

OPINION

by Assoc. Prof. Christina Georgieva Savova, Ph.D.,

full-time teacher and Head of the Design Department, New Bulgarian University, 8.2 Fine Art

based on the materials submitted for participation in a competition for the academic position
"Associated Professor" at the New Bulgarian University, Sofia

by field of higher education 8. Arts

professional direction 8.2 Visual arts (design of printed advertising, book publications, and
web products)

In the competition for "Associate Professor," announced in the State Gazette, **SG No. 50/09.06.2023**, for the needs of the Design Department, the only candidate who participated, **Chief Assistant Professor Sofroni Georgiev Varbev, Ph.D.**, New Bulgarian University

I. Research (creative) activity and results

The candidate for the competition for the academic position "associate professor," Chief Assistant Professor Sofroni Georgiev Varbev, Ph.D., began his creative journey in 1986 with the acquisition of a master's degree in Industrial Arts at the National Academy of Arts. In 2013, he successfully defended his dissertation "Corporate Identity in the Interior" at the New Bulgarian University for the award of an educational and scientific degree "Doctor."

Since 2013, he has been a full-time teacher at the New Bulgarian University in the programs - BA "Interior Design," MA "Spatial Design," and MA "Product Design for the Interior". He participated in two international and three national creative projects. In 2020, he received the "Golden Lion" award for the design of the Anthology "Collection of Folk Thoughts" published by the NBU - 2 volumes of the poet Boris Hristov.

In the competition for "Associated Professor" in print advertising design, book publications, and web products, Ch. Assist. Prof. Sofroni Varbev participated in a habilitation thesis - a complete artistic development, which includes the works from the last two solo

exhibitions, "Advertising vision of national autumn exhibitions - Plovdiv (2014-2022.)", a complete complex product, composed of individual recognizable by its visual transformations' modules with permanent highlights. The individual elements of the National Autumn Exhibitions include printed products: a bilingual catalog, a large-format poster, numerous banners in different formats, informational and advertising leaflets, an official invitation, and banners for the virtual space—the skill of Ch. Assist. Prof. Sofroni Varbev in creating connections between these different genres and functional products and "moving" through them, shows his creative potential and depth of understanding of a proven artist-designer who strives to find "the intersection between curatorial idea, uniqueness, representativeness, and a little provocation."

Along with it, numerous creative performances and participations in exhibitions dedicated mainly to the design of graphic and advertising presentation, pre-press preparation, and creative absorption of the living space have been presented with eight innovative performances, over 20 realized short author's products in the field of arts and led several the project to the curriculum fund of the NBU. He is the author of eight design publications. He is a member of the Association of Interior Designers in Bulgaria (AIDB) and the Society of Plovdiv Artists.

In artistic circles, Ch. Assist. Prof. Sofroni Varbev is known for his creative pursuits, mainly graphic and advertising presentation design, pre-press preparation, and creative utilization of living space.

The list of presented research and creative performances of the candidate comprehensively covers her creative activity, awards and honors, participation in seminars and lectures, and organizing and participating in projects. The list is presented in a neat and logical sequence.

Those presented by Ch. assistant professor Sofroni Varbev, materials for the competition, as well as his research, creative and academic-educational activity meet the mandatory and specific conditions and scientometric criteria for the occupation of the academic position of "associate professor," according to the requirements of the Law on the development of the academic staff in the Republic Bulgaria, the Regulations for the application and the requirements of the NBU.

II. Learning and teaching activity

Ch. Assist. Prof. Sofroni Varbev is active in his teaching activities, involving students in numerous projects and encouraging their participation in various creative performances and projects. He has been actively teaching since 2006 in the programs at NBU, and since 2013, he has been a full-time teacher. He successfully participated in national and university projects, workshops, and competitions with the participation of students from BP "Interior Design," MP "Spatial Design," and MP "Product Design for Interior."

III. Administrative and public activity

The administrative commitment of Ch. Assist. Prof. Sofroni Varbev goes through Program Director 2010-2012, Director of the Program Board from 2021 to now. He took an active part in the creation of the MP "Product Design for Interior" and the MP "Spatial and Product Design for Interior," and along with this, he regularly and actively participates in the development and updating of the BP "Interior Design" and MP "Spatial Design."

The public activity of the candidate should include his assistance and participation in the promotion of design in Bulgaria. This is evidenced by his involvement in exhibitions dedicated to this theme and his membership in the Association of Interior Designers in Bulgaria (AIDB) and the Society of Artists in Plovdiv.

IV. Personal impressions of the candidate

I can express my positive impressions of Ch. Assistant Professor Sofroni Varbev, Ph.D. He is a talented teacher and designer with a unique author's style. I am impressed by his ability to inspire and motivate his students.

Sofroni Varbev is not just a teacher but a creator who always finds innovative ways to present the material. His positive attitude towards the learning process and students is contagious. He not only shares his expertise but also creates inspiration in all of us. His passion for education and design is reflected in the quality of our work and our students' development.

V. Opinions, recommendations, and notes on the activity and achievements of the candidate

I have no critical remarks regarding the candidate's overall performance. He is highly competent and committed both as a teacher and designer. He gives both of his roles a personality and style that are recognizable and inspiring.

I recommend the candidate continue in the same professional spirit he works in. He has demonstrated the ability to inspire and guide students to achievement and success. His enthusiasm and passion for education are valuable qualities that deserve to be preserved and developed, and complemented in the future.

Sofroni Varbev has a clear inspiration for his work, reflected in his learning process and design achievements. His ability to combine the pedagogical approach with creativity and innovation makes him an essential asset to our educational institution.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I express my **positive opinion** about Ch. Assist. Prof. Sofroni Varbev's, Ph.D. contributions to creativity and scientific research activity and his teaching activities correspond to the field and professional direction of the announced competition. I recommend the esteemed members of the scientific jury to unanimously support and vote positively for selecting **Chief Assistant Professor Sofroni Georgiev Varbev, Ph.D.**, in the academic position "**Associated Professor**" in professional field **8.2. Fine art (print advertising design, book publications, and web products)**

4.10.2023

.....

/Assoc. Prof. Christina Savova, Ph.D./