

OPINION

by Assoc. Prof. Nikola Borislavov Lautliev, PhD

scientific direction 8.2 Fine Arts, "Photography"

On the artistic-creative, scientific and teaching work of Chief Assistant Prof. Encho Naydenov Naydenov, PhD, lecturer at NBU, department "Cinema, Advertising and Show business" presented for participation in a competition for occupying the academic position of

Associate Professor according to 8.4. Theater and film art (Photography), announced in SG 92/18.11.2022

Information about the competition and the candidate:

This opinion was prepared on the basis of documents submitted by the Cinema, advertising and show business department at NBU, on the occasion of a competition for the academic position of Associate Professor in professional direction 8.4. Theater and Film Art (Photography), announced in SG 92/18.11.2022. The procedure for announcing the competition and admitting candidates to participate is compliant with the requirements of the Act on the development of the academic staff and the Regulations for its implementation.

The following documentation has been submitted for participation in the competition:

Self-assessment Table according to the Act on the development of the academic staff in Republic of Bulgaria / List of the scientific, teaching and artistic work

Self-assessment (bibliographic description)

Specific photographic expressive and technical means for staging photography - Creative Summary

As evident by the review of the submitted documents, the applicant meets the formal requirements of the Act on the development of the academic staff for occupying the academic position of Associate Professor.

Ch. Assistant Professor Encho Naydenov, PhD is a full-time teacher in the department of Cinema, advertising and show business. He teaches in the four-year bachelor's programme Photography. In October 2013 he was awarded doctoral educational and scientific degree upon defense of thesis entitled "The influence of digital photographic technologies on professional

lighting'. His CV shows he has a Master's degree in Sound Technology from the Technical University, a Master's Degree of Marketing from UNWE and a Master's Degree in Sound Directing, 2021, from NBU.

Assessment of compliance with the minimum requirements for the scientific, teaching and artistic-creative activity of the candidate to occupy the academic position of "Associate Professor" in professional field 8.4. Theatre and film art, in line with the Act on the development of the academic staff in Republic of Bulgaria and the requirements of New Bulgarian University

The monographic work of the candidate for the award of doctoral educational and scientific degree is entitled "The influence of digital photographic technologies on professional lighting".

The dissertation is dedicated to a current and significant problem in Bulgaria's photographic theory and practice. It has wide application in the field of advertising and applied photography and expands the possibilities of professional photographers and photography educators to identify problems in using lighting with digital technologies and to turn them in competitive advantage in real conditions.

The scientific thesis has been developed thoroughly and consistently, in tune with the most essential practical and applied aspects such as: Theory of light, The influence of light on the quality of the photographic image, Work process in analog and digital photography, Non-standard light sources and the change of work process and its influence on the artistic content. The research is a combination of theoretical knowledge derived on the basis of serious study of the information sources and the author's rich professional experience as a photographer, which speaks of confidence and full credibility. The contributions of the dissertation are clear cut, especially in the comparative approach in the analysis of analog and digital photography, and electronic lighting.

The applicant has submitted a list of publications and a report for peer review. The materials were published in the Yearbook of the Department "Cinema, Advertising and show business" 2022, in "Collection of scientific publications" under project BG051PO001-3.3.06.-0060 and in a departmental conference. They reflect the scientific development of the candidate and his activity as a teacher. These texts fall within the academic area where the candidate works and are in line with the announced competition: "Role of the development of digital technologies in the creation of visual content", "The development of photography technique in

recent years", "Peculiarities in photographing portraits on white background". From a scientific and professional point of view, these are publications of added value which bring innovations to contemporary applied and commercial photographic practices photography.

The candidate lists two citations and three reviews in the self-assessment table.

Evaluation of contributions in creative performances made after award of Doctoral educational and scientific degree.

Encho Naydenov's first solo exhibition entitled *35 mm* was displayed "Vivacom Art Hall" on June 23, 2014. The exhibition consisted of 48 photographs of reliefs, structures, landscapes and abstractions. The author's aim was to categorically distinguish his professional advertising and commercial projects from a new, unfamiliar vision for viewers. He aims at limiting technological parameters when shooting, i.e. one camera and one lens. These "restrictions" to achieve compositional, tonal and meaningful values establish him as an artist of refined delicacy and perception of the world.

Particularly curious from a professional point of view is the *RED APPLE* project – 15 years of *EVA* magazine, published in December 2013. It is a complete and detailed photographic project which apart from its practical aspect of an advertising character appears to be a wonderful methodical aid for young advertising photographers.

The *Wild Nature of Sozopol* was opened in Sozopol in September 2016. The exhibition was part of the Apollonia Arts Festival and was organized jointly by the Natural Sciences and Cinema, Advertising and Showbusiness departments, the Laboratory of marine biology - Sozopol and the Biolaboratory to New Bulgarian University.

The photographs and graphic layout are made by Ch. Assistant Prof. Encho Naydenov, PhD, Pepa Angelova, Lilia Petkova, Adelina Savova and Bilyana Savova. The exhibition shows the different biological species found in the vicinity of Sozopol. The team who organized the exhibition chose glass as a symbol of laboratory work and the point of view from above – as if under microscope, which is an original and non-standard approach.

Encho Naydenov's last solo exhibition entitled *Latent Portraits* exhibited at NBU on 26.01.2022 reveals a new unknown side of his artistic essence. The exhibition presents previously unseen portraits made in the last few years. Below I will quote graphic designer and teacher Assoc. Prof. Iliya Kozhuharov and his professional analysis in the *Kultura* magazine of April 2022:

“Yet another emotional charge lies in the solo exhibition of Encho Naydenov’s *Latent portraits*. ...On the one hand, the author presents static images, on the other hand, one can feel how alive, natural and real they are. ... The tale Encho Naydenov tells us sounds more like jazz, like a virtuoso’s improvisation... Encho Naydenov feels comfortable in the classics, hence the term "latent portrait" used mainly for black and white images developed by the classical film roll method.”

Learning and teaching activity

The candidate’s annual teaching workload in the academic 2022/23 is a total of 280 academic hours and 72 academic hours of training courses. The disciplines he teaches are of fundamental importance for the professional training of students, such as: Advertising in action, Alphabet of Photography, Photographic Techniques and Technologies, Digital Workflow in photography, Organization and practice in studio work, Team work, Studio Portrait, Practices: Portrait Photography, Commercial Photography, Applied photography. Internships: Master photography, Working with light (natural and man-made sources) Marketing and advertising photography assignment work), Economic and legal aspects of photography.

The student survey shows a satisfaction score of excellent 4.72

Dr. Naydenov provides most of his courses with study materials through the Moodle platform. The majority of his courses contain presentation material with detailed content, links, videos, additional materials according to the requirements of NBU. For the reporting period, the study material has a volume of nearly 230 presentation slides and illustrations edited to suit the purposes of the respective courses.

For the period from autumn 2014 to autumn 2021, Encho Naydenov supervised 17 graduate students, participated in 58 committees and was a reviewer of 7 graduate students.

He is an active participant in project "Student practices" having mentored over 20 students.

Administrative and public activity

Dr. Encho Naydenov is a member of the Council of the "Cinema, Advertising and show business" Department and the Program Board of the same department. In his capacity as a member of the Program Council he contributes to the improvement of the study programs programmes and plans, as well as for the quality of the educational process.

Personal impressions of the candidate

I have known Encho Naydenov for many years and I can say he possesses personal qualities such as thoroughness and systematicity in his work, a high sense of responsibility, a sense of the novelties in the scientific and applied area; enjoys authority among students, has ethical collegial relations with the professors of the department, as well as with colleagues from all over the country.

CONCLUSION

My overall opinion is that the candidate possesses all professional and personal prerequisites for holding a higher academic position.

After getting acquainted with the materials presented for the competition, analysis of their significance and his scientific, applied and artistic contributions, I give my positive opinion and I recommend the Scientific Jury to approve the candidacy and propose to the Academic Council of the NBU to elect Ch. Assistant Prof. Encho Naydenov Naydenov for the academic position "Associate Professor" in professional direction 8.4. Theatre and film art (Photography) in department "Cinema, advertising and show business" at NBU.

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