

OPINION

by Prof Anna Topaldzhikova

on the application of Dr Dimitar Vodenicharov

in the competition for academic position Associate Professor

The habilitation materials presented at the competition by Dimitar Vodenicharov, prove his comprehensive professional presence as set designer, teacher and theatre researcher in the field of set design. I will focus my attention on the articles cited by him as essential to his application. Two of them present him as a researcher in the history of stage design and lighting theory, and the third focuses on his career as stage designer.

The article *Adolphe Appia, first performances of modern theatre*, 2019, focuses on the role of theatrical lighting. For the Bulgarian theory and history of the theatre this is unexplored territory. Dimitar Vodenicharov's detailed study of the concepts of Adolphe Appia has a contribution value. Attention is drawn to Appia's modern thinking about the stage lighting that he applies in his theatrical practice, and that he conceives and develops as a theory for the first time in the history of theatre.

The article *Three scenographic solutions for "light" theatrical genre*, 2019, offers a description of three conceptual scenographic solutions, focused on discovering the visual image of the spectacle and the emergence of the ideas put into practice for the construction, dynamics and metamorphoses of the scenography, the impact the colour, the role of light, the specific features of the costume. The introductory part of the text points to the nature of the musical, perhaps it is somehow incomplete and not entirely accurate, but it gives a general idea of the genre direction of the stage solutions. The article discusses three productions by director Leo Capon. The stage solutions are interesting, consistent and in this sense a constructive part of the idea and the stylistic direction of the performance. In *The Schmuck*, the visual image builds on the transformation of a palace into a ship that slowly sails away from the stage. It is a transformation of a static image into a figure that creates an idea of motion. An image on the move is achieved – a kind of “weight loss” and the gradual disappearance of the ship from the stage – an effect of “dissolution” into the space.

Leading in *God is Innocent* is again the dynamics of transformations – from the realistic presentation achieved through television screens showing documentary footage, stage equipment visible on the stage – the lowering of the lighting bridges, directing the spotlight towards the audience, etc., to the surreal poetic vision with angels flying in the air.

In *The Wizard of Oz*, the visual impact is greatly achieved with the effect of the lighting on the backdrop screens. It uses complex construction, dynamics of spatial solutions, play with the light and colours.

The contribution of this text is mainly in the discovery and comprehension of scenographic practice, which in itself has its high professional qualities.

The article *Historical Analysis of Stage Lighting*, 2012, complements with new theoretical and historical knowledge the field of stage lighting, which has not been studied yet in Bulgaria. It traces the history of stage lighting since its appearance and the subsequent changes that have taken place during the process of its elaboration. It analyses the stages of development from the front lighting with gas lamps, through the rationalization of Leonardo da Vinci and the Camera Obscura effect, and the emergence of the next ideas for the role of the stage lighting, aided and stimulated by the modern technical inventions. In his historical review, Vodenicharov explores chronologically this development, revealing the specifics of the visual decisions during the various aesthetic periods of the Renaissance, Classicism, and Romanticism.

On the grounds of the merits of the historical and theoretical articles presented by Dr Dimitar Vodenicharov, and the detailed information about his practice as a teacher and set designer, I vote in favour of his application for an academic position Associate Professor.

27. 10. 2019

Signature:

/Anna Topaldzhikova/