# Press release – November 2017

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## LEONARD DE VINCI HIGH SCHOOL MONTPELLIER RECONSTRUCTION

### A PIECE OF THE CITY AROUND A PLANTED COURTYARD

Subsequent to delivering staff housing and reception building in 2013, this autumn the Hellin-Sebbag Architectes Associés office completed the second phase of the reconstruction of this building trades high school.

The architect's appointment comprised different scales - from urban space to furniture.

**Planning**

Complete replanning of the 4-hectare site, the four new buildings built around a 450m2 square courtyard organise the school grounds as an urban square: student foyer , media centre, student activities, canteen and boarding accommodation.

To avoid the image of "hutches" within the bitumen courtyard, around beautiful existing trees the architects built a Mediterranean garden where pupils can relax freely.

**Architecture**

The architects paid particular attention to the transition between the inside and outside. Identifiable by its red frame, a ground floor terrace extends the canteen to the south by opening onto the courtyard. Alongside the boarding accommodation, a covered gallery extends into the garden as a large step where it is good to sit.

Connected to both teaching buildings by two footbridges on the first floor, a small white pavilion extended by a vast terrace accommodates the media centre. Protected by a sunshade, the terrace overlooking the garden becomes a central place for exchanges and relaxation.

Below this terrace, the well-shaded courtyard is punctuated by the pupils foyer that nestles into a glass ellipse.

**Design**

The atmosphere within each space has been designed according to its function with particular care and originality. In the canteen, a sinuous curved partition/counter creates a separation between the self-service and the dining area while small oval-shaped islands define areas of intimacy very appreciated by pupils.

Similarly in the media centre, the magazine rack and screen support tables were specially designed by the architects.

**Low energy consumption**

Thermal comfort is provided by reinforced external insulation, double flow ventilation and external solar protection.

Financed by the Occitanie Region for 29 € million excluding taxes, the two construction phases in occupied premises lasted nearly eight years.