

# Create Borderless Theatre by Fusion of Field and Community



By Tang Shunjia

Strolling from Huangxing Road to Kongjiang Road, Theatre YOUNG is located at a bustling street intersection. Passing through the living area imbued with normal daily life, rusty red baguette facade and white glass curtain wall of the theatre jump into sight. Overwhelming industrial atmosphere and sense of modern design are derived from the same origin as Yangpu with "centenary industry" in the blood.

In September, Yangpu Grand Theatre located on Kongjiang Road makes comeback as "Theatre YOUNG". It meets audiences with a new image, drama at heart, integrates stage performance, original incubation, exhibition and show, public welfare education, as well as community empowerment, and seeks to present dynamic, avant-garde and diversified artistic works, build a gravitational field and experimental field of new young artists, create a borderless theatre and achieve the fusion of field and community.

On September 2-4 and 10-12, original dramas of When We Two Parted and Symmetry Breaking ushered in Shanghai premiere and national premiere respectively at Theatre YOUNG.

Yangpu Grand Theatre was built in 1996 on Kongjiang Road. In February

2018, Culture and Tourism Administration of Yangpu District signed a strategic cooperation framework agreement with Shanghai Grand Theatre, planning to tailor a new theatre fully mixed with regional characteristics for Yangpu District, based on mature theatre operation complex and brand system of Shanghai Grand Theatre. Xu Feng, an architect in charge of Reconstruction Project of Yangpu Grand Theatre and professor at the School of Architecture and Design of Tongji University, said, "When the reconstruction project brings a sense of freshness, there must be no strange feeling of memories cut off."

During the reconstruction, original large steps at the entrance were leveled off and transformed into 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> front plaza to gain more public spaces and render more openness and affinity to the theatre as a whole. The main architecture retained original external contour of the Yangpu Grand Theatre, while transparent panes, glass curtain walls and facade baguettes added visual permeability and changes. Theatre YOUNG expanded the area to nearly 10,000 m<sup>2</sup>. Stepping into the theatre, a large area of wooden wall strips catch the eyes, and all undulating lines display its rhythm and vitality; spiral steps on both sides lead to main space of the theatre, echoing starry sky decoration

on the top of lobby, implying a youthful aura that grows upward and reaches for stars.

In respect of internal structure and stage technology, the Audience Hall of YOUNG's main theatre has an elevated height of 16 meters and seats from 750 to 1,020. Whilst optimizing architectural acoustic conditions, it has also enhanced viewing experience and comfort; stage machinery and lighting audio equipment were fully upgraded, main stage was further equipped with lifting orchestra and 4 lifting platforms, increasing electric booms to 43 pieces, plus 6 pieces of lighting booms, and rear stage was added, thus suiting technical needs across a variety of art categories.

Apart from main theatre, Theatre YOUNG also comprises a 168-seat experimental theatre with retractable seats; its space and style are fit for exploring more possibilities in future theatre incubation, art education and parent-child performance. Public spaces of theatre such as "Art Oxygen Bar" will also fully play the functions to hold a wide range of cultural activities for the public audiences, including lectures, exhibitions, workshops and parent-child picture book camps on a regular basis.

As indispensable chemical molecule for the nature and subject of life, ever-changing "oxygen" gives birth to all creatures. The opening

performance season of Theatre YOUNG focuses on the theme "oxygen", not only referring to the significance of art and theatre to life, but also indicating expectation for every audience on the scene. Hopefully audiences will have an intriguing chemistry reaction with the theatre just like oxygen molecule.

The overall opening performance season started at the end of July and will run throughout the year. Adhering to curatorial mentality, it is divided into seven units, to first launch 92 performances of 28 productions, including 8 productions in China premiere and 7 productions in Shanghai premiere, followed by something new afterwards.

"Seed Lab" unit is designed and produced locally by Theatre YOUNG to convey a humanistic philosophy of "global vision, Shanghai-style culture and Yangpu expression", including three works entrusted by Theatre YOUNG. The 2022 version of oral theatre ONE FINE DAY directed by Li Jianjun recruits 20 narrators from all walks of life, different ages and native places living in Shanghai to tell their real life experiences on stage. Through technical setting of speaking and listening, audiences will directly connect with narrators, experience the theme of works and see public "voices" from this era and the city of Shanghai. Music genius Xiaohe joins forces with independent animation and video artist Ma Weijia to deliver interactive performance Fleurs Sauvage de Lyon in conjunction with live music and experimental images. Chinese Orchestra Lute Society joins hands with Ao Dingwen, a popular dancer of Dance Smash, to create new Chinese music ballet theatre Jade Hairpin • Send with history as a mirror, music as a medium and dance to express feelings.

Backed by outstanding education resources of Yangpu District, "Unpacking! YOUNG Generation" unit invites No.8 Xiangyangli, an original drama of Beijing Film Academy, HUDEC, Shanghai's major artistic creation project produced by Shanghai Theatre Academy, Hometown, same name drama of Nanjing University's tribute to 100th anniversary of Lu Xun's Hometown, etc. When We Two Parted and Double Dual, phenomenal works of THE NINE Peking

University and the latest masterpiece Symmetry Breaking will also be staged consecutively at Theatre YOUNG. On the occasion of releasing this unit, Theatre YOUNG also sends invitation to colleges and universities nationwide, expecting more excellent works and artistic talents with youth vitality, exploration or intellectual temperament from colleges and universities to come here, aspiring to forge a global performing art performance platform and practice base for colleges and universities.

"Theatre Evolution" unit invites the most dynamic new generation and Mesozoic theatre creators who are active on domestic performing art stage to show the leading level of Chinese contemporary theatre development. Adapted from Zijin Chen's novel of the same name and produced by Drum Tower West Theatre, the psychological suspense drama Diary of Mystery created by original creative team of The Pillow Man will have its national premiere at Theatre YOUNG; as a word-of-mouth work for the main unit of 2021 Wuzhen Theatre Festival, World on a Wire directed by Li Jianjun will also have its Shanghai premiere at the Theatre YOUNG. Through the accumulation and gathering of this section, Theatre YOUNG is poised for building future youth drama festival in terms of talents and repertoires.

"52Hz Sound Makes Wave" blends with harbinger in the era, collision of popular concept and culture. Other Side 4.0—Listening to the Landscape of Life is a serial concert of "Piano Hypermedia" initiated by Yu Xiangjun, a young Chinese pianist in Germany, integrating oriental and western music classics and the creation of contemporary Chinese composers, combining interactive design with hypermedia technology and exploring the origin of life with music. "No.7 Screening Hall" unveils multi-variant fantasies of the theatre and taps into infinite possibilities of space. "2022 Feinaki Summer Animation Season" will span across award-winning works from major international animation festivals, the latest popular works, as well as leading-edge contemporary animations, and launch a selection of happy family world animations for audiences of all age groups.

# Centennial Traditional Architecture "Revamped"

By Wang Xinyu

Old architecture carries historical memory of a city. For Shanghai No.1 Rehabilitation Hospital located at 349 Hangzhou Road, the earliest architecture among its historical architecture protection group has a history of 100 years. Nowadays, old architecture is repaired as old, "revamped" while preserving the heritage. Buildings 2# and 3# in the first phase engineering of renovation project have been successfully

completed and put into service recently, currently as rehabilitation wards of the hospital.

Open the window to see green, wind under corridor and sunshine on outer wall of architecture, shining like stars, which is a unique visual effect of stone washing process. Passing through the foyer, rustic atmosphere of old architecture touches the face directly, coupled with two uneven stained glass panels in rich colors. "Our hospital has century-old architecture, repaired

as old. While improving inpatient conditions, it retains historical heritage and taste." Zhang Zhenzhong, a Chief of Infrastructure Construction Department of Shanghai No.1 Rehabilitation Hospital, introduced to reporter; in an effort to restore original style of old architecture to the utmost, the costs of manpower and time are multiplied during the renovation. For example, a two-storey stairwell can complete renovation and restoration within two to three days using ceramic tiles of modern

process and mechanized measures, but traditional terrazzo process takes two weeks.

Renovation engineering of old architecture is performed by three phases. In addition to the completed buildings 2# and 3#, buildings 5# and 6# will also kick off construction soon, estimated to complete renovation within this year.

According to introduction, the predecessor of Shanghai No.1 Rehabilitation Hospital is the Shengxin Hospital founded in 1923

with a history of nearly a hundred years. The original site of Shengxin Hospital functioned as Inpatient Department of Yangpu District Central Hospital (349 Hangzhou Road) in November 1958, treating numerous patients over nearly half a century, and providing superior medical services to the people in eastern Shanghai. In July 2014, it was officially renamed as "Shanghai No.1 Rehabilitation Hospital" and continues to this day.