

REVIEW

by

Prof. Dr. Elena Todorova

on

competition for filling the academic position of “associate professor” for the needs of the NBU in the field of higher education 8. Arts, professional direction 8.2 Fine Arts (Fashion),

The sole candidate in the „associate professor“ competition, published in the State Gazette, SG, dated, for the needs of the Design Department, is Chief assistant Dr. Yana Dvoretzka, New Bulgarian University

I. Assessment of compliance with the minimal national requirements and the requirements of the New Bulgarian University:

The habilitation materials presented by c.a. Dr. Yana Oleg Dvoretzka for filling the academic position of „associate professor“, completely comply with the minimal national requirements, also in compliance and covering the NBU requirements for habilitation for filling the academic position of associate professor. C.a. Dr. Yana Oleg Dvoretzka has the necessary number of points of all index groups of the minimal requirements table for the scientific, lecturing and/or artistic/creative activities as per the Academic Development Law and the requirements of the New Bulgarian University.

The habilitation work thus presented, the various designing exhibits and projects realized by Yana Dvoretzka, demonstrate consistent and purposeful creative work in the field of scenic costume, fashion and fabrics.

II. Research (creative) activity and results:

- **Monography assessment**

Yana Dvoretzka is a well-known and approved contemporary Bulgarian artist and scenic costume designer with a solid professional biography. Her creative activities comprise a large number of important opera and ballet productions, lately also theater productions. For a period of 10 years she created hundreds of costumes for different productions. In the latest few seasons both public and critics are strongly impressed by the costumes for: „Shakespeare in Love“ for the Satirical theater - Sofia; “Fledermaus” by Johann Strauss, „The circus princess“ by Imre Kalman, for the State Music and Ballet Theater “Stefan Makedonski” - Sofia; the musical “Hair” for State Opera – Plovdiv; "Sister Angelica" – by Puccini, “Il Barbiere di Sevigla” by Rossini for State Opera Russe; „Ellissir d’Amore” by Gaetano Donizetti for State Opera Plovdiv... No use enumerating further projects, by those described it is evident that Yana Dvoretzka is highly estimated as a creator invited to work for the most prestigious Bulgarian theaters.

Yana Dvoretzka's habilitation work is dedicated to the process of creating the scenic costumes for the ballet „Bayadera“, set on stage in 2021 in the State Opera - Russe. The staging was done by the great Bulgarian prima ballerina Acad. Kalina Bogoeva. This was her first production of “Bayadera” and she chose a team of proven professionals of long experience: artistic director – Vessela Vassileva, ballet master – Mariana Zaharieva, scenography – Ivan Tokadjiev, costumes – Yana Dvoretzka, multimedia – Stefan Mateev, lighting – Boyan Georgiev, director's assistant – Elena Koleva, photographer - Emil Kyostebekov.

The costume designer's job for this production is not an easy task. The ballet belongs to the classical ballet tradition. The libretto's subject is exotic but the music to a great extent belongs to the European traditions of the epoch of Romanticism. This discrepancy between subject and music style makes the role of producer, costume designer and choreographer decisive for the creation of an exotic atmosphere as expected by the public. In this production Yana Dvoretzka, through the costumes, easily deals with the challenge to reflect the Indian exotic reality, which is the base of the subject line. The main

characters are very different in essence and bring different messages. The scenic costumes successfully create the individuality of visual images, simultaneously responding to the functional requirements of choreography. The costumes of the main female characters of Nikia and her rival Gamsati are made of light ethereal fabrics, with delicately added Indian motives. The colors and decorations play the role of identifying codes, presenting the characters and destinies of the female main characters. Costumes change for each act. By changing the colors and complexity of the costumes, Yana Dvoretzka succeeds in convincing the public of the change of spiritual state and emotions of the characters.

The costumes of the main male characters are very impressive. The great Brahmin is „the bad character“ in this story. As a representative of the higher clergy, he is supposed to be colorful, powerful, fearful. Yana Dvoretzka has found a perfect solution for this role. The costume is in vivid red, decorated with “golden” jewelry and complete with a richly decorated hat; thus the designer creates a feeling of power and religious mysticism. The characters of Solor – a noble warrior, and Dugmanta – a raja, have very inventive costumes. They are of the typical silhouette and elements of traditional ethnic Indian male clothing, but more functional for easy movements, with added decorative elements of bands, embroideries and pearls. The beautiful hats, turbans and shoes are very impressive, adding a fairy tale feeling to the images. Although very complicated, these costumes are very appropriate for dancing and a complicated choreography. Another interesting character is the Golden God. A religious accent in the setting, without being any concrete God of the Indian Epos, the costume creates a summed-up image of a deity. In fact the costume is very minimalistic but it completely achieves the desired impression. The crown, the rich necklace and the golden color add to the godly image.

I must say a few words about the costumes for the ensembles. It is of utmost importance for them to be sufficiently comfortable for the complicated choreography, and at the same time to follow the theme of the performance. The veil dance is one of the most memorable scenes in the setting of „Bayadera“. Yana Dvoretzka has chosen an interesting palette of decent lilac tones. The costumes are a lovely combination of pure forms, delicate decorations, entwined into the typical oriental silhouette line. In all other ensemble groups

the costumes are resourcefully designed so as to carry certain features, and at the same time be an organic part of the whole performance.

Creating scene costumes requires lots of skills. A fundamental knowledge of costume history, ethnic clothing, history of fashion is of extreme importance for designing for productions of different epochs. Knowing the process of making clothes and accessories, as well as knowledge of scenic and choreographic requirements are also very important. However, the most important thing making a designer successful, is to be able to recreate all his/her knowledge and skills, to reflect them through his/her own imagination and personal esthetic feeling and turn them into a final product, which is understood and estimated by the audience in the first place. This kind of skill we see in all scene costumes created by Yana Dvoretzka.

- **Assessment of other creative works, outside the scope of the monography:**

The following awards are a regular result of her professionalism and a large number of creations in the field of scene costume design:

„CRYSTAL LYRE`2016“ nomination for the production team of the opera „Il Barbiere di Siviglia“ by Rossini (opera and ballet performance) on the stage of the Russe opera.

International acknowledgements: for the film +7 hours (the team): Nomination and award for best costume design - Sarajevo Fashion Film Festival, BIG SEE FASHION COLLABORATION AWARD 2020; Nomination and award for best costume design – 12th edition of La Jolla Fashion Film Festival and International Fashion Film Awards 2021

Creative interests of Yana Dvoretzka do not end with scene costumes. She is also very successful as a fashion designer applying sustainable practices in fashion. She is closely connected to the start of the sustainable fashion movement in Bulgaria. Yana Dvoretzka is one of the coordinators of the international project “Fashion Revolution” in our country. Her fashion projects follow the principles of „slow fashion“ – using natural materials, combined with authentic manual techniques of textile treatment and colors obtained from natural dyes. The result is a unique „...design beyond fashion’s whims“.

- **Citing by other authors:**

C.a. Dr. Yana Dvoretzka has a sufficient number of citations as shown by the NACID reference.

III. Educational and lecturing activity :

Yana Dvoretzka has been a lecturer in the BP Fashion, NBU, since the year 2000. In 2013 she defended a doctor dissertation with the theme "Clothing as a sign of identity". During her 23 years of lecturing she actively contributed to the enrichment and actualization of the Bachelor program in fashion, preparing new courses, such as „Forms and volumes in fashion“ – Parts I and II, „Introduction to fashion design“ – Parts I and II, „Theory of fashion“, „Experimental practices in fashion“ – Parts I and II, „Design Lab“ – Parts I and II, „Fashion and scene“. She has been the project manager of various local and international projects, student fashion shows, as well as the international contest for young designers IDEAMODA whose third edition is taking place right now. Yana Dvoretzka's activities as a lecturer, her high professionalism and dedication are the reason why her students achieve high results in the realization of their creative ideas.

IV. Administrative and social activity:

C.A. Dr. Yana Dvoretzka is a member of the program council to the Design Department. In the years 2015 – 2016 she was the director of the Program Council at the Design Department and a program consultant of BP Fashion between 2004 – 2009. She is a regular participant in the department councils.

V. Personal impressions of the candidate (if any):

I have known Yana Dvoretzka since the year 2001 when I started work for BP Fashion, NBU. During these 22 years I witnessed the great efforts and work, often beyond the academic hours, that Dvoretzka employed working with the students. Her devotion and high

professionalism in teaching and realizing various student products have long turned her into a highly respected lecturer and colleague.

Conclusion:

Having made an analysis of the creative and academic activities of Yana Dvoretzka, fully confident in the high quality and professionalism of her creative work thus presented, I propose to the respected members of the scientific jury to elect C.A. Dr. Yana Dvoretzka for the academic post of associate professor on point 08.02. Fine Arts (Fashion).

Prof. Dr. Elena Todorova

15.03.2023