

Shanghai Book City opens new chapter

Xu Wei

Shanghai Book City, the city's largest bookstore and a landmark, reopened to the public on Saturday following the completion of its renovation.

Located on Fuzhou Road in Huangpu District, the bookstore, which opened in 1998, was shuttered in December 2021 for refurbishment.

The renovation has ensured the bookstore will have multiple functions, as well as giving it a brand new and fashionable look to cater to young readers. Diverse services and cultural experiences of reading, exhibition, theater, coffee and dining will be offered at this comprehensive cultural space.

The bookstore also launched a city-wide reading brand titled "Xinhua Yuedu," which will promote happy reading to various groups of people. By using books as a medium, the reading activities will link readers from enterprises, government units, and schools and meet the personalized needs of different readers.

Meanwhile, the store released its mobile app, Shanghai Bookcity, to provide online services. Book coupons, online book purchase service and information about its cultural events will be offered on the app.

Through the app, readers can also interact with writers and scholars through livestreaming programs and acquire the latest cultural news and book review recommendations.

The bookstore is becoming a cultural



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landmark with a smart green concept, and is a successful case of urban renewal.

Chen Qiwei, general manager of Shanghai United Media Group, noted that after the renovation, energy consumption at the bookstore will be reduced by 40 percent.

Famous local writer Sun Ganlu said that each time he visited the bookstore he was surprised. "I am a frequent

visitor to the bookstore as a reader," Sun said. "I am also a witness to the city's consistent efforts in upgrading its bookstores and promoting reading programs among citizens."

Apart from many reading resources, the bookstore will hold a variety of reading activities and lectures. Cultural celebrities, scholars and writers, including Ge Jianxiong, Liang Yong'an and Sai Lei, will interact with readers through book signings.

Chief designer Yu Ting applied the theme of books throughout the renovation. The exterior walls of the store are artistically book-shaped and equipped with large floor-to-ceiling windows to let the sunshine in.

The first floor of Shanghai Book City has been turned into a public cultural plaza, which is also the starting point for people to enter the interior of the bookstore.

"It introduces the horizontal pedestrian route of Fuzhou Road from the outside to the interior, and transforms from the horizontal to the vertical from the second to seventh floors, creating a vertical and micro city of books," Yu explained.

From the second to seventh floors, hundreds of thousands of books are

arranged in varied categories of famous masterpieces (2/F), social science (3/F), children's book (4/F), education (5/F), lifestyles and arts (6/F), and academic research and art design (7/F). They're available for readers to read and purchase.

Owl Comedy, a popular theater has been introduced to the bookstore's sixth floor to offer theater-themed bazaars, stand-up comedy performances and magic shows.

On the seventh floor, artworks of Mari Kanstad Johnsen, Bjorn Rune Lie and Kristin Roskifte are displayed at the newly launched Shanghai Illustration Art Center. All these paintings record the three artists' observations and discoveries in Shanghai.

In the future, the varied theme spaces of the bookstore will become an ideal venue to host many kinds of cultural events such as book signings and salons, film exhibitions, comic book exhibitions, photography exhibitions, fashion shows, small concerts, vocal classes, and markets of creative cultural products.

Shanghai Book City is expanding the boundaries of book selling and becoming a comprehensive "city" of cultural consumption.



Many reading resources are on offer at the bookstore.