

## OPINION

on competition for the academic position of Associate Professor, specialty Mural Painting 8.2. Fine Art, for the needs of the Faculty of Fine Arts, Department of Fine Arts - Church Painting, promulgated in State Gazette No 63/25.07.2023

**by Assoc. Prof Dimitar Vodenicharov, PhD**, Department of Applied Arts, Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts "Prof Asen Diamandiev" – Plovdiv

In the competition announced for the needs of the Department of Fine Arts, specialty Mural Painting at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, one candidate appeared - Assistant Stefka Ilieva Popova, PhD.

### **Education**

Assistant Popova graduated Church Painting at the AMDFA Prof Asen Diamandiev, Plovdiv, in 2009. Then she wrote a doctoral thesis titled *Creation of Creative Models for Decoration of a Modern Temple in the Education of Students*, defended successfully in 2020.

### **Teaching Work**

The teaching career of the candidate covers a wide professional perimeter, namely Assistant Popova teaches basic and specialized disciplines; Icon Painting, Iconography, Mural Painting, Composition, Drawing. In addition to authorship and updating of educational programs in Painting, Drawing, Iconography and Theology for the practical training of the Church Painting specialty, her professional commitment includes also the tedious but necessary job of a secretary in the Department of Applied Arts during the period 2010-2016.

Along with her teaching work, the candidate is professionally active in a number of scientific forums. From this position, she participates in the current competition for the acquisition of the academic position of Associate Professor, and according to the materials presented and the necessary number of classes, the current habilitation is justified.

### **Research Activity**

As a researcher Stefka Popova has published a book based on her dissertation work for the award of an educational and scientific degree "doctor", with the title *Creation of Creative Models for Decoration of a Modern Temple in the Education of Students*, and the scientific publications;

1. *Restoration of the icon St. Nikolay village Yoakim Gruevo. Study of its origin*, 2021. AMDFA Yearbook, ISSN 2738-7712, 118-128 p.

2. *New artistic practices in wall-monumental panels.*, 2022., AMDFA Yearbook - ISSN 1313-6526, 115-124 p.

3. *Use of old icon painting techniques for gilding in modern painting*, 2023- AMDFA - Spring Scientific Readings- ISSN: 13 14 -7005, in press.

The above publications discuss current professional problems in their field and expand the theoretical knowledge that the candidate Popova applies in her teaching work, setting a high horizon for her educational and methodological work.

### **Creative work and realized author's projects**

The creative work of Stefka Popova PhD is mainly focused on temple painting and restoration. The presented visual materials regarding her projects as author, include icons from an exhibition at the New Bulgarian University and icons for the temples "St. Ilia" - the village of Churen, "Ascension of Christ" - the village of Churekovo. Restoration of the temple icon "St. Nikolay" from the church of the village of Yoakim Gruevo. Two mural panels in SU "Paisii Hilendarski" a composition with the Holy Brothers Cyril and Methodius and opposite one with Stoyan Mihailovski and Panayot Pipkov, executed in orthodox canonical style. Participation in a number of common projects during the inscription of the temples "St. Intercession of the Holy Virgin" town of Smolyan, "St. Georgi" Pancharevo, row of festive icons for the church "St. Ilia" village of Sinapovo, etc. mainly in a team with Assoc. Prof Kantareva-Decheva and Assoc. Prof D. Dechev.

Along with the creative products presented for the participation in this competition, the candidate presents evidence of a number of academic commitments related to the education of students in specialty Church Painting. Management of the art studio "Sgraffito", participation in two editions of the workshop "Art of the Fresco" 2019-20 under the leadership of Assoc. Prof E. Decheva and Prof M. Kasapyan, participation in the Biennale of Church Arts, project for restoration and conservation of mosaics from the Bishop's Basilica, etc.

The professional interests declared by the candidate are of a wide range, but primarily related to the canonical painting in its various aspects, as well as to the pedagogical practices of its teaching. The mentioned contributions meet the minimum requirements, which gives me grounds to declare my positive assessment of the candidate and I propose to the respected scientific jury that Assistant Stefka Popova PhD take the academic position of "Associate Professor" in scientific field 8.2 Fine Art.

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Assoc. Prof Dimitar Vodenicharov