

OPINION

by Prof Antoaneta Angelova Ancheva, D.A.
member of the scientific jury in competition for academic position
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
8.2 Fine Arts (Photography)
announced by Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts
“Prof Asen Diamandiev”, Plovdiv

In the competition for Associate Professor in professional field 8.2 Fine Arts (Photography), for the needs of the Department of Applied Arts at the Faculty of Fine Arts of AMDFA “Asen Diamandiev”, Plovdiv, announced in the State Gazette and on the website of the Academy, there appeared one candidate– Mariana Todorova Dafova from the Department of Applied Arts of the same faculty.

Mariana Todorova Dafova graduated photography in AMDFA "Prof Asen Diamandiev", Plovdiv, in 2006. In 2021, she received the educational and scientific degree Doctor, specialty Photography in Professional field 8.2 Fine Art at AMDFA "Prof Asen Diamandiev", Plovdiv. She currently teaches History of Photography and Applied Photography at the Department of Applied Arts of the Faculty of Fine Arts, at AMDFA.

Inseparable from the teaching activity of Mariana Dafova is her artistic work. An active artist, she has worked in the field of photography for many years. The presented references, documentation, and information about the exhibitions, projects, participation in conferences, etc. realized by the candidate, show that she is the author of six solo exhibitions from 2009 until now in the city of Plovdiv and the city of Burgas. The last one is from 2021 and was realized within the framework of International Photographic Meetings, Plovdiv, with the title *Mom, how are you, mom*. Mariana Dafova has also participated in collective exhibitions in Plovdiv, Warsaw and Leipzig. She is also the curator of student exhibitions in Plovdiv.

She has produced four publications, mainly on topics related to her dissertation work, as well as a book based on the dissertation work entitled *Time and Transformation in Photography*, ISBN 978-619-7178-32-6, 2022.

I agree with the contributions formulated by the candidate regarding her habilitation work, on the condition that the dissertation work and the monograph, which is a revised version of it, cannot be considered as such. Nor should they be included in the list of contributions, according to the regulatory requirements.

The main contributions that can be pointed out in the habilitation work in particular (here I refer to her solo exhibitions *Mom, how are you, mom* from 2021 within the framework of

International Photographic Meetings, Plovdiv, and *We were here* from 2017), but also which concern the candidate's overall work, relate to her author's view, aimed at contemporary photographic ideas for interpreting various topics of life - social, personal, etc. As well as her author's focus on photography as a medium, providing a rich field for interpretation possibilities and connections with other media.

An active author, she feels close to the idea of photography placed in its spatial-material and temporal dimensions. Mariana Dafova follows a creative line in which concept and realization are irrevocably linked.

In terms of applied contributions, the author practically solves the questions about the technological presentation of ideas in the photography works. This gives her the opportunity to spatially express her ideas, to solve the author's problems and, depending on the specific work, to look for their symbolic or metaphorical recoding.

Thus, in a way close to her nature, she achieves a visual creation of her ideas for photography and art. Mariana Dafova successfully combines her active creative work with her teaching.

Currently, the candidate teaches History of Photography and Applied Photography at the Faculty of Fine Arts, Department of Applied Arts at AMDFA and actively works with students, which can be seen in the student exhibitions she curates.

The main habilitation work of Mariana Todorova Dafova, as well as her scientific production, defines her as a candidate who meets the requirements of the competition. All this, together with her teaching work, gives me the reason to propose to the esteemed scientific jury that Mariana Todorova Dafova be awarded the academic position of Associate Professor in professional field 8.2 Fine Arts /Photography/ for the needs of the Department of Applied Arts at the Faculty of Fine Arts, AMDFA "Prof Asen Diamandiev" Plovdiv.

Date: 15.11.2023

Jury member:

Prof Antoaneta Ancheva, D.A.