

## OPINION

By Assoc. Prof. Rusen Georgiev Doykov. PhD

regarding the materials submitted in connection with the announced by AMDFA "Prof. Asen Diamandiev" competition for the academic position of **Associate Professor** in scientific field 8. Arts, professional field 8.2. Fine Art, specialty Mural Painting grounds for the opinion - participation as a member of a scientific jury, pursuant to order RD-27-121 of 21.09.2023 of the Rector of AMDFA

### **I. Information about the competition**

In the announcement by the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts "Prof Asen Diamandiev" competition for the academic position of **Associate Professor** in Mural Painting in field direction 8.2. Fine Art, field of higher education 8. Arts, there is one candidate Stefka Ilieva Popova.

The announcement for the competition was published in the State Gazette 63 of 25.07. 2023.

The procedure is in accordance with the requirements of the state and university normative documents regarding the occupation of academic positions.

### **2. Information about candidate**

Stefka Ilieva Popova was born in 1984. In 2009, she defended her Master's degree in Church Painting at AMDFA "Asen Diamandiev" - Plovdiv. In 2020, she successfully defended a dissertation for the award of educational and scientific degree Doctor on the topic *Creation of Creative Models for Decoration of a Modern Temple in the Education of Students*. Since 2010 she has been a teacher at AMDFA "Prof Asen Diamandiev" - Plovdiv. The solo exhibitions of Stefka Popova, as well as the participation in numerous collective projects, testify to an author with an established plastic position and indisputable capacity.

### **3. Description of the candidate's work**

The submitted materials for participation in the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor cover the minimum national scientometric criteria and meet all the requirements specified in the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act, as well as in the Regulations of the AMDFA "Prof Asen Diamandiev".

The main part of the materials relating to the artistic and creative work of Stefka Popova, include the following:

Solo exhibition of author's icons - New Bulgarian University - NBU-Plovdiv, from 23.10.2011 until 10.02.2012.

Mural panels in "Paisiy Hilendarski" Secondary School - Plovdiv, 2015-2016, May-June 2015: May-June 2016 – vestibule of the school.

Painting of author's icons for the temple "St. Iliia" – Churen, 2019, Plovdiv region, Rodopi Municipality -75/115 cm.

Painting of the author's temple icon "Ascension of Christ" - Churekovo, Smolyan Region, Devin Municipality – 120/80 cm.

Restoration of the temple icon "St. Nikolay" – reinforcement, stabilization, cleaning, retouching, cleaning of silver fittings and research of origin - 2020-2022, 89/140 cm, Yoakim Gruevo, Plovdiv Region.

The works presented above show an in-depth knowledge of the classic wall and icon painting materials, techniques, skills, stylistic and compositional solutions. The form of the murals is solidly built with a monumental air. In the author's icons, the presence of the author is delicate and consistent with the style of the icon. The restoration of the temple icon "St. Nikolay" in the village of Yoakim Gruevo requires not only mastery of the art of mural painting, but also solid knowledge of the techniques and the processes of restoration and conservation.

The management of the Art Studio Sgraffito, as well as the participation in the workshop The Art of Fresco, and the participation in collectives for painting of temples and icons, complement the candidate's professional experience.

As part of the habilitation materials related to Stefka Popova's scientific research, is presented the book *Creation of Creative Models for Decoration of a Modern Temple in the Education of Students*, published on the basis of her dissertation work. From a scientific point of view, the research is of interest considering the perspective in which the problem of the selection and the arrangement of the images is discussed as a synthesis between temple architecture, monumental painting, composition, technique and technology of materials, liturgical sequence. This allows for the introduction of a complete, alternative methodical approach in the creation of new models for decorating the modern temple by the learners.

To a large extent, the publication supports the author's searches, derived from the creative and academic experience of working with students, in which, of particular importance when compiling a creative model for decorating a temple is its immediate applicability. It is also valuable as a methodological reference in the learning process.

The substantial body of scientific literature used as the basis of the study makes the book a valuable source of information.

Also listed are three citations in scientific publication and two reviews: by Kolovska, Ts. on *Creation of Creative Models for Decoration of a Modern Temple in the Education of Students* in Meridian 27 -ISSN:1312-0689, and Manova, G. "A brief overview of the creativity and scientific interests of Assistant Stefka Popova, PhD" - Meridian 27 ISSN: 1312-0689.

The candidate is an active participant in the project of Assoc. Prof Elena Kantareva-Decheva for the restoration and conservation of the mosaics of the Bishop's Basilica 2019-2020 as an assistant restorer. She has also participated in the Fifth Biennale of Church Arts in UVT, Veliko Tarnovo 2017, in an annual exhibition of teachers and students from the Faculty of Fine Arts at AMDFA, as well as a

contract for the artistic design of the exterior and interior with Municipal Markets - for design and implementation of mural panels.

**In conclusion**, given the materials presented, I believe that the candidate meets the national requirements for participation in the competition announced by AMDFA "Prof Asen Diamandiev". Her qualities as an author and a proven teacher give me reason to propose to the esteemed scientific jury to award Dr. Stefka Ilieva Popova the academic position of Associate Professor in scientific field 8 Arts, professional field 8.2 Fine Arts, specialty Mural Painting. I will vote **“in favor”** with conviction.

Plovdiv

21.11.2023

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