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HEADLINE: Gift to spur **Hogg** makeover

BYLINE: Jeanne Claire van Ryzin AMERICAN-STATESMAN ARTS WRITER

BODY:

The University of Texas' historic **Hogg** Memorial Auditorium is a big step closer to getting a major renovation, thanks to an Austin couple.

David and Ann Honeycutt have donated \$2 million to UT's Performing Arts Center toward the renovation of the 1,200-seat hall, university officials are set to announce today. David Honeycutt is president of Texas American Resources Co., a privately held energy firm.

"I hope this gift will serve as a catalyst and focus attention on the building and what its possibilities are," he said. "It's a great piece of architecture. A building like Hogg could serve as a destination for Austin's lively entertainment scene. It's a natural meeting place."

A 1984 graduate of UT, David Honeycutt for several years has spearheaded the effort to raise money for the renovation of the art deco style Hogg, built in 1933.

"Hogg Auditorium is an architectural treasure in the heart of campus," said William Powers Jr., president of the University of Texas. "Ann and David Honeycutt's commitment to reviving this theatre and providing a new state-of-the-art space for performing artists will enrich students' learning experience and become a new source of pride for Austin.

"With this generous gift, the university will strengthen its place as a national and increasingly international center for the arts," he said.

The university has not set a date for renovating Hogg or a current budget.

A renovation planning study of the building was completed in 1998. In 2003, a \$12 million fundraising campaign - with Honeycutt in charge of the leadership committee - was launched. Only about \$500,000 was raised, center officials said, before the university put that effort on hold to concentrate on the \$83.5 million campaign for the new Blanton Museum of Art.

Now, attention has turned to UT's Performing Arts Center, which oversees touring and academic productions at six campus halls, including Hogg.

Ten years ago, Hogg was partially restored when the theater was brought under the Performing Arts Center umbrella.

Designed by architect Paul Cret, the performance hall is named for former Texas Gov. James S. Hogg and his son, UT benefactor Will C. Hogg. The hall was part of Cret's university master plan that included the Main Building and the Tower.

Through the 1970s, the venue was a premier space for the performing arts in Austin, hosting everything from the Austin Symphony Orchestra to the Martha Graham Dance Company.

Numerous campus groups used the space as well. Among the now-famous UT students who appeared on the Hogg stage are Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt of The Fantasticks fame, actors Rip Torn and Zachary Scott, and song-and-dance man Tommy Tune.

UT is also involved in a \$14.7 million campaign to fund a state-mandated refurbishing of the 26-year-old, 3,000-seat Bass Concert Hall. In addition to fire-code upgrades, the university will expand visitor amenities such as restrooms and lobby space. Bass is set to close May 21 and reopen in fall 2008.

jvanryzin@statesman.com; 445-3699

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