

## **Summary**

**on the habilitation thesis of Chief assistant professor Yavor Spasov Grancharov, PhD, for participation in a competition for the academic position of “Associate Professor”**

### **Graphic design – modern trends, aesthetics, functionality**

#### **Thematic scope and parameters of the habilitation thesis**

The habilitation thesis covers the author's work as a graphic designer, artist and lecturer in the field of graphic and 3D design, presenting a series of works created during his appointment as Chief Assistant Professor in the Department of Visual Arts, Faculty of Educational Studies and the Arts (FESA), SU “St. Kliment Ohridski” in 2020 and until now. The works are grouped according to their artistic features and objectives, so as to demonstrate the skills and competences of the author within the field of study and show the general picture of his creative and scientific achievements in the area of graphic and 3D design during the last 4 years. In all presented works, graphic design takes an essential place, with specific visual elements and textures applied, in order to enrich the functionality of the visualization, facilitating the accessibility and perception of the author's idea. In this sense, the correct application of graphic design aims to highlight specific aspects of the work that would otherwise be overlooked.

The habilitation thesis is presented in three parts:

- **Activity and implementation in the field of graphic design**
- **Creative performances**
- **Teaching activity**

#### **1. Activity and implementation in the field of graphic design**

In the “Graphic Design” section, implemented designs related to the professional commitment of the author to the Department of “Visual Arts” and projects for the needs of FESA are attached. The realized concrete designs closely correspond to the teaching

and practical activities of the author and are the result of his activities in the relevant field. This section also presents graphic designs of book and digital editions of different purpose, nature and volume, a large set of advertising materials, visual identity and web design (selected pages from the redesign of the FESA web site are shown). Contribution in a typographical approach to the layout of issues is the use of typefaces with the Bulgarian Cyrillic form of the letters.

## **2. Creative performances**

The series of 18 digital prints in the thesis were created for the solo exhibition “Integration in Algorithms”, presented at the “Alma Mater” Gallery, SU “St. Kliment Ohridski”, 2023. They emphasize current topics related to the development of artificial intelligence and its impact on the modern society. The images in the works do not directly refer to transhumanism, but rather show the integration into the “play” of man with the machine. The merging of the organic with the technological and the interaction of the human soul with the machine (algorithm) would inevitably lead to a change of personality and its fragmentation in a digital environment.

The two works “Contemporary 2” and “Contemporary 3” were created for the International Exhibition “Vibrations of Strings”, Poland, 2023 (curator Assoc. Prof, Milena Blazhieva). While in the science "strings" literally mean nothing and provoke nothing, in the art they can be represented metaphorically as a multiverse (a hypothetical set of all possible parallel universes, including our own).

The work “Contemporary 4”, part of the series of digital graphics “Contemporary”, was created for the exhibition “Vertical and Horizontal”, presented in the “Alma Mater” Gallery, SU “St. Kliment Ohridski”, 2023, as well as in Poznan and Łódź /Poland/, Niš /Serbia/. The main idea in this work is the achievement of a technological singularity in the near future, which could lead to the following consequences: depersonalization and fragmentation of individuality in a digital environment; development of artificial intelligence, its benefits and risks for the humanity.

The latest author's work “Contemporary 5” – a continuation of the series "Contemporary", is a part of the exhibition "Spirit and Matter – Inspirations", presented

in “Alma Mater” Gallery, SU “St. Kliment Ohridski”, 2024. It is a key moment in the work of the author not only as a designer, but also as a lecturer, through the implementation of work with 3D programs, showing the realization of new creative searches in the area of graphic design. This work reflects the transition from two-dimensional work to three-dimensional printing, opening new horizons and possibilities for expressing and enriching the artistic image.

In the works presented in this section, graphic design plays an important role in emphasizing the artistic expressiveness of 3D renderings, by including various textures, graphic elements and filters. With their help, the visual perception and clarity of the idea is facilitated by the viewers.

The works from the “Landmarks” series are a part of the exhibition “Art Initiatives, 2020 (Global and Local)”. This is a series of six digital works created using Low-Poly design, which is characterized by minimalism and creative stylization of images and figures. It is characterized with various combinations of triangles and/or rectangles, through which compositions of varying complexity are created. In each of the works shown, the original image undergoes a certain stylization that aims to enhance the impression, emotion and feelings that each one of them evokes.

### **3. Teaching activity**

For the purposes of training in the field of graphic design, author's presentation materials have been developed and used. They are detailed structured visual resources aimed at forming new knowledge in students for working with specialized software for design and prepress, creating advertising and corporate design, following the modern trends in graphic design. Some of the visual materials were created specifically for the online training, which became necessary due to the spread of COVID-19 in Bulgaria. In this section, only a small part of the prepared visual presentation materials is shown.