

## Opinion

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**Regarding:** PhD thesis for the award of the educational and scientific degree “doctor”, scientific field 8.2 Fine Arts, New Bulgarian University, Department of Fine Arts, Doctoral Program in Visual and Plastic Arts.

**Author:** Ilko Borisov Nikolchev

**Theme:** “Interaction between viewers and artistic works in non-objective sculpture. Manifestations in Bulgarian sculpture at the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century”

**Supervisor:** Assoc. Prof. Valentin Savchev, New Bulgarian University

The PhD student has presented all the necessary documents - correctly compiled and legitimate.

- All necessary administrative documents
- Autobiography
- Dissertation
- Abstract
- List of scientific publications on the topic of the PhD thesis

“Art needs truth, not sincerity”

Casimir Malevich

It is the problem of the “truthfulness” of reality that shaped the reaction and behaviour of a number of colossal authors in the early twentieth century. They defined the new spiritual essence of art with rationally motivated beliefs and presented a new visual language. They were looking for pure artistic expression.

This historical fact is outlined at the beginning of the convincingly structured text of Ilko Nikolchev’s PhD thesis. The past is never over. It explains the present. An appropriate maxim for this groundbreaking worldview in the field of art that has

changed the morphology of visual language. A formative viewpoint, which is central to the problematic discussed in the present work.

The big volume of studied literature on the subject, the examples analysed and the sincere bias (as an author) to this viewpoint themselves speak of being conversant with the subject – which is the basis of the qualitative result and contribution to Nikolchev's scientific activity.

The PhD candidate firmly defends the thesis: modern times (with all their manifestations) create new rules and a new quality attitude to reality.

The author emphasizes on the principally conceptual side of selected visual manifestations - exhaustive, studied, understood and summarized.

He applies an analytical approach to substantiate the content and significance of the conclusions. He interprets abstraction as a process that involves different characteristics, but always with a connotation of “detachment” from material reality.

Ilko Nikolchev clarifies the terms, concepts and processes that determine the look and meaning of the topic of his choice.

He creates a historical and territorial framework of his research work.

In Ilko Nikolchev's “quest”, as a form of research, is a search for an entity through which the latter inspires the following dominant implications:

- A piece of work is an art world with its own laws and rules. Its own “logic” and value dimensions. Autonomous. Its sole purpose is the absolute purity of expression.
- Reality is a construct of the mind.

Aim:

- To demonstrate the ontological beginnings of concepts and categories related to visual expression - color, line, shape, space, texture. Based on the following principle of organization - balance, rhythm, harmony, movement.
- An ability to create construction based on weight, speed and direction of travel

The results:

- Aesthetics of impact. Geometry as an abstract idea becomes language.
- Meaning is found in the sign itself.

In addition:

- The phenomena of any perception of experience (visual, sensory or mental) are the grounds for knowledge and include a certain horizon of expectation. The viewer seeks the image by virtue of experience.
- Art is included in the conception of the world's simplicity. A radical reorientation from the material to the spiritual. It acquires a social character. The viewer is also involved in the creative process. Art is a

means of communication between people and a major area of spiritual realization.

But:

- All meanings and truths are never absolute or independent of time. Consciousness is not subject to causality (chance).
- What is considered to be of deep central importance depends on where we stand.
- In the totality of institutions, intersectional discursive practices serve the authority in a certain way. In this context, the role of the individual consciousness is one of an arbiter of truth.
- A need for learning from the arts (as part of the whole), developing the sensory, creative abilities, individuality and social skills. To learn how to “understand” and how to live. And this is a consequence of artistic modernism.

The study offers a cut and complement to make sense of the framework of “meaning” - the human being and his worlds.

High levels of knowledge and answers.

In-depth analysis and analysis based on personal experience (as an erudite, thinking author) and meaningful teaching at UACEG.

The most sincere conversation is a conversation with oneself.

And the result is present.

The dissertation is required for entry into knowledge and society.

The work makes a contribution to science and practice and meets all the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria. I believe it should be published because of its significant social and cultural impact.

I strongly express my positive assessment of the dissertation, of the achieved results and contributions and suggest to the Scientific Jury that they award Ilko Borisov Nikolchev with the educational and scientific degree of “Doctor” in the professional field 8.2 Fine Arts, scientific field 8.2 “Art Studies and Fine Arts”.

15.11.2019

Sofia

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