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ABOUT THE PERELMAN BUILDING

The Ruth and Raymond G. Perelman Building occupies a trapezoid-shaped 2-acre site bordered by Pennsylvania Avenue, 25th Street, Fairmount Avenue, and 26th Street in Philadelphia. Formerly known as the Reliance Standard Life Insurance Company Building, it was designed by Zantzinger, Borie and Medary and completed in 1926 by the same firm, which, along with the firm of Horace Trumbauer, also designed the Museum's main building that was finished two years later. The acquisition of the Perelman Building for the Museum thus unites two structures that share a common architectural history and now a common future.

Constructed with Indiana limestone and highlighted with color and gilding, the building originally housed the Fidelity Mutual Life Insurance Company, which occupied the structure until 1972. Its north and south pavilions are joined by a soaring arched main entrance facing the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, a celebrated example of inspired urban planning of which the building was designed to be an integral part. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1973 and the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places in 1980.

Decorative scheme by leading 1920s architectural sculptor

The Perelman Building has one of the most richly sculpted façades in Philadelphia. Many of its outstanding decorative features were designed by the leading architectural sculptor of the 1920s, Lee Lawrie, whose work also adorns such notable American buildings as Rockefeller Center in New York City, and the Library of Congress and the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, D.C. The main sculptural

elements include Egyptian-inspired flora and fauna symbolizing attributes of insurance: the owl of wisdom, the dog of fidelity, the pelican of charity, the possum of protection, and the squirrel of frugality. Leon Solon, who had advised the Philadelphia Museum of Art on the color scheme of its celebrated glazed terracotta decoration and pediment, also served as color advisor for the Perelman Building.

Like the main Museum building, the Rodin Museum and Garden, and two historic houses in Fairmount Park-Mount Pleasant and Cedar Grove-the Perelman Building is now owned by the City of Philadelphia, and will be administered by the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Ruth and Raymond G. Perelman

Residents of Center City and collectors of modern art, Mr. and Mrs. Perelman have long been deeply involved in philanthropic causes at the local and national level. A Philadelphia-born industrialist and entrepreneur, Mr. Perelman has been a Trustee of the Philadelphia Museum of Art since 1975. He was named Vice Chairman in 1992 and served as Chairman from 1997 through October 2001, when he was named Chairman of the Executive Committee and Chairman Emeritus of the Board. The Perelmans were founding members of the Museum Associates in 1969. On January 21, 2000, Mr. and Mrs. Perelman, who have been key advocates of the Museum's longstanding need for expansion, announced their unprecedented gift of \$15 million to the Museum. It is the largest unrestricted monetary gift from an individual or couple in the Museum's history.

The Philadelphia Museum of Art celebrated its 125th anniversary in the year 2001. It is among the largest art museums in the United States, showcasing more than 2,000 years of exceptional human creativity in over 200 galleries installed with masterpieces of painting, sculpture, works on paper, decorative arts and architectural settings from Europe, Asia and the Americas. The striking neoclassical building stands on a nine-acre site above the Benjamin Franklin Parkway and offers many enriching activities-including programs for children and families, lectures, concerts and films.

For additional information, contact the Marketing and Public Relations Department of the Philadelphia Museum of Art at (215) 684-7860. The Philadelphia Museum of Art is located on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway at 26th Street. For general information, call (215) 763-8100, or visit the Museum's website at www.philamuseum.org. (01/30/02)