

HERITAGE IN DANGER

Tony Garnier – the unloved

BY PHILIPPE DUFIEUX



01 Demolition of Pavilion H at Édouard-Herriot Hospital, Lyon, 2015.
© Anne-Sophie Cléménçon.



02 Architect François Chatillon, the new block at the Édouard-Herriot hospital, Lyon, 2018. © Anne-Sophie Cléménçon.

At a time when Lyon celebrates the one hundred and fifty years of the birth of one of the most famous architects of the beginning of the 20th century, Tony Garnier (1869-1948), the observation of the conservation of the works of the designer of the *Cité industrielle* (1917) is very disturbing. Garnier's heritage remains extremely fragile and the protection measures are insufficient.

Several complexes and buildings have been destroyed and disfigured, for example the *Abattoirs de la Mouche* in Gerland (Lyon, 1909-1914) that were demolished in 1974. The large hall of the market has been preserved and transformed into a performance hall. Although the Édouard-Herriot hospital (1913-1933) has benefited from the protection of the perimeter of its chapel since 1967, its monumental fireplaces were demolished in 2001 for security reasons and, more recently, the Pavilion H has been destroyed in 2015 with indifference for the construction of a new 18,000 m² building, designed according to François Chatillon's (1961-) plans and delivered in 2017.

In 1967, the Gerland Stadium (Lyon, 1913-1926) was included in the additional inventory of historic monuments. It was the first monument of the 20th century in the region of Lyon to benefit from a protective measure that would later prove to be completely illusory when considering how unrecognizable the developments carried out between 1984 and 1996 made it. In 1991, two of the

three villas built by Garnier in the 1910s in Saint-Rambert (Lyon) were protected even if, today, only the former villa of Catherine Garnier (1912-1919) still retains its original physiognomy; the architect's villa was brought into alignment in 1958 and the third house has recently undergone a significant modernization.

The war memorial on Île aux Cygnes (1920-1930) was included in the supplementary inventory of historic monuments in 1982. The municipal cow-shed in Tête-d'Or park (1913) was once threatened with demolition and the same applies to the District of the États-Unis (1921-1934) which was subject of a major upgrading campaign between 1983 and 1995. This last project played a major role in raising awareness among residents and the public of the heritage of Garnier. In 1991, Tony Garnier Urban Museum and the District of the États-Unis was awarded the label of the World Decade for Cultural Development by UNESCO, but thirty years later, the district did not benefit from significant protection unlike the skyscrapers of Villeurbanne. Still in 1991, the École de Tissage in Lyon built by Garnier between 1927 and 1933, benefited from a measure of protection which also was extended to the villa of the director.

How to explain that no works of the architect are classified as Historical Monuments? This question echoes the real uneasiness surrounding Garnier's architecture in Lyon. These are the reasons which motivate today

the launching of a petition in favor of a real consideration of the heritage of the architect. It is now advisable to think in a coherent way, on the scale of the metropolis and in support with the steps taken by the city of Lyon at the time of the inscription of its "historic site" on UNESCO's World Heritage List, to the need to broaden the recognition of the architect's physical and intellectual work which contributes to avoiding the double risk of trivialization and loss of substance. It is also necessary to encourage partners – public or private – in urban development or heritage change operations to really consider the necessary protection of Garnier's works, in particular by launching a general study aimed at strengthening regulatory and legal measures using existing tools (UNESCO classification of Garnier's work, extension of the UNESCO perimeter in Lyon, strengthening of historic monument protections, creation of remarkable heritage sites, etc.).

Philippe Dufieux

Professor at École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Lyon and regional representative Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes of **docomomo** France.

Sign the petition for the protection of buildings constructed by architect Tony Garnier in Lyon at

<http://chnng.it/qPzKNP4GwD>
combo_share_initialcombo_share_initial



03 Édouard-Herriot Hospital, Lyon, 1933, general view of the pavilions, tirage argentique, 18 x 24 cm. © Jules Sylvestre, public library (P0546 S 0587).



04 Tony Garnier, Hôpital de Grange-Blanche, aisle serving the pavilions, the major works of the city of Lyon, studies, projects and works carried out by Tony Garnier, Paris. © Charles Massin, 1919, pl. 11.



05 Tony Garnier, Édouard-Herriot Hospital, Lyon, detail of one of the pavilions. © Photo of the author.