

Opening of De Krook: a new landmark for Ghent

On Friday 10 March, De Krook in Ghent will open its doors to the public. De Krook will give Ghent a new landmark, between the three towers and the Booktower. This architectural highlight by the Ghent-based COUSSEE & GORIS architecten and the Spanish-Catalan firm RCR Arquitectes features a library, a lively café, experimentation labs, radio studios, a study room and much more. De Krook invites everyone to read, to learn and above all to live life to the full.

The city of Ghent, Ghent University and imec are joining forces to develop activities in the new building, with the support of the Flemish government and the Province of East Flanders. The opening weekend, from 10 to 12 March, will give visitors their first opportunity to discover the new city library, the ongoing research by Ghent University and the innovative strength of imec. The unique collaboration will be highlighted by means of an activity trail. The full programme can be found at www.dekrook.be.

“De Krook is a breeding ground for culture, knowledge, research and enterprise. It will become the leading reference for broad-based innovation in Flanders and Europe.” – Sven Gatz, Flemish Minister of Culture, Media, Youth and Brussels

An inspirational venue for culture, knowledge and innovation

In this digital era, a city library is still relevant but its role is definitely changing. In a digitalised world which offers an abundance of information, there is a growing need to help people navigate the available knowledge. The new city library is responding to this development with its collection of books, CDs and DVDs but also with digital technologies such as online information sheets and an app which provides reading suggestions.

“We strongly believe in the library, but it must be ready for the future. A place where anyone can go to read or borrow a book, but also to attend lectures or participate in research. A place where you can navigate your way through the complex digital world or simply enjoy a cup of coffee with friends. De Krook truly belongs to everyone.” – Annelies Storms, chair of the cooperative partnership Waalse Krook and councillor for culture, tourism and events.

“For the province of East Flanders, the investment in De Krook is an important social contribution. Libraries continue to play a crucial role in preserving our heritage and this innovative concept ensures that the library is also ready for the future.” – Jozef Dauwe, province of East Flanders

De Krook will also become a place where Ghent University and imec can present research and a breeding ground for pioneering ideas and innovative startups. De Krook will become the leading source of innovation for Flemish companies.

“De Krook provides Ghent University with more opportunities to present its research to the outside world and to involve visitors in academic activities. The university is developing its own public activities for the first time, which will be evident from the extensive calendar of events.” Anne De Paepe – rector of Ghent University

“De Krook focuses strongly on Flemish innovation. We guide companies through the various steps of the innovation process, from the moment of conception right through to the fully functional product or service. Although we are using our unique nano and digital technologies for this, it is not enough. Innovation with a positive impact on society can only be achieved if companies, the research world, citizens and the government join forces. This is the great thing about De Krook.” – Luc Van den hove, president and CEO of imec

An open building like a balcony overlooking the city

“The aim was to develop an area which had fallen out of use and give it back to local residents. This plan has been more than successful.” – Daniël Termont, mayor of Ghent

The building can be read as a stack of horizontal plateaus with a view of the Scheldt, which are intended to create a city within a city. The building is therefore extremely transparent and open, allowing local residents to meet here once again and discover what this reclaimed location has to offer.

“Historically, Ghent has always been a fluid combination of streets and squares which merge into each other”, says architect Ralf Coussée (TVHV Coussée & Goris architecten / RCR Architectes). “Our design reflects this. We have used the spaces around the building for passageways. People used to walk around this area, now you can go straight through it. When you arrive in Ghent, you can easily walk into the city. De Krook is almost a gateway.”

Further information:

see appendix

Contact:

Tinne op de Beeck, spokesperson for Annelies Storms: 0499 594929, www.dekrook.be