

**Call for papers**  
**International colloquium**

**Tony Garnier (1869-1948)**  
**The design and construction of a modern city prior to 1920**

A joint initiative between the LARHRA UMR 5190 (Laboratoire de Recherches Historiques Rhône-Alpes) and the INHA (Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art) commemorating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Tony Garnier's birth.

**Date: 13-15 November 2019**

Location: The *Archives Municipales de Lyon* and the *Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon*

This colloquium forms part of a series of events coordinated by the Ville de Lyon. Several exhibitions are currently being arranged, most notably in the *Archives municipales de Lyon* and the *Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon*.

**Organisers:**

Laurent Baridon, Nathalie Mathian, Gilbert Richaud  
(Université Lumière-Lyon 2 – LARHRA UMR 5190)

**Scholarly Committee:**

Pauline Chevalier, Anne-Sophie Cléménçon, Jean-Louis Cohen, Bernard Espion, Louis Faivre d'Arcier, François Loyer, Jean-Philippe Garric, Guy Lambert, Réjean Legault, Jean-Baptiste Minnaert, Valérie Nègre, Jean-Luc de Ochandiano, Sylvie Ramond, Pierre Vaisse

**Rationale:**

The objective of this colloquium is to extend and revise knowledge of Tony Garnier's work prior to 1920. Despite his work's evident brilliance, Tony Garnier's contribution to early Modernist architecture remains unfairly neglected to this day. The fact that he worked almost entirely in Lyons has impeded the impact that his work deserves. His name has not figured in major international events, and critical appraisals of his work are limited, due to the fact that he did little to theorise or propound his views. He did, however, pass on his ideas and practice by teaching in the *École régionale d'architecture de Lyon* and by training many architects.

Given Tony Garnier's historical and artistic importance, scholarly research into his work is still meagre, particularly in comparison with the number of studies dedicated to other architects from the first half of the twentieth century. He has not been the subject of any major national or international exhibition since the 1990 exhibition at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris. An international colloquium held in Lyons in 2008 situated his work

within the history of European architecture and town planning, but the more material aspects of his practice have yet to be analysed.

This colloquium has two related aims. Firstly, it sets out to trace the initial sources and full development of Garnier's book *Une Cité industrielle. Étude pour la construction des villes*, which finally appeared in 1917, having been in preparation since 1899. Secondly, the colloquium seeks to offer a close analysis of the sources for Tony Garnier's approach to construction and the technical specifics of his built projects.

Tony Garnier belongs to the generation of Frank Lloyd Wright, Peter Behrens, Joseph Maria Olbrich, Josef Hoffman, Adolf Loos and Charles Rennie Mackintosh, all of whom were born before 1870. He was five years younger than Auguste Perret and seven years younger than Paul-Philippe Cret, and about fifteen years older than Walter Gropius, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Robert Mallet-Stevens and Le Corbusier. The latter were beginning their careers when *Une Cité industrielle* was published towards the end of the First World War. This pivotal work links together the early Modernisms of nineteenth- and twentieth-century buildings. Thanks to Garnier's training at the *École des Beaux-Arts de Lyon* and then at its sister institution in Paris, he was an accomplished draughtsman and was also experienced in architectural composition, as is clearly apparent in his numerous competition entries. Nevertheless, from his arrival in Rome in 1899 onwards, Garnier seems to have turned his back on a decade of Beaux-Arts projects. Instead, he focussed on a project which he had not learned from his masters: designing an entire town. In 1900, as winner of the *Prix de Rome* and during his period in the 'Eternal City'. Garnier would develop his ground-breaking vision for the modern city.

The strong resemblances between the buildings that Garnier realised in Lyons and his plates in *Une Cité industrielle. Étude pour la construction des villes* have often been remarked upon. The views in this book, published in 1917, a considerable time after his first design for an industrial city, both inspired and were inspired by his work in Lyons. While it is not possible to establish the precise chronology of the book's development from Garnier's initial drawings, it is clear that his major public buildings related to his broader town plan. Their infrastructures, industrial buildings, sanitation services, and school buildings constitute four programmes of particular importance and significance for his social and urban ambitions, as his *grands travaux* in Lyon were intended to accomplish political and social goals, of which social housing was one of the most important.

As well as examining the theoretical and stylistic sources for *Une Cité industrielle*, the colloquium will study the materiality of this book, most of whose plates are undated. They have often been corrected or redrawn, with minor changes, in multiple printings. On the whole, Garnier's ideas are expressed through images rather than words, and are grounded in successive revisions of his drawings and plates. This aspect of his work, which is largely unexplored, shows that he was not simply an excellent draughtsman with a mastery of watercolour techniques but one who also paid attention to rendering textures of landscape and architecture with care. In this respect, Tony Garnier can be said to 'construct' images as well as buildings.

The materials and techniques that Garnier used in construction will also comprise a major theme of this colloquium. His early projects show that he intended to use reinforced concrete but usually only to a limited extent. Instead he drew on the longstanding technique of rammed earth *pisé* construction, traditional in the region, but modernised it, mixing *gros béton* (unreinforced mass concrete), reinforced cement concrete and *pisé de mâchefer* (clinker concrete).

Garnier was clearly committed to using these low-cost materials economically, but consequently he employed labour-intensive, artisanal techniques in production. He became acutely aware of the way in which large-scale construction sites in Lyons operated during the difficult period of the First World War. He belied the reductive image of the artist-designer, demonstrating that, like Auguste Perret, he was equally a builder. Indeed, he was a skilled and pragmatic manager of construction sites and his architecture was based on an economically viable use of the techniques, labour, and materials available to him. He therefore had formed an integrated conception of any building - far removed from the structural aesthetic of Auguste Perret. He was more a pragmatist than a rationalist and his ideas differed markedly from the modern classicism defined by Perret and widely accepted in France and many other countries during the inter-war period. Garnier's monumentalism does not correspond with the production of huge, imposing and even authoritarian structures; it is rather due to his remarkable capacity for compositions widely accepted as beautiful. Its combination of simplicity and erudition accords with a social conception of architecture which aims to construct a modern, bienveillant and democratic city.

The colloquium will focus on these two aspects of Tony Garnier's work, either in their own right or by comparison with the work of his contemporaries.

Proposals must be submitted before 1 March 2019 in the form of an abstract (between 2,000 and 4,000 characters) in French or in English; this should be accompanied by a brief academic CV. Papers will be 20 minutes long, followed by 10 minutes for questions and discussion. Proposals should be sent to the following address: **colloquetgl2019@orange.fr**.

Proposals will be anonymised before submission to the scholarly committee and selection will be made on the basis of double-blind evaluation. The organising committee will respond to proposals by 15 April 2019 at the latest. The full text of proposals that are accepted should reach the organisers before the date of the colloquium. There will be an opportunity to amend contributions (25,000 to 35,000 characters) before publication. The transactions will be published with the support of the INHA.

## **SUGGESTED THEMES FOR RESEARCH**

### **TO DRAW, PUBLISH, DISSEMINATE: THE *CITÉ INDUSTRIELLE* AND THE ARCHITECTURAL BOOK**

Graphic and visualising techniques (originals, copies, prints, photographs) ; uses of drawings (projects, teaching and publications); development and selection of drawings.

Works and their materiality: editions, printings and examples; layout, organisation, documents and scale of reproduction; reproduction techniques and processes.

Publication contexts: The *Cité industrielle* and other publications by Tony Garnier (*Tusculum. État actuel et restauration* (1911) and *Les Grands travaux de la ville de Lyon* (1920); architectural publishing at the beginning of the 20th century; the contribution of Tony Garnier's projects and buildings to the *Cité industrielle* and comparable publications by other authors.

### **TECHNIQUES, MATERIALS, ON-SITE PRACTICES**

Tony Garnier and the building site: technical training, chains of command, organisation, functioning of the office, work with project architects and developers, economics, workforce.

Materials: selection, transfer, hybridisation in Tony Garnier's work and more generally in early 20th century construction.

Tony Garnier and the history of poured concrete: inventors, developers, processes, patents; construction practices among the generation of the Modern pioneers (Frank Lloyd Wright, Peter Behrens, Henri Sauvage, the Perret brothers, etc.).

### **TONY GARNIER AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES**

Construction and its ornamentation: techniques, materials for decorating works; interior design and applied arts.

The *Cité industrielle* as a town planning project: comparison, reception, legacy.

The transformation of Tony Garnier's work into heritage: observations and recommendations.