Poster Text:

The Equitable Trust Building was designed by Horace Trumbauer in 1922, and commissioned by Louis Cahan, the leader of the Equitable Trust Company. The design is an inspiring Gothic office-castle with fortress towers on the roof. Cahan also requested that the letter “E” was to be placed on every window to mark the company’s name. The ground floor had a large Gothic theater, which was first occupied by The Fox-Locust Theatre in 1927. In 1930, Equitable Trust became part of Chase National Bank, and part of the company moved into the now Wells Fargo Building. With most of the office tower emptied, the theater became the main focus of the building. By 1970, the majority of the office spaces were completely empty and falling apart, and even the theater was in such disrepair that it was controversially demolished in 1982 and turned into a parking garage. After two decades of several attempts at renovation and modernization, the tower is once again nearly 100 percent occupied.

Book Text:

The Equitable Trust Building was designed by Horace Trumbauer in 1922, and commissioned by Louis Cahan, the leader of the Equitable Trust Company. Trambauer and Cahan have worked on other French inspired buildings in Philadelphia but this time Cahan was building a Philadelphia headquarters for his own company. The design is an inspiring Gothic office-castle with fortress towers on the roof. Cahan also requested that the letter “E” was to be placed on every window to mark the company’s name. The ground floor had a large 1,580 seat Gothic theater, which was first occupied by The Fox-Locust Theatre in 1927. In 1930, Equitable Trust became part of Chase National Bank, and part of the company moved into the now Wells Fargo Building. With most of the office tower emptied, the theater became the main focus of the building. By 1970, the majority of the office spaces were completely empty and falling apart, and in 1980 the theater was in such disrepair that it was controversially demolished and turned into a parking garage. After two decades of several attempts at renovation and modernization, the tower is once again nearly 100 percent occupied.

<https://hiddencityphila.org/2012/06/horace-trumpowers-gilded-age-castle/>