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1877
*John Wanamaker
opens new-style de-
partment store*



427 H

David L. Kurtz Center for the Performing Arts, William Penn Charter School, 2010

3000 School House Lane
Voith & Mactavish Architects

Penn Charter, the oldest Quaker school in the world, was founded in 1689 and since 1925 has been located on a 44-acre campus in the East Falls neighborhood. This new performing arts center stands on axis with and flanks the school's Georgian Revival Main Building, designed by Zantzinger, Borie & Medary. Its highly contextual design echoes the Main Building's Wissahickon schist walls, fenestration patterns, wood window profiles, cornice dentils, slate roofs and rooftop cupolas. A classically-ordered, two-story glass-enclosed portico adds an inviting transparency to the building's front elevation.

The center houses a 650-seat theater, band and choir rooms, recording and practice studios, library, wardrobe rooms, and a set design shop. The LEED Gold design incorporates numerous sustainable elements, including a 10,000-square-foot green roof set inconspicuously behind the building's pitched gable roofs. Operable cupolas also double as natural ventilation and daylighting features for the spaces below.



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The use of brickwork to create rich textures and patterns was copied in many other houses of the period.

251 G

Centennial Bank, 1876

32nd and Market Sts.

Frank Furness

Paul Peck Alumni Center, Drexel University
Renovated 2000, Voith Mactavish Architects

The Centennial Exposition sparked a building boom in West Philadelphia. The site of the Pennsylvania Railroad's main depot, at 32nd and Market streets, was a key intersection. Of the many commercial buildings in that area, only the Centennial Bank remains.

The bank is characteristic of Furness's style. The symmetry of the facade is emphasized by a projecting bay with hip roof that is penetrated by a window stack, which terminates in a crocketed gable. The facade includes all the typical Furness devices: squat columns, pointed windows, oversized ornamentation and decorative patterns of cut and pressed red brick. Although less colorful than some of his other designs, the exterior uses the unusual glass tiles also found at the Pennsylvania Academy. Furness devised the glass tile to give permanent, vivid color to the facade. Light penetrates the painted tile to a backing of gold and silver foil, whose reflective properties intensify the color. The interior of the bank was brilliantly colored and lit by skylights.