



LA RÉFÉRENCE DE GANTHIER: PROVIDING CONSISTENT EDUCATION TO A GROWING POPULATION

Posted on November 23, 2021 by xavigonzalez



Categories: [Contributors](#), [Densities](#), [Formats](#), [Low Density](#), [Project](#), [Studio PHH](#), [Territory and mobility](#), [Topics](#), [Urban Paradigms](#)

Tags: [Children](#), [Community](#), [Construction](#), [Courtyard](#), [Design process](#), [Educational Building](#), [Ganthier](#), [Haiti](#), [Identity](#), [Lightweight Materials](#), [Long-term Strategies](#), [low cost](#), [Modular Design](#), [Project](#), [Seismic waves](#), [Thermal comfort](#), [Vegetation](#), [Ventilation](#), [Wind energy](#)

urbanNext Lexicon

La Référence de Ganthier: Providing Consistent Education to a
Growing Population

<https://urbannext.net/la-reference-de-ganthier/>

La Référence School responds to the pressing challenge of providing consistent education to the growing population of children in Haiti. Located in Ganthier, a one-hour drive from Port-au-Prince towards the border with the Dominican Republic, "La Référence" was founded in 2012 by a group of young Haitian professors whose aspirations of becoming the model and archetype for other schools in Haiti inspired the name and is exemplified by their students' academic results.

ISSN : 2575-5374

urbanNext Lexicon

La Référence de Ganthier: Providing Consistent Education to a
Growing Population

<https://urbannext.net/la-reference-de-ganthier/>



ISSN : 2575-5374

urbanNext Lexicon

La Référence de Ganthier: Providing Consistent Education to a
Growing Population

<https://urbannext.net/la-reference-de-ganthier/>



After years of proven excellence and growth, La Référence turned to the Princeton-based foundation Konekte for help to purchase land and to continue its long-term vision for quality education. As part of a pro-bono effort, Studio PHH Architects got involved in the project to provide guidance and ensure rigorous safety standards. After meeting with the professors to discuss their goals, that role grew into site planning, architectural design, and engineering.

ISSN : 2575-5374

urbanNext Lexicon

La Référence de Ganthier: Providing Consistent Education to a

Growing Population

<https://urbannext.net/la-reference-de-ganthier/>



Throughout the process, Studio PHH Architects closely coordinated with our structural engineers, Eckersley O'Callaghan, who donated their time to ensure the safety and durability of the school, which is engineered for hurricane-force winds and seismic activity.

The proposed site strategy consists of a courtyard scheme made up of two L-shaped buildings – 18 classrooms in one plus an administrative building – which dovetail with the existing trees in order to provide light-filled, naturally ventilated spaces surrounding a large open central courtyard for the kids to play in. This configuration was a direct response to the needs of the administration: to be able to provide a safe, healthy space for the children that fosters community.

ISSN : 2575-5374

urbanNext Lexicon

La Référence de Ganthier: Providing Consistent Education to a
Growing Population

<https://urbannext.net/la-reference-de-ganthier/>



ISSN : 2575-5374

urbanNext Lexicon

La Référence de Ganthier: Providing Consistent Education to a
Growing Population

<https://urbannext.net/la-reference-de-ganthier/>



The building emerged from carefully studying and combining the only affordable materials – CMU block, concrete, and corrugated steel roofing – in order to increase air-flow, provide natural light and security, and control sound transmission between classrooms. The façade's rhythm of reinforced piers and openings, which is a big part of the school's identity, is based on playfully shifting the CMU block piers which transfer the bearing, up-lift, and shear loads down to the foundations.

ISSN : 2575-5374

urbanNext Lexicon

La Référence de Ganthier: Providing Consistent Education to a
Growing Population

<https://urbannext.net/la-reference-de-ganthier/>



ISSN : 2575-5374

urbanNext Lexicon

La Référence de Ganthier: Providing Consistent Education to a
Growing Population

<https://urbannext.net/la-reference-de-ganthier/>



The school construction was developed as a series of repeating modules and was strategically phased. This allowed us to manage the limited funds efficiently, while simultaneously troubleshooting any issues during the first phase of construction. Several issues did occur during phase 1 due to a lack of available material sizes, the inability of some sub-contractors to read construction drawings, and language barriers (with contractors speaking English, French and Creole on-site). However, each problem was discussed and rectified in the field, and the phase 2 drawings were adjusted by the design team to ensure clear communication. The second phase, which was twice as large as phase 1, was built without any problems, and this phased, modular approach

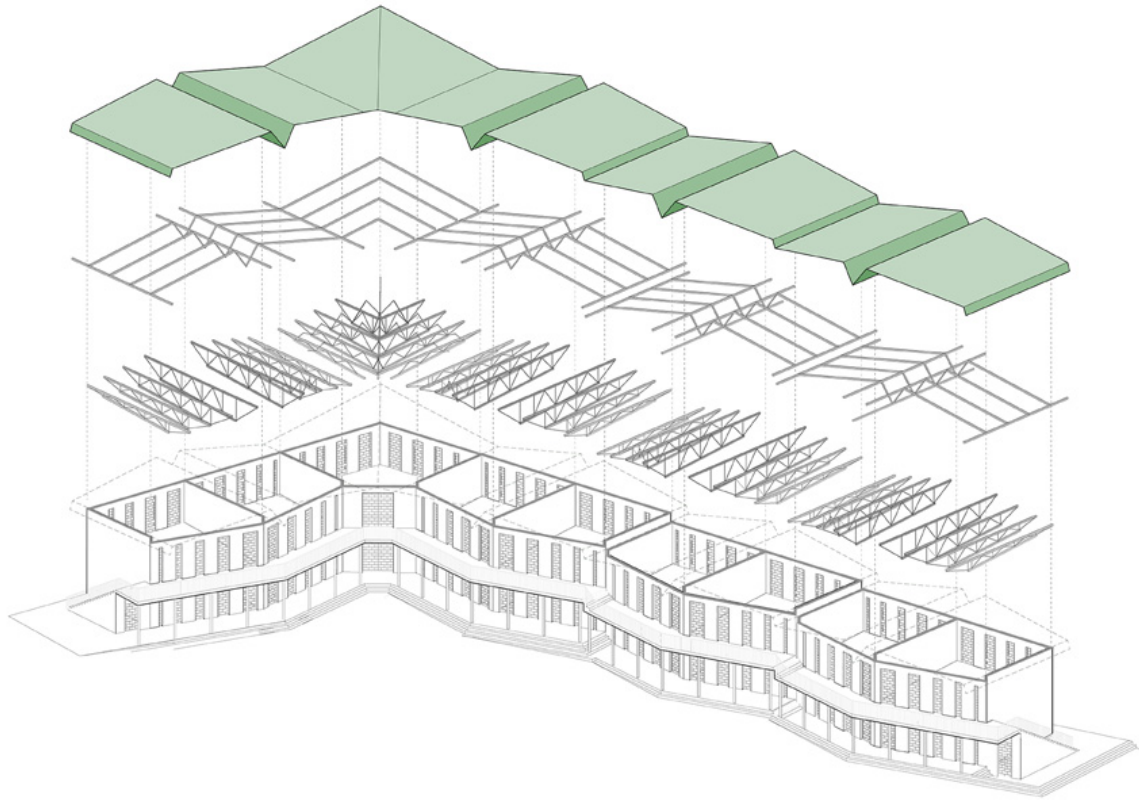
ISSN : 2575-5374

urbanNext Lexicon

La Référence de Ganthier: Providing Consistent Education to a
Growing Population

<https://urbannext.net/la-reference-de-ganthier/>

provided valuable insights for both the design and construction teams.

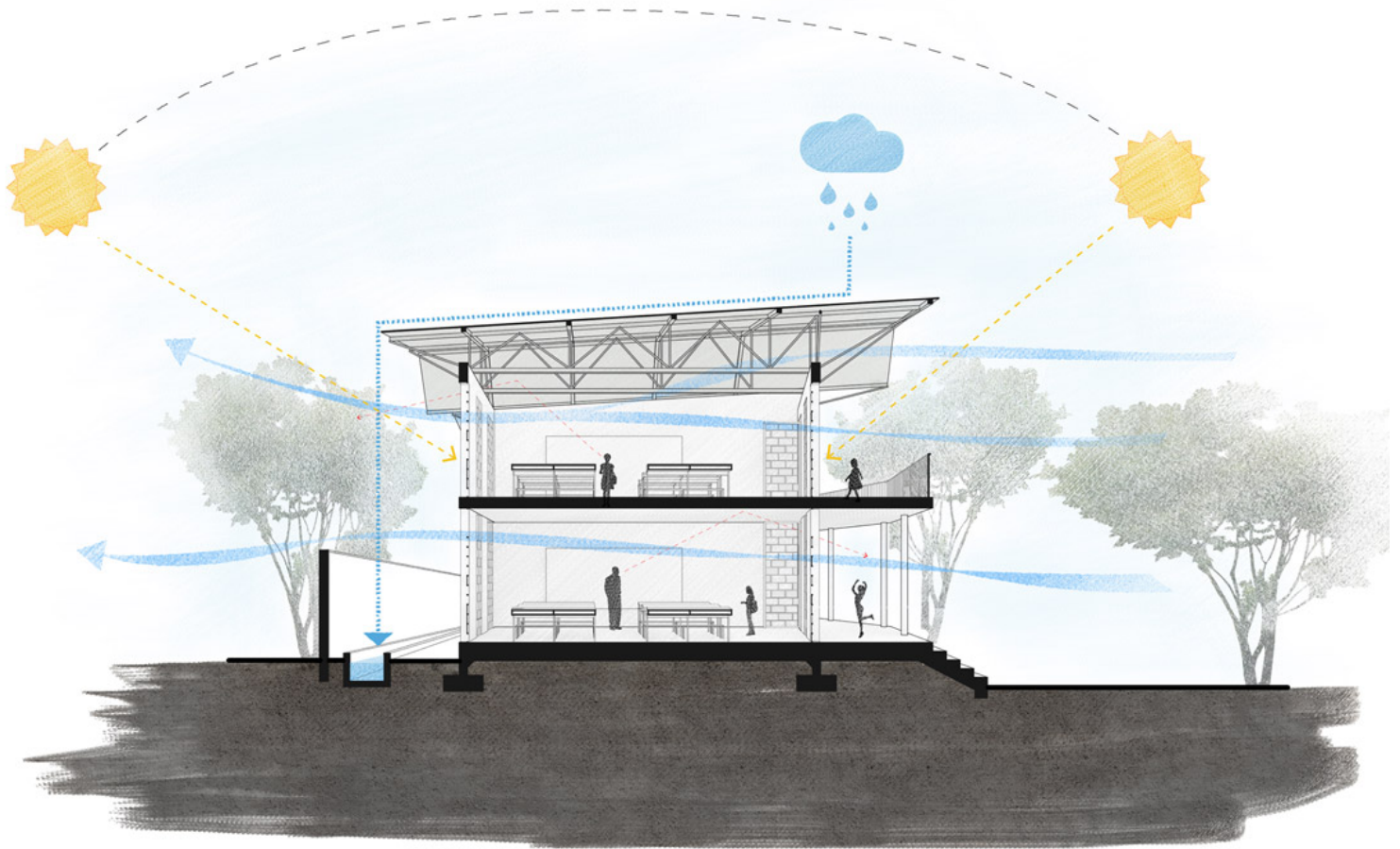


ISSN : 2575-5374

urbanNext Lexicon

La Référence de Ganthier: Providing Consistent Education to a
Growing Population

<https://urbannext.net/la-reference-de-ganthier/>



ISSN : 2575-5374

