

STATEMENT

by Prof. Dr. Miglena Lyudmilova Prashkova, VTU (University of Veliko Tarnovo),
professional direction: 8.2. Art

regarding the procedure for holding the academic position "**associate professor**"
New Bulgarian University, Faculty of Basic Education,
Design Department

General information about the announced competition:

Field of Higher Education: 8. Arts

Professional direction: 8.2. Fine Art

Scientific specialty: "Fine art - visual composition, shape and color in design"

The contest was announced in the State newspaper : number15, dated 14.02.2023

1. Assessment of compliance with the minimum national requirements and the requirements of the New Bulgarian University

The contest for the academic position of "associate professor" in Visual composition, shape and color in design has been announced for the needs of the "Design" department, in the Faculty of Basic Education of the New Bulgarian University, Sofia. The scientific jury was appointed by rector's order No. 3-RK-192 / 28.04.2023. According to the record of its first meeting, held on 15.05.2023, one candidate was admitted to the contest - Ch. Assistant Ivanka Dimitrova Dobrava-Dragostinova, PhD, who has been working on a regular employment contract as a teacher at the NBU since 2011. According to the scheme presented in the documents, the candidate meets the minimum national scientometric indicators. At the same meeting, the date for the final meeting was set - 25.09. 2023, the chairman and members of the scientific jury were elected to prepare reviews and statements. No violations were committed in the procedure.

The contest documentation presented to me for a statement fully meets the requirements of LDASRB (law for the development of the academic staff of the Republic of Bulgaria), the Regulations for its application and the requirements of the NBU.

2. Research (creative) activity and results

Ivanka Dobрева-Dragostinova has a master's degree from the Faculty of Applied Arts at the National Academy of Arts, specialty "Design of Children's Environment" (2003) and a teaching license (2001). For her thesis for the bachelor's degree, also from NHA, she received an award from the "Open Society" Foundation and the Inter-University Fund (2001). In 2010, the Higher Attestation Commission awarded her the educational and scientific degree "doctor". The topic of the dissertation work is "Design for children's health. Design of the interior of preventive and medical institutions for children". Since 2011, she has been a chief assistant in the "Design" department of the NBU. She is a member of the "Impulses Art Circle" association, the "Color - Bulgaria" group, the Chamber of Bulgarian Designers and the Scientific and Technical Union for Textiles, Clothing and Leather.

Ivanka Dobрева-Dragostinova participates in a sequence of national and international projects and art forums, and their number is impressive. All of them are correctly written and attached to the documents prepared for the contest. Let me not list every participation. I will summarize that after her election for the academic position of "chief assistant", from 2011 until now, the candidate has had 7 solo exhibitions in the country and dozens of participations in collective art exhibitions, national exhibitions, international exhibitions, biennales, etc. A large part of them, as well as the projects, are dedicated to creativity in the field of design. Along with her artistic and creative work, Dobрева-Dragostinova also develops an impressive scientific activity. Participates in a number of national and international scientific conferences and has a total of 42 publications. 34 of them have been published in peer-reviewed publications since 2011

Initially, her interests were focused on the design of children's environment, but her recent articles address a variety of issues in the field of design in general, which directly relate to composition, the choice of expressive means and materials, the creative process and the environment which is the target of various design or artistic objects. The texts are published in peer-reviewed editions, under the scientific editorship of boards of Bulgarian and foreign scientists and specialists. The significance of the scientific production presented is proved by 7 citations in world and other databases.

The contest for the academic position of "associate professor" in Visual composition, shape and color in design ch. assistant Ivanka Dobрева-Dragostinova, PhD participated in a habilitation thesis - a complete artistic product that includes the works from the last two solo exhibitions - "21 in Blue", Music Center "Boris Hristov", Sofia, May 21 - June 4, 2021, and "Journey in Blue", Yuka Gallery, Varna, August 16 - September 10, 2021 and "Journey

in Blue", Yuka Gallery, Varna, August 16 - September 10, 2021. The two cycles present the author's "research and artistic pursuits at the border between design and visual arts" (Summary, p. 1). The candidate has prepared a text for them - an extended summary of 61 pages, 47 pages of which are text, 12 pages are illustrations and 2 pages are bibliography, including 33 pencil sketches, 30 color compositions, 41 graphic compositions, which are created by the author. The text presents the idea, the means of expression used in the process of creation, the creative experiments and their results. The author skilfully handles the concepts and terminology, examines the individual elements of the composition - background, shape, line, contrast, as well as their organization - symmetry and asymmetry, meter and rhythm, dominant. The approach is particularly analytical in the part, which refers to color, as well as to principles in composition.

In addition to the main habilitation work, several more cycles have been presented - compositions, small sculptures "Forks" and "Rhodope Landscapes" (painting), as well as several exhibitions. A separate presentation has been prepared with accomplished design solutions: "Biostore", children's constructor "Fairytale City" and a manipulative constructor for children, several series of lighting fixtures and furniture "Origami", "Spheres", "Phoenix" and spatial installation "Christmas Spirit", with brief annotations – titles, technique and format.

The works in the habilitation work and the scientific and artistic products presented in support are entirely author's. They show the creative pursuits and research interests of Ch. Ivanka Dobрева-Dragostinova, assistant professor, PhD. They demonstrate the author's ability to explore the means and principles in composition through practice and in the creative process, which is the basis of any work, regardless of the type of art. Subject to certain regularities, individual compositional elements can be moved or replaced, opposed or balanced in order to seek the balance between the author's decision and the viewer's perception. This is the kind of dialogue between the creator and the user, whereby the result acquires meaning. Or, it is the freedom of the author to "step" on the known, the familiar, on the tradition, exploring new territories, gaining new experience and discovering new possibilities.

The results of the various abstract-decorative painting experiments conducted, interestingly – in a single color range, reveal options for compositional solutions that can be transferred to the design. They mainly refer to the psychological attitude, the emotional impact (state), to the human-environment interaction, or they can serve to convey certain ideas and messages.

Work with students in practical disciplines is based on constant live communication, motivation for creative work and professional skills that the candidate possesses. I have no doubt that the success of teaching is based, on the one hand, on precision and punctuality, on persistence

and systematicity, but on the other hand - on the possibility to express different points of view in the work process, accepting challenges and giving meaning to the random. It is particularly important the perspective of the researcher, necessary to provoke thinking, analyticity and search for new solutions. Dobрева-Dragostinova brings out useful, experienced creative process, in the center of which is the person, as an absolute necessity for the success in the accomplishment of the work. The creative process is identical in the field of design, where the expected result cannot be achieved without the interaction between man and environment.

The contribution of the presented habilitation work - text and works, is mainly expressed in the fact that it is based on systematically conducted artistic experiments, which are theoretically grounded. The printing of the study, together with the presented author's visual material, can serve in the education of students both in the field of design and in the education of composition and color studies, not only at NBU, but also at other higher schools of art.

3. Educational and teaching activities

The candidate's auditory and non-auditory employment meets the requirements of the university and even exceeds them, which also includes work in the electronic training module "MOODLE - NBU". She participates in committees for accepting and approving student applications under the Erasmus program. From the presented documents - the table with the scientometric indicators we can see the high evaluation of the students in the conducted surveys.

4. Administrative and public activity

Ch. Ivanka Dobрева-Dragostinova, assistant professor, is a member of the FS (Faculty Council) and regularly participates in the work of departmental councils. Evidence of her public activity is a number of projects implemented during the last years. Her annual participation in the open days of the NBU is related to attracting students to the program.

5. Conclusion

Considering all that has been said so far, I confidently propose to the honorable scientific jury ch. assistant professor Ivanka Dobрева-Dragostinova, PhD, to be elected to the academic position of "associate professor" in the field of higher education 8. Arts, professional direction 8.2. Fine art, scientific specialty "Fine art - visual composition, shape and color in design".

23. 06. 2023

Veliko Tarnovo

Prof. Dr. Miglena Prashkova