Micro-Opera/Exhibition, “Wandering Wishes” presents 5 separate micro-operas, small scenes, that may be performed simultaneously. The audience can walk in the hall during the performance, going from one scene to another. In the preface of the score composer explains the peculiarities of the performance of the opera: “In order to control the sound result of 5 pictures performed simultaneously, I created the special score for the signalling system of the stage lightening, intended to signal when a particular picture leaves or joins the presentation.” (Chabashvili, 2018:4).



Video 6. Eka Chabashvili, "Josephine the Singer, or the Mouse Folk": III scene from opera/exhibition "Wandering Wishes" (Web 8)

Nano opera "Pandora"

Another example is the documentary nano opera "Pandora" (for internet space, 2021) - a new interpretation and deconstruction of a traditional opera. "Video-opera dramaturgy is based on conveying the processes taking place in two worlds through parallel montage. Episodes 1-3-5 reflect the reality that surrounds us in the macrocosm, and episodes 2-4 reflect what is happening in our microcosm." (Kavtaradze, 2021: 337). This is a journey of mutated Corona throughout macro and micro worlds. A virus wants to be implemented in our lives and the desire is so big that the corona makes mistakes. This is the Interaction of music with documentary film and microbiology, (genetics, atomic and quantum physics). Composition's size is significantly reduced in almost every aspect, 8 minutes, not only in the field of instrumentation. That's why it is nano and presents a journey in the nano or quantum world.



Video 7. Eka Chabashvili Nano-Opera PANDORA (Web 9)

Symphony/Exhibition "Khma"

There is another interesting example Hybrid genre Syncretic experimental multimedia project -Symphony/Exhibition, 'Khma' (the Voice, 2018-2022) First of all it is a sample of eco-music. The new configuration of the interaction between the composer, the performer, and the listeners are involved in the creating and performing process. "The listener has to follow the performer, his ear has to think along with the composer, and only in this case the sharing of energy currencies occur, and music fulfills its most essential purposes. That is impossible without the complete involvement of listeners." (Jvania, 2019: 40). A certain 'scenario' of the work envisages the interaction between music, visual art, lighting, and science through associative-metaphorical connections. The novelty is the composer's desire to return to the listener a sense of the wholeness of the universe, that art is not separated from the universe and art is not alone– all sounds are part of a single cosmic harmony. She tried to create with sounds the vibrations that would harmonize with

the vibrations of the universe. According to the composer, this is what will help the listener to become a cosmo-energetic person and to connect to the unified communications network of the cosmos as the largest energetic process.



Video 8. Symphony-Exhibition "KHMA" (Web 10)

Conclusion

Humanity is on the verge of global changes and is preparing to become more and more integrated into cyberspace. Against the background of such an objective fact, the field of education is primarily responsible for increasing the youth relevant to scientific-technological progress. Thus, when the subject of discussion is novelties for the education system or innovative methods in online or in-person teaching, not only technological innovations, sophisticated enterprise solutions, or special training for both students and lecturers are needed, but also training the consciousness of youth for exactly these next stages of digital reality psychologically and mentally. Examples of new compositional approaches reflected in multimedia genres will change their outlook and attitude toward the world, and destroy stereotypes and clichés. Enriched with multimedia genres the *Course Programs* themselves respond accurately to the new epochal challenges and we think that it will be most effective to update the content of the theoretical subjects of the TSC by including exactly these multimedia genres in the syllabus of *Course Programs*. They are inherently interactive, informative, and relevant to the challenges of the modern era. Incorporating multimedia musical hybrid musical genres into the learning process due to the cross-disciplinary content will give the student not only verbal but also non-verbal knowledge, genres they will provoke an unconscious influence for better adaptation in virtual reality in the future, will help the student:

- to change their way of thinking;
- to better adapt to a computer-generated simulation reality in the future;
- will give us the opportunity to experience a reality different from the one we live in.

And we should start with the national samples. Fortunately, Georgian music gave birth to samples of multimedia genres. Eka Chabashvili's multimedia compositions are clear examples of that.

Biodata of Author



Gvantsa Ghvinjilia – Musicologist, Ph.D., Associate Professor (Department of Music History), member of the Academic Council, and head of the dissertation Board at Tbilisi State Conservatoire, Georgia. A member of the Georgian composer's union. The guest senior teacher at Shota Rustaveli Theatre and Cinema Tbilisi State University. Member of the jury of the Tsinandali Awards (2022). She has received the Scholarships of Z. Paliashvili and the President of Georgia. PR manager of *Tbilisi Opera and Ballet State Theatre* (2006-2013). In 2021-2022 she was a participant in the Erasmus+Mobility exchange program (Belgium, France). Her scientific interests are connected with: the ways of European integration of Georgian music; the dreadful consequences of Russian annexation on Georgia's music; the impact of

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