

OPINION

by prof. Maria Stoyanova Bocheva-Blazheva, PhD.

Theatre college "Lyuben Groys", professional direction 8.2 "Fine art"

regarding participation in a competition for the occupation of an academic position "associate professor" under 8.2 Fine art (fashion design and design of stage costumes), announced in SG 92/18.11.2022, with the only candidate in the competition assistant professor Yana Oleg Dvoretzka, PhD

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

The competition for associate professor in professional direction 8.2. Fine art (fashion design and stage costume design) is announced according to the established legal order for the needs of the "Design" department at the New Bulgarian University. The only candidate in the competition is Yana Dvoretzka, PhD. The documentation presented meets the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for Application of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria. The candidate also meets the additional requirements of the New Bulgarian University, according to the Ordinance for the Development of the Academic Staff at the NBU and according to the Table of Indicators for Opening a Procedure for Announcing a Competition for an Associate Professor in a Professional Direction 8.2. Fine Art (Fashion Design and Stage Costume Design).

II. Research (creative) activity and results.

The candidate for participation in the competition for the academic position "associate professor", assistant professor Yana Dvoretzka, PhD presented for her habilitation work: ballet, opera, operetta productions, fashion production, as well as articles and reports published in specialized editions in the field of arts. The productions and publications were realized after the acquisition of the scientific degree "PhD". In terms of its thematic focus, the candidate's scientific and fellow activities after obtaining the scientific degree "PhD" cover the scientific field and specialty of the announced competition. The topic of her habilitation work is directed to the specific issues of costume in ballet, opera, operetta art and practice; it has modern scientific and applied importance and is tied to the teaching process at NBU. In her report on the contributing nature of her creative activity, submitted as a habilitation thesis on the basis of Article 1 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, assistant professor Yana Dvoretzka points out her creative achievements in 4 performances, of which she emphasizes on the ballet "La Bayadere" as the main one, three of which are on the stage of the State Opera Ruse and one on the stage of the National Music Theatre Sofia, six articles published in scientific magazines in referenced and indexed in world-famous databases for scientific information, three articles in Collection of scientific publications: Department of "Architecture", Department of "Design", Department of "Fine Arts". Sofia: New Bulgarian University.

III. Evaluation of the habilitation work

From the materials presented as a habilitation thesis assistant professor Yana Dvoretzka distinguished her work on: the ballet "La Bayadere", production of the Ruse State Opera, premiere on 29.04.2021; the opera "La Traviata", staged by the Ruse State Opera, premiere on 17.12.2019; the ballet "La Fille Mal Gardee", staged by the Ruse State Opera, premiere on 08.11.2019; "The Bat" operetta production of the National Music Theatre Sofia, premiere October 2019.

La Bayadere premiered in 1877 at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, choreographed by Marius Petipa and composed by Ludwig Minkus. Petipa was inspired by the drama of the ancient Indian poet Kalidas and Goethe's ballad "The Lady". The action takes place in India, in the court of Raja Dugmanta. The love of the bayadere (temple dancer) Nikia and the warrior Solor incurs the wrath of the great Brahmin (secretly in love with Nikia) and Princess Gamzati (the raja's daughter in love with Solor). Nikia is called to dance at a temple celebration and is fatally bitten by a snake hidden by Gamzati in a basket of flowers. The Brahmin offers Nikia an antidote in exchange for her love, but Nikia refuses and before dying reminds Solor of his oath of eternal fidelity. Solor is broken and seeks salvation. Under the influence of opiates, he is transported to the Shadow Realm, where he meets and dances with the spirit of Nikia. After returning to reality, he cannot shake the memory of the ghost. At the wedding reception, just as Gamzati and Solor are about to exchange vows of allegiance, an earthquake occurs. The temple collapses and everyone dies. In the epilogue, the spirits of Nicias and Solor are reunited in the afterlife. The plot transforms the passionate and all-consuming love of the bayadere Nikia to the brave warrior Solor, and intertwines tragedy and lyricism, the pursuit of happiness, love and freedom. Loyalty, betrayal, sincerity and treachery are at the heart of this expressive ballet performance. La Bayadere is one of the jewels of the Paris Opera repertoire and is associated with the famous Rudolf Nureyev, who revived the entire ballet in its 1877 version in 1992.

I will stop my attention on the costume decision, which Dvoretzka defines as the most significant of the specified materials in the competition. La Bayadere story, presented through the magnificent music and virtuosity of the dance, as well as the variety of fabulous characters, is a dance challenge - this is the ballet that clearly demonstrates the creative potential and artistic qualities of joint teamwork in a troupe. Here the costume design reading of Yana Dvoretzka. In the ballet production La Bayadere, the costume designer's parameters are set in advance. The classical reading of the choreography determines the classical decision in stage and costume terms. Dvoretzka manages to discover in the performers their complex creative nature by preserving their characters and subordinating it to her personal contribution in the drawing of the individual image. The artist makes a reference to the Romantic ballet, using the elements of the white ballet to transport the viewer into unreality, thus following the storyline. Undoubtedly, there is a provocation in Dvoretzka's mind, caused by the interest in Eastern philosophy and aesthetics. She easily transports the audience into the challenge of traditions, customs and manners in Ancient India. She herself explains: "Indian fabrics have been known for their lightness and airiness since ancient times. This led the ancient Romans to call Indian cotton fabrics "woven winds"...

In her projects, she mainly uses transparent fabrics /chiffon, tulle/, as well as velvet, many trimmings and accessories, following the code of the performance. With her choice of colour, the

author makes an impact that creates the power of emotions in the action of the performance. The artist achieves a dialogue with colour and its reflection in materials. This quality in her work is part of the character of the image, also built through the costume. The costume of the bayadere is transmitted in two real parallel worlds. Seen as the immaculate, graceful, captivating dancer in white, caressing chiffon decorated with rich silver embroidery. The dress symbolizes the girl's freedom, love and dreams. Nikia, whom Dvovetska puts in the image of the other Nikia - restrained and unhappy, because she is forced to dance in the face of her lost love. Dvovetska has turned her into a suffering, ghostly creature, struggling for her own happiness, steeped in anguish. "The invariable association of red with blood was also the basis of my interpretation. I chose a deep dark red shade, with almost blue undertones, the colour of clotted blood, which I associate with the tragic fate and unfortunate death of the bayadere. For the top, my choice of material fell on velvet, which gives the colour an even deeper, matte shade..."

"However, the colour red here had to be strongly differentiated from the bright red of the Great Brahmin's costume (in Hinduism, red is a highly positive colour, a sign of wealth, strength, power, passion and sensuality)," notes the artist. The handsome warrior Solor appears in two costumes. The colouring is subordinate to his gentle, lyrical personality, in light tones, and the second costume is dove grey, with rich ornamental embroidery, a pleated silver shawl, and a turban made of the same material. Here the colour and silhouette solution is undoubtedly presented in the look and suggests the character that Solor carries. The great Brahmin in "La Bayadere" is considered as a negative character in the ballet synopsis: malicious, vengeful, somewhat comical in his attempts to destroy the pure love between Solor and the bayadere, but at the same time he is a representative of the highest caste in Indian social hierarchy. In his suit, the colour red has another message. The colour is in "strong association with the character of the hero who is destined to devote his life to "study, teaching, performing sacrifices and performing religious services" but is instead involved in earthly temptations and carnal desires"... Dvovetska has sought a historical coverage of the character in the costume decision. The realization of this ballet requires expensive costumes and rich sets. Only one of the scenes - "The Procession" has an impressive number of exquisite costumes. The entire first act is filled with a lot of dynamics, precision and good synchronization between the costume designer and the ballerinas.

The "Hindu Dance" deserves special attention, imbued with a lot of dynamics, enchantment, colourfulness and artistry. Dvovetska shows her creative potential, most vividly in Act III known as "The Kingdom of Shadows", which is considered the pinnacle of choreographic art. This monotonous sequence creates the feeling of something magical and mysterious about the underworld - the Kingdom of shadows. The dancers in "The Shadows" are enchanted on stage and dependent only on time and space. The achieved visualization of the dance and music is aligned with the vivid presence of the costume designer. Dvovetska handles the language of dance professionally and subordinates the costume to the movement, succeeding through it to bring out the elegance of the form. The artist achieves the construction of the costume image not only as a technical means of visualizing the acting, but also, placed in the context of the ballet, it acquires all the qualities of a work of art.

This is also one of the candidate's contributions. Dvoretzka shows in her costume stylish author's creativity, subtly changing some classical and historical givens accepted in the code of the production, which she interprets more radically in the images. She skillfully shows the specificity of the ballet costume, such as requirements in the construction of the clothes, which determines the movements, the colour characteristics and the requirements for the materials in their production and their presence on the stage. She manages to make the costume a second skin for the dancer and subdue him to the dance. Dvoretzka shows her skills as a costume designer with regard to shape, volume, silhouette, fabrics, colours and the interpretation of the historical reading.

In the opera "La Traviata", a production of the Ruse State Opera, premiered on 17.12.2019, the merit of Yana Dvoretzka is evident. The costumes in La Traviata are both opulent and intimate, shaped with exquisite attention to period detail, but also with the presence of fashion elements associated with mid-20th century trends. The style in Act II, Scene II is very different from the style of Violetta's party at the beginning of the opera, all women are wearing formal dresses and men are in dark tailcoats. Predominantly dark costumes and fabrics convey both the opulence and elegance of this hypocritically moralizing yet promiscuous society. Violetta's series of dark, white, red dresses represent the different aspects of her personality as Alfredo sees them: the cursed courtesan, the selfless angel, and the seductive temptress. **Dvoretzka demonstrates her ability to choose materials subject to color in order to emphasize and build the character of the image.**

"La Fille mal gardee" is one of the oldest European ballets. The author of the libretto and the selection of music from folk and popular dances, as well as the choreography, is Jean Doberval. The libretto reveals how Lisa's mother tries to marry her daughter against her daughter's will, but her intentions are thwarted. The costume is in response to this romantic story. Dvoretzka painted the typical provincial costume of the Nouvelle-Aquitaine region, subordinated to folk, popular, rural dances in the specifics of ballet art. Cleverly incorporates the elements into the characteristic of costume: women's clothing often consists of a white shirt, a black or red corset, a coloured or check skirt decorated with black ribbons, a white petticoat, and sometimes an apron, scarf, or embroidered white collar, a white hat or scarf, white bonnets. Men wear a red or brown jacket to the waist or in the colours of women's dresses, sleeveless over a white shirt without a collar, brown trousers, long white or brown socks, a brown beret, a red and yellow scarf tied around the neck; used in the bure dance. **This reference to the region creates a lot of mood, colour and atmosphere in the performance, which is her contribution to the team's work.**

The plot of "The Bat" is current with its themes of eternal problems in marital relations, love and jealousy, joy and disappointment. The spicy situation in which the main characters find themselves reveals to the viewers a whole palette of emotions. **Dvoretzka manages to create separate colour schemes without disturbing the overall vision. With them, she achieves an imposing, solemn vision and at the same time successfully separates acting groups in the performance. Through its costume decision, it preserves the code of the performance and does not depart from the specifics of the genre.**

The following contributions stand out in the habilitation thesis:

- Defines stylish author's creativity in costume solutions.
- Subtly changes the classical and historical codes of the production by building the costume with nuances of contemporary elements.
- The costume is subordinate to the movements and character of the dance.
- Demonstrates the skills of a costume designer with regard to shape, volume, silhouette, fabrics, colour and interpretation of historical reading.
- Emphasizes the dramaturgy in the performance when building the character of the image, through the colour, which is in dialogue and direct dependence with the materials.
- Achieves mood, colour and atmosphere, through the historical training in a certain geographical region in the national costume and dance.
- Manages to create separate colour plans without disturbing the general vision in the performance, achieves an imposing, solemn picture and at the same time successfully separates the acting scores.
- Her costume decisions preserve the code of the production and do not deviate from the specifics of the genre.

Assessment of contributions in other attached publications

In addition to the habilitation work assistant Professor Yana Dvoretzka has presented additional research in the field of fashion design, which touches on issues related to the development and policy of the fashion industry, its relationship with education, communication in education and culture, the processes of creation, management and implementation of policies of the European Union in the field of education and culture as well as specific problems in this direction. She is the author of a number of articles and reports published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information. From a practical-applied point of view, the candidate's achievements are aimed at theorizing and practicing in the field of the fashion industry and the performing arts.

The scientific and scientific-applied contributions are:

- Each stage of the development of the modern fashion industry is in accordance with a historical, political, economic institutional context in search of Sustainable Fashion.
- The relationship between performing arts and fashion design.

1. Citation from other authors

Yana Dvoretzka has presented a list and reviews with citations that meet the national requirements.

2. Evaluation of the results of participation in research and creative projects and application of the obtained results in practice

Yana Dvoretzka participated in 11 projects, of which 3 were international, leading one of the international projects. I believe that the candidate has an indisputable potential to expand his

participation in research projects in the European scientific space, as well as to continue his efforts to integrate his research work with modern aspects of teaching and learning activities.

III. Learning and teaching activity

1. Auditory and non-auditory employment, work in the electronic training module "MOODLE - NBU", provision of student practices and internships, work with students and doctoral students.

Yana Dvoretzka has fully developed or co-authored 6 training courses for students. The courses are annually updated in the electronic training module "Moodle - NBU". She fulfilled the classroom and extra-auditory employment. Participates in the development and improvement of bachelor's and master's courses in the BA "Fashion" and MA "Fashion, styling and business strategies" programs. She is communicative and works successfully with students in her teaching activities. Proof is her project activity.

The candidate has proven knowledge in managing scientific and educational projects.

3. Work with Erasmus students.

Yana Dvoretzka participated in the Erasmus program as head of the master class "Slow Fashion: Natural Dyeing" at La Escuela de Arte y Superior de Diseño y de C.R.B.C. de Burgos, April 2019, Burgos, Spain.

4. Student survey ratings.

Her teaching activity has been positively evaluated, the average rating from students for their satisfaction with the courses is 4.75. Student evaluation is a testament to her knowledge, competence and teaching skills.

IV. Administrative and public activity

1. Participation in collective management bodies of the NBU

The candidate holds the position of Director of the Program Board at the Design Department, 2015-2016, Program Consultant of BP Moda, 2004-2009 and is a Member of the PS at the Design Department 2017-2022.

V. Personal impressions of the candidate (if any)

I know Yana Dvoretzka as a talented costume designer with interesting innovative solutions in the field of ballet costume and in general in the stage. She is responsible, thorough, hardworking, precise and dedicated in work and research. Works well in a team.

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

The materials submitted in the application meet the requirements for occupying the academic position "associate professor". I recommend the candidate to continue her creative development

in the field of performing arts, and in addition to her current teaching activity, to inform himself about the new aspects of the development of higher education - oriented in cooperation with business, promotion of scientific and applied research. I believe that the candidate has an indisputable potential for participation in research projects in the European scientific area and has the knowledge to develop in the field of project management, the cultural environment in education, integration of teaching and learning activities in the European area of higher education.

Conclusion

Bearing in mind the qualifications and achievements assistant professor Yana Dvoretzka, PhD, the place she has won in Bulgarian education and performing arts, and her professional competence, I have the reason to confidently support the candidacy. I believe that she fully meets the requirements for occupying the scientific position of "associate professor" as formulated in the Law for the development of the academic staff and the Regulations for its application.

I appeal to the scientific jury to award assistant professor Yana Dvoretzka, PhD, the academic position of "associate professor".

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Sofia