

Information on the original scientific contributions of Assoc. Prof. Anna Tsolovska, PhD,

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Author's report on the contributing nature of the original works included in the competition for professor of Sculpture and Artistic Structures

My habilitation thesis includes three main types of works which were presented in four exhibitions. Most of these works were created and presented over the last four years of my professional practice as an artist, all of them being created after 2011, when I successfully passed the competition for associate professor announced by Sofia University St. Kl. Ohridski, and accordingly, I was appointed as such. My works and activities presented to the National Centre for Information and Documentation with regard to my presence there as an associate professor have been excluded. The works are selected so that to cover the specifics of this competition and are grouped according to their technological dimensions and aesthetic and genre features.

The topic of my habilitation thesis – **“Foundations of Creative Reality. Wanderings. Balance. Meditation. The Garden”**- summarizes the direction and nature of my artistic pursuits during the presented period. There are comments included regarding the contributions of my work as a lecturer in the disciplines "Sculpture" and "Sculpture and Artistic Structures" at Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski, FESA, Visual Arts Department (as an associate professor in the period from 2011 to the present).

The sculptural works of the last four years have been created based on various techniques.

The list of exhibitions which I have included in the competition, covers some selected performances from my artistic practice over the last 10 years. These are the three solo exhibitions, the fourth not yet presented exhibition with works of cast iron and glass and a series of international exhibitions, a consequence of sculptural symposia and a land art plein air work, most of them with a periodic character, 62 items in total, 48 of them being three-dimensional plastic objects made of traditional materials, but having a hybrid character, 12 are three-dimensional projects of mesh and resin, and two are kinetic installations on the basis of wooden structures. Furthermore, I include a section with 75 items of additional graphic works, created

on the basis of plastic forms, made by myself, which after shooting and digital processing have been turned into independent graphic works bearing contributing aspects.

1. Integration of innovative techniques and methods in the field of teaching sculpture and artistic constructions as a discipline within higher education programmes with a view to cover the maximum number of compositional solutions on the relevant topics, flexible technological options, which allow new ways to realize the final result and individual work with each student.

/Supporting evidence under item 1 - content of curricula for compulsory and elective disciplines in Bachelor's educational-qualification degree, specialties "*Fine Arts*" and "*Graphic Design*" and content of curricula in the compulsory discipline "**Basic Guidelines and Trends in the Symbolic Nature of Sculpture XX Century**", "*Methods of Designing in Graphic Design*" in Master's educational-qualification degree, specialties "**Testing of Skills in Fine Arts**", "*Graphic Design*", Visual Arts Department, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski, and from 2011 to 2019 inclusive - "**Tactile Creation**" in Bachelor's educational-qualification degree at "Special Pedagogy", Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski, photos of student works and events, posters of events, a letter certifying a report presented/.

Supporting evidence under item 2.1 - the visual and textual material in my habilitation thesis from page 107 to page 115 inclusive.

- 1.1 A contributing aspect to the work in the discipline "Sculpture and Artistic Structures", "*Fine Arts*" appears the creation of practice, based on various plastic forms created by students in connection with the relevant tasks, for generation of independent graphic works, which after shooting and digital processing, are realized as digital prints. In 2019 at the invitation of Maria Skłodowska-Curie University, Lublin, Poland, I presented a report on this technique before lecturers and students from the Faculty of Arts within the project of Assoc. Prof. Snezhina Biserova, PhD.
- 1.2 Another contributing aspect is providing the students with the opportunity to participate in a workshop on hot blown glass and the preparation of a student exhibition where glass forms can be incorporated into metal structures, under my guidance. Supporting evidence under item 1.2 - photos of student experiments from the sculpture studio; photos from events presenting the work of students in the discipline "Sculpture and Artistic Structures" exhibited in the gallery spaces of "Alma Mater"; photos from a student exhibition following a workshop for hot blown glass.

- 1.3 A contributing aspect is the inclusion and experimentation of work with various free 3D software /demo versions/ and free software for creating fractal objects and media before the "Covid situation" and their use in the process of online education. Another contribution is the online exhibition "Four Walls" in Artspace "Moon", 2020, of teachers and students from the sculpture studio.
- 1.4 A contributing aspect is the development of curricula in the discipline "Artistic Constructions" part I, II, III and IV for Bachelor's educational-qualification degree in "*Graphic Design*". The leading concept of these curricula is the idea that the teaching material in the field of plastic arts should present such knowledge about space, its transformations and behaviour, so that when creating two-dimensional objects in the field of graphic design, students should not make "imitation design" but create original objects based on their knowledge of space, light and shadow, relative to the object. Supporting evidence under item 1.4 - presentation before **FESA**, Sofia University, on 21.05.2021 and photos of student works from the process during online education.

2. When defining my author's position as a contribution, I would generally call it an experiment, correlating between three-dimensional space, two-dimensional plane and multidimensional mental spaces, the encounters between them, their plastic expression and graphic equivalent. That is, my very authorial position appears the opportunity to go beyond it, to pass bidirectionally through it.

/ **Supporting evidence under item 2** - the visual and textual material in my habilitation thesis from page 9 to page 107 inclusive; posters and poster messages for solo exhibitions and my participation in other exhibitions; photographs of the events; description of reviews related to my works. /

Explanations to the contributions under item 2 and their listing:

- 2.1 A contributing aspect in my exhibition "My wanderings are Outside the Context of Wandering" is the way in which individual works are present in the exhibition. In fact, they are not separate, but fragments of a complete mental landscape that is engaged in one and the same forms and ideas in a process. The main figures provoked by mythological creatures, transformed into cartoon characters from pop culture, are three-dimensional plastic formations made of ceramics, iron wire and LED light inscriptions. In spite of their variety in technique, execution and visuality, my works are based on one common narrative. They complement, resemble, and are highly

associative, creating instantaneous connections in the contemplator. No matter the order in which they are viewed, one can see the common, and each of them brings meaning and detail that contribute to create the artistic and thematic world of the exhibition.

Supporting evidence under item 2.1 - the visual and textual material in my habilitation thesis from page 18 to page 31 inclusive.

Review of works of Anna Tsolovska from the period 2019-2020 by: Valeva, Bisera. Land Art Plein Air work "Between Sand and Foam" - Between Everyday Life and the Ephemeral - in: Art Magazine "Visual Research", issue 02/2021, p. 23-29, ISSN 2535-101X

2.2 A contributing aspect in my exhibition "Balances". The idea for the exhibition "Balances" largely refers to the composition and the possibility to emphasize the difference between artistic structure and sculpture, where in the first case the emphasis is on the decorative - plastic use of space, and in the second - on the personal presence through plastic forms. The concept for the works is more than just the idea of balance and the ability to find the gravity centre of the elements in one fulcrum, as well as the interference between many such and the balance between the graphic lines of the material relative to the empty space. A contributing aspect in this exhibition is its additional dimension. In it, it appears as an installation, where each structure is placed sequentially on a rotating axis. The installation is developed in yet another way. The rotating objects with additionally heated elements are captured with a thermal camera, which produces highly impressive videos in spectral colours, whose sequence shows the thermal behaviour of the elements and the connections between them. Since the installations are abstract in nature, their logic is clearly legible and convenient to design when associated with organic bodies of the world around us.

Supporting evidence under item 2.2 - the visual and textual material in my habilitation thesis from page 34 to page 44 inclusive. The exhibition "Balances" is part of the artistic performances within the international project "Art Initiatives 2020", realized with the support of the Research Fund of Sofia University. The project is implemented by the Visual Arts Department under the leadership of Prof. Laura Dimitrova, PhD. The works created by Assoc. Prof. Anna Tsolovska, PhD, for this exhibition can be seen on the project website:

<https://artinitiativesproject.com/balance>; <https://artinitiativesproject.com/en/balance>.

2.3 A contributing aspect in my exhibition "Total Meditation". This exhibition is an overall experiment. Its main plastic elements are called "Objects of Meditation". These are forms made of ceramics and hot blown glass. Their make itself is an experiment. Due to the different compressibility of the materials when cooled, glass and ceramics can crack each other. Therefore, this characteristic should be considered when creating the forms. On the other hand, the interpenetration of one material into another is fundamental to the concept of the exhibition. The idea of opposing matter and spirit and at the same time combining them is not new. Here it finds its plastic expression, respectively, when using the two emblematic as a vision, materials, which are basically of similar origin. The materials in question are clay and glass. Thus, I accept that the forms created by me, thanks to the discovery and realization of this author's technique, used by me to create a distinctive signature for discovering new solutions and enriching the connections and interactions between materials, is an undisputable contribution.

The experiment does not end here. There are several other objects created, which are made of steel mesh, so that they visually look like curves of "Riemann surfaces". The aim of these objects is to evoke an association for multidimensional mental spaces. Some of them have been shown in previous exhibitions. The ones presented here have not been shown so far. This exhibition is again constructed on the principle of a complete narrative, in which the plastic objects turn to graphic, where they gain a deeper meaning due to the possibility of being shown in a different media. For this purpose, photographs of details from the glass objects and the mesh shapes are used, visualizing complex spatial movements. The whole "Beyond Meditation" series is created this way. Furthermore, the technique of photomicrography with polarized light is used when applying colour accents to graphic sheets. I accept that this type of technique is a major contributing aspect for my work.

Supporting evidence under item 2.3 - the visual and textual material in my habilitation thesis from page 47 to page 71 inclusive.

Review of a solo exhibition of Anna Tsolovska in Arosita Gallery by: Valeva, Bisera. Exhibition of Anna Tsolovska - in: UBA Information Bulletin, issue 01/2021, pp. 59-61, ISSN 1313-9622

2.4 A contributing aspect in my exhibition “The Garden”. This exhibition is a natural culmination of my conceptual and plastic pursuits in the last three years. The main trend in my work is experimenting with new possibilities in both artistic and technological aspects. “The Garden” is represented by 7 sculptures that have a front and a back side. The works are to a great extent symbolic, abstract, but also include very realistic detail. The contributing element in them is the way to determine which side is the front one. This is achieved through increased detail on the surface of the front side and neglecting the back. This way I wish to emphasize that we notice much more details on the front side and they give us the image itself. When this is applied to unrealistic forms, but to random figures, it gives them shape and instantly makes us articulate and rationalize them in a familiar way. Here the contribution is in the two-dimensionality and the way the surface and the detail are treated to achieve appropriate spatial and semantic suggestions and even moral gradation in one form, giving preference to the face, appearance, eidos over the back, which is the absence of image and respectively lack of meaning.

Another yet more expressive emphasis on detail is achieved using contrast between the materials. These sculptures are made of 4045L steel and C425-30 cast iron on the principle of casting in sand forms or the so-called "soil casting", which gives a very characteristic texture of the surfaces and coloured glass elements made with the technique of "fusing".

Supporting evidence under item 2.4 - the visual and textual material in my habilitation thesis from page 73 to page 85 inclusive.

2.5 Contributing aspects in art prints presented in the habilitation thesis as additional works and performances, created on the basis of author's plastic objects, with included microphotography, executed with the technique of computer-generated design and digitally printed. Creating and developing my own technique and specific signature of applying digital software for the purposes of transformation from three-dimensional object into two-dimensional graphic and application of microphotography.

Supporting evidence under item 2.5 - the visual and textual material in my habilitation thesis from page 96 to page 105 inclusive.

2.6 Developing, establishing and promoting in the country and abroad graphic works created on the basis of author's plastic objects. In 2019 at the invitation of Maria

Skłodowska-Curie University, Lublin, Poland, I presented a report on this technique before lecturers and students from the Faculty of Arts within the project of Assoc. Prof. Snezhina Biserova, PhD. A letter attached to my documents for participation in the competition certifies the presentation of the report on the topic.

Assoc. Prof. Anna Tsolovska, PhD