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## GELM Annex / Díaz Paunetto Arquitectos

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Architects: **Díaz Paunetto Arquitectos**

Location: **Corozal, Puerto Rico**

Architect In Charge: **Víctor Díaz Paunetto**

Project Area: **256.0 m<sup>2</sup>**

Project Year: **2012**

Photographs: **Courtesy of Díaz Paunetto Arquitectos**

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Collaborators: **Víctor Díaz Paunetto AIA, Ariel Santiago AEE, Alberto de la Cruz AEE, Jimme Vélez, Danniely Staback.**

Engineering Consultant: **Roberto Agramonte PE**

Electromechanics: **Francisco Mate PE**

Client: **PuertoRican Family Institute, Inc.**



From the architect. The project involves a second commission from the Guardería Ecológica La Mina. Like the first commission, the structure was in a state of neglect for 20 years, where it was once part of a set of structures devoted to vocational training facilities and then volunteer corps. The building was used as a sports and recreation hall on the first floor and cosmetology salon on the second. The structure is a typical module of pre-designed concrete used by the Department of Education for school expansions since the 1960s, with a second floor in block walls and a wooden roof that was completely collapsed when we arrived at the project. Being an ecological school, the building footprint should remain unchanged and so it was not demolished, even though this idea was tempting, instead the school was completely recovered.

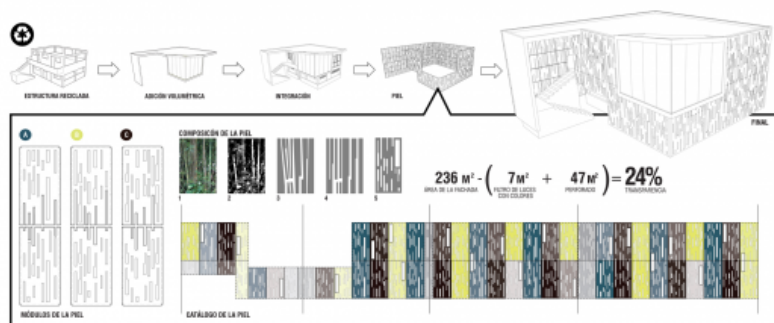


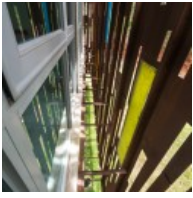
The structure would now serve as a multipurpose room where the school could offer meetings for parents, seminars and training for teachers, among other uses, as well as storage on the first floor to support other schools in the area belonging to the client.



The building had some big challenges in terms of costs and timing given that only 6 months were granted for its design and construction, a concept under which the commission was requested. In terms of design, the second floor had the potential to have a commanding view of the original nursery, consisting of one floor only and the recreation area for

children. A concrete slab roof that extended up the staircase was created to provide shelter from the rain and sun, and a glass volume was designed towards the vegetation and the play area. In formal terms this volume would act as a screen or display for the nursery, creating different readings while allowing light to enter the space and enjoy the views. The challenge of harmonizing the rest of the structure bordered on its demolition, so we decided to line the building in a weathering steel cladding, a high durability and low maintenance material, drilled with a pattern allusive of the bamboos surrounding it. This allows light to filter into the space and establishes a dialogue with the environment. Colored glass panes were incorporated into the sliding glass doors, alluding to the colors used in the nursery, which bathe the interior with color.







GELM Annex / Díaz Paunetto Arquitectos originally appeared on ArchDaily, the most visited architecture website on 15 Oct 2014.

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