



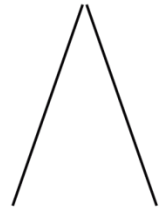
Marguerite-D'Youville School – LAB-ÉCOLE COMPETITION

The project was one of the 2020 Lab-École competition's laureates. On the program, designing a new 3440 m² construction on the current site of the Marguerite-D'Youville school, near the downtown area of Saguenay's Chicoutimi district. This new school will welcome students from preschool to grade 6 and will count 15 classrooms, including 3 pre-school and 12 elementary classrooms, a single gymnasium, as well as gathering spaces for moving, collaborating, and eating.

The newly proposed school aims to reflect a typical Saguenay living environment, a village strongly intertwined with its natural environment, anchored in its residents' culture. The building is divided into distinct houses, arranged around an outdoor courtyard, united by glass passages. The architectural design aimed to deconstruct the conventional school, a building with an institutional style, and transpose it onto a livable scale, accessible and warm for the child; to design a building on the scale of toddlers; to fragment a complex arrangement into a legible volume; to offer multiple reference points. The school's characteristic pedagogical approach, described using the term "nurture", coloured the project, lending it a reassuring and familiar architecture.

The project sits comfortably on Boily street, offering a façade that gives onto street and a scale in harmony with the surrounding residential tissue, all while making itself inviting for passersby. Its "U" shape allowed for a comforting inner courtyard to be furnished, conducive to both recreational and pedagogical activities. Sculpted in harmony with weather fluctuations, the building's morphology allowed the space to be fully south-facing, as well as protected year-long from dominant winds, creating a pleasant microclimate that varies along with the seasons. Implanted at the heart of an urban fabric broken up by large islands of vegetation, the project proposes a landscaping that enriches its surrounding landscape all while complementing it. In response to the rugged topography, the building is designed over two main levels: you can access the ground level from the street and the garden level through the courtyard. Many entrances are planned and express themselves coherently for the building's different users.

The project is articulated across three main construction areas; one gathering the spaces open to the community, while the other two gather the different learning communities and staff areas. The street-facing wing is comprised, at the ground level, of the staff rooms that animate the façade, while beneath them, at the garden level, you can find the preschool classrooms. The kindergarten classes' strategic location on the lower level allows for a strong connection with the courtyard, contributing to a feeling of safety. The central wing is more porous. It offers vast spaces representing the urban, dynamic and effervescent core, encouraging students' socialisation. The gymnasium is found at the intersection of both wings and in direct connection with the sports fields, facilitating the use of installations by the community. The stands, heart of the school, allow for physical and visual connections with all the shared spaces. The third wing is subdivided into three houses, each one housing an elementary cycle. Each learning community is thus organised over two levels, creating a livable scale.



Luminous interstices link the cycles and reemphasize each learning community's identity. These translucent and welcoming junctures offer viewpoints onto the heart of the project, the outdoor yard, which highlights the school's direction. The shared spaces and passages give onto the yard, creating transient zones between the movement and noise of recess and the calm that fosters concentration, necessary to classrooms' learning climate. In this way, all classrooms enjoy the northern light.

APPAREIL thanks its collaborators on this project:

Étienne Bernier Architecture
BGLA Architecture
Collectif Cargo
Rousseau Lefebvre
LGT Inc.

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About APPAREIL Architecture

APPAREIL Architecture is a Montreal-based firm whose mission is to design high quality, bespoke residential and commercial environments that are unique for their residents. Our clean and contemporary signature is greatly inspired by our Nordic roots, and our projects bear witness to our desire to find balance between tradition and modernity. To improve its sustainable development practice, the firm has obtained an ECO-RESPONSIBLE certification issued by Ecocert and participates in several mentoring programs such as Women4Climate as well as Montreal's Parcours Développement Durable.

Its work has been recognized and rewarded throughout the years. Among several distinctions, APPAREIL Architecture received the OAQ's "Relève en Architecture 2020" award and the "Public's Choice" award at the AZ AWARDS 2020, for the Le Dernier Petit Cochon project at the Reford Gardens. The firm was a double-laureate at the "Grands Prix du Design" awards in 2019 for the Pastel Rita project and the Floe chair. The firm was also the recipient of Canadian Interior's "Best of Canada" prize in 2017 for the Hoogan & Beaufort restaurant, and was nominated for the "Emerging Talent" award by Canadian Architect in 2016.

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