

STANDPOINT

by Prof. Dr. Galina Georgieva Lardeva, AMTII Prof. Asen Diamandiev

Plovdiv, professional field 8.2. Art

for artistic activity in connection with participation in a competition for the academic position of "professor" in a professional field 8.2. Fine arts (artistic ceramics), published in the State Gazette, issue 51 / 18.06.2021,
for the candidacy of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Monika Petrova Popova

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

The activities presented by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Monika Popova significantly exceed the minimum national scientometric requirements and the requirements of the New Bulgarian University.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Popova has defended her dissertation "Development of sculpture during the Theban kings XII and XVIII dynasties" (indicator A). Within the group of indicators V for realized author's product in the field of arts there are 390 of the minimum required number of 100 points. In connection with the contribution grounds, I note here the fully considered exhibitions "Vacuum" (2021), "Skinned and Sewn" (2016), "1 + 1 = 1 + 1" together with Ivan Kulekov (2017), "Sieve" (2016) with Metodi Popov, "Embroidered in Black" (2017). Section G includes the published book based on the defended dissertation for the award of educational and scientific degree "Doctor". "The Sculpture in Ancient Egypt during the XII and XVIII dynasties (2015), as well as several articles and reports.

Although - in my opinion, for example, the presented "review on the occasion of the release of a retrospective author's album by NBU of honorary professor Ivan Veselinov" should not have a place in these standards. However, the supporting creative performances in the same section are completely correct. In the set of indicators D - the reviews for the creative performances, Assoc. Prof. Popova also presents a large amount of materials (with 140 of the required minimum number of 80 points collected), and the authors of the reviews have proven their importance as researchers.

Last but not least - in the norms of indicator E, the candidate is the head of a successfully defended doctoral student and participates in various projects in the artistic life of the country.

II. Creative activity and results

II. 1. Evaluation of creative performances. The main creative performances, which Assoc. Prof. Dr. Monika Popova has placed in the body of her candidacy, are distinguished by internal density, characteristically defined plasticity, recognizable artistic language and complexity. It is evident that the candidate has built and imposed both her conceptual principles and their stylistic orientation long time ago.

Lately, she has been working towards the communicative sharing of her established stylistic focus - something that is absolutely necessary for a contemporary artist and teacher. In its work, several main problem cores can be identified. First, the key to understanding this work is the relationship between drawing and ceramics, thoughtfully not as media projections, but rather as spatial dimensions or in their stylistic and compositional unity, as a process of developing a typology of the ornamental.

Second, the intense presence of a lasting anthropological dominant of the founded vision - this is a kind of figurative and semantic urge from the field of the archetypal beginning, associated with consistent efforts to stylizes the primitive. Third, the characteristic of the candidate's conceptual exhibitions is a specific suggestion of monumentality, in which the author's interests in ancient Egyptian sculpture and her attitude to the beginnings of the Bulgarian artistic tradition are linked. The works themselves, which take part in the main solo exhibitions of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Monika Popova, are distinguished by a mastered and carefully developed drawing, with a profound figurative paradox and a pronounced interest in the body as an intersection and transformation node of many human and artist energies. Based on the above, the following contributions of the candidate can be indicated:

The anthropological framework in which the author's exhibition appearances are located, universalizes the communication with the audience and transforms the problems of individual poetics into universal attitudes and receptive models. The presence of almost ritual actions such as sewing and sifting - both in the image system and in the auto-poietic framework of many of Monika Popova's works, are a suitable example in this respect.

The rethought presence of ancient Egyptian sculpture in contemporary works as an object of creative processing can be deduced as an independent contribution.

II. 2. Evaluation of the contributions in the other creative performances.

What has been said so far is completely valid for all other creative performances of the candidate Assoc. Prof. Dr. Monika Popova. Moreover, both solo and group exhibitions have a high degree of prestige. They are visible physiognomic events

in which the presence of the author has consistently received high praise from experts.

II. 3. Citation by other authors. In the plan of the creative professorship, this section covers the reviews of the candidate's artistic performances. Maria Landova, Daniela Chulova-Markova, Georgi Lozanov, Beloslava Dimitrova and others write about the works and exhibitions of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Monika Popova. The places of publication of the materials, in which the works of the candidate are considered, are invariably prestigious editions.

II. 4. Evaluation of the results of participation in research and creative projects and application of the obtained results in practice. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Popova is the main supervisor in Ceramics at NBU. She participates in the organization of all ceramics exhibitions for students at the University. In this sense, her creative potential and her research as a scientist are found in the process of training and realization of many graduates.

III. Educational and teaching activities. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Monica Popova is highly respected by her students from Graphic design and Plastic arts programs of the Department of Fine Arts in NBU. In this department, she is an associate professor since the year of 2010, and in all academic years there is full audience employment. In addition to its immediate teaching activities, Popova initiated the exhibits in part II.4 activities and supports the creative process of students, participates in academic exchanges, organizes seminars attended by significant authors and educators, including guests from abroad, as well as visiting teachers in other higher education institutions.

IV. Administrative and public activities.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Monika Popova has been the founder of the ceramics and 3D ceramic printing studios at NBU since 2002. She is the founder of the first and only in Bulgaria laboratory for 3D ceramic printing. She is the director of the Training Practical Unit in Ceramics at NBU. She is the organizer of many art events, including the International Festival of Contemporary Ceramics - Sofia 2017 with many side events that directly engage the student audience, but also expand the perimeter of the impact of ceramic art.

Associate Professor Popova is directly involved in attracting students to the educational programs of NBU. She is a member of the Union of Bulgarian Artists and the Bulgarian Institute of Egyptology.

V. Personal impressions of the candidate.

My personal impressions are that Monika Popova is a completely precise person in her professional relations, she is dedicated to her work and her creative path. In addition, my impressions confirm her statement many times: for Monika Popova the fullness of life is not just as important as art - for her the processes of living and creating are conditioned and motivated by each other.

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

The personal impression shared above has long been clearly stated by the author and her work in the surroundings of the collegial community. In this sense, it was quite sufficient and a quick marking is enough for the documentary basis of the activity, what I define above as an anthropological concept in her works.

The multiple repetition of the token "womb" and the reference to the womb, the expression of the mother's pride - figuratively, rhetorically and literally, seems to me in a sense overexposed.

In conclusion - based on the distinct and recognizable creative and teaching achievements of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Monika Petrova Popova, I express with unconditional clarity my positive assessment of her work. Her presence in contemporary art life and many years of teaching at NBU give her a well-deserved place for the academic position of a Professor, so I propose to the esteemed scientific jury to allow her to be elected by the Academic Council of NBU and I confidently vote "yes".

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/ Prof. Dr. G. Lardeva /