

For release: Saturday evening February 27, 2010  
For interviews, please contact  
Margaret Talcott, [mtalcott@themusichall.org](mailto:mtalcott@themusichall.org)  
Kathleen Soldati, [ksoldati@themusichall.org](mailto:ksoldati@themusichall.org)

For images, please see:  
<http://gallery.me.com/musichallnh/100355>

For more information about the campaign, please visit:  
<http://campaign.themusichall.org/campaign/>

Music Hall announces  
**Treasure the Future Capital Campaign**  
**\$13.5 million goal, \$9 million raised to date**

Honorary Co-Chairs Ken Burns and Mrs. Judd Gregg  
herald Music Hall plans at reception Saturday

200+ celebrate Saturday night in a raw space  
that will become The Music Hall's  
Center for Performing Arts and Education

Symposium of Experts in Arts and Economic Development gathered Friday to  
discuss impact

## **A Major Cultural Advancement for the Region**

*Portsmouth, New Hampshire – February 27...* In a downtown storefront space twinkling with lights, filled with big band music, and alive with projected video and facts about The Music Hall and its 100,000 patrons; filmmaker Ken Burns, Senator and Mrs. Judd Gregg, and 200-plus donors and supporters celebrated the announcement of The Music Hall's Treasure the Future Capital Campaign, a once-in-a-generation fundraising effort that will bring a major cultural advancement to the region.

At the private event held Saturday evening, February 27, The Music Hall's Executive Director Patricia Lynch said, "The goal of restoring, rehabilitating and transforming The Music Hall into a performing arts center for the 21<sup>st</sup> century is now in sight." \$9 million has already been raised toward the full needs of \$13.5 million. Nearly eighty percent of the contributions have come from visionary individual donors, new and old friends of the historic theater, board and professional staff members.

Campaign Co-Chair Jameson French welcomed celebrants from a makeshift stage in the raw space, “The Music Hall’s Treasure the Future Campaign will secure the legacy of the historic theater while advancing its community and education programs, further stimulate the economy and creative culture of this remarkable region in New England. The Music Hall’s impact will be significantly greater as an arts and education center for the broadest community because of this campaign.”

The major components of the Treasure the Future campaign:

- essential updating and modernization of backstage systems securing The Music Hall’s performance capability & safety;
- extension of the theater’s historic finishes into the upper lobby and modernization of the concession stand; upgrading of the building’s façade and windows and recreation of the original chandelier and olio curtain;
- the fit-up of the new Music Hall Center for Performing Arts & Education (the Loft) with and multi-use performance space/studio classroom;
- and the establishment of The Music Hall’s first-ever endowment.

“Early community support has been breathtaking thanks to visionary philanthropists. The Music Hall has been a key driver in the cultural and economic re-emergence of the Seacoast and our programs have been lauded for their innovation and reach, bringing the community unprecedented access to today’s leading authors and artists. The Music Hall brings the world to Portsmouth,” said Campaign Co-Chair Gail VanHoy Carolan.

Patricia Lynch brought context to the night and campaign’s importance to the community. “You are standing in the future Center for Performing Arts and Education, The Music Hall Loft. Here our work will be more transparent, our programs connecting children to the masters deepened and expanded, and our community partners and collaborations taken to new heights – this is a rising tide that lifts all boats.”

“The time is now for The Music Hall, for this community and the region. Without modernization of The Music Hall’s backstage, where we’re still working with 19<sup>th</sup> century equipment, and a thoughtful fit-up of this new space we cannot meet our audiences and community’s growing demands, nor keep pace with other, more modern theaters. The historic finishes in the theater are not yet complete, our façade is still dimmed with age. With our vision, passion and dedication, The Music Hall can and will become a jewel in the crown of New England’s culture and history and a sturdy economic engine supporting the community and the region for generations to come,” added Lynch.

Ken Burns, acclaimed filmmaker and Honorary Co-Chair of the campaign heralded The Music Hall’s plans, particularly the addition of the Center of Performing Arts and Education for its community impact. “I am here because I believe in The Music Hall and support its plans for advancement. In our too-often disconnected world, the arts bring us back to our essential selves. The Music Hall is a beacon here in upper New England. Through its generous and diverse set of experiences, The Music Hall connects audiences and communities with creativity, purpose, art and life”

Honorary Co-Chair Mrs. Judd Gregg added, “I am pleased to be part of advancing such a vital organization. Judd and I have many fond memories of The Music Hall, and are dedicated to seeing it flourish. We have long been committed to the arts, historic preservation, and education which are the hallmarks of The Music Hall, and we are proud to be associated with this worthy cause.”

### **Experts’ Symposium: “Performing Arts Centers as Economic Engines: Next Steps for The Music Hall”**

A Breakfast Symposium titled “Performing Arts Centers as Economic Engines: Next Steps for The Music Hall” was held on Friday, February 26 in The Music Hall’s raw space at 131 Congress Street, the future Center for Performing Arts and Education. The event was attended by experts in arts, economic and sustainable development as well as civic leaders who discussed at length about the impact of arts developments on a community.

Washington D.C. arts advocate Sandra Gibson, Pres/CEO, Association of Performing Arts Presenters, a special guest, spoke to her belief that performing arts organizations are a civic force engaged in the important work of building community. Remarks by Chris Dwyer Senior VP, RMC Research and Portsmouth City Councilor centered on the growing recognition of the inherent connection among the fields of planning, economy, arts and culture.

Patricia Lynch brought their national perspectives into sharper focus by talking about how The Music Hall vision and developments – specifically the proposed The Music Hall Loft, a Center for Performing Arts and Education - fit into the Northern Tier and the City’s plans for sustainable growth. “Portsmouth is at a cusp moment. The Music Hall Loft along with the Discovery Center and the African Burying Ground tie closely into new developments and will fuel lower Congress Street while feeding Market Square’s strong development. Our vision for The Music Hall is one of a rising tide lifting all boats,” she said.

“A development such as The Music Hall Loft is a strategic investment in and for everyone in the community,” concluded Gibson.

### **Treasure the Future - the last step in The Music Hall’s journey to full restoration**

Upon the completion of the comprehensive Treasure the Future projects, The Music Hall will be transformed into a Performing Arts Center for the 21st century, able to serve the community and the region into the next century. The funds will at once secure the legacy of this historic building and its community programs, further stimulate the economy and creative culture of this fast-growing region of New England, and strengthen and advance The Music Hall’s impact as an arts and education center for the broadest community.

In closing remarks, Music Hall Board President Mike Harvell said, “Tonight we again see the promise of the future and the strength we take from our accomplishments. This

campaign will benefit and improve the entire community, driving the local economy, raising the profile of arts and culture on the Seacoast, and making this an even better place to live. People will look back at this as one of the things that really put Portsmouth on the map in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.”

For further information on the campaign, visit our website:

Fact Sheet: Treasure the Future Campaign – <http://bit.ly/FSCamp>

Fact Sheet: Treasure the Future Projects – <http://bit.ly/FSProj>

Fact Sheet: The Loft, The Center for Performing Arts and Education – <http://bit.ly/FSLoft>

Treasure the Future Campaign Brochure: <http://bit.ly/TTFBroch>

### **About The Music Hall: An American Treasure for the Arts**

The Music Hall is a nonprofit performing arts center that entertains 100,000 patrons, including 20,000 school children, annually with acclaimed film, music, theater, and dance performances. Its historic 900-seat theater, built in 1878, is the oldest in New Hampshire and designated an “American Treasure” by the U.S. Senate in the Save America’s Treasures Program administered by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the National Park Service. Living out its mission to be an active and vital arts center for the enrichment of the Seacoast community, The Music Hall presents diverse and relevant programming, including its signature series and innovative community outreach programs, and hosts numerous community fundraisers and celebrations for the benefit of more than 40 local nonprofits. A cultural anchor in a thriving Seacoast economy, The Music Hall and its patrons contribute \$5.5 million annually to the local economy through show and visitor related spending. The Music Hall is a 501c3 tax exempt, fiscally responsible nonprofit organization, managed by a professional staff with the assistance of a dedicated volunteer Board of Trustees. The historic hall is located in Portsmouth, the seaport city recently named a “Distinctive Destination” for 2008 by National Trust for Historic Preservation and one of the “20 Best Towns in America” by *Outside* magazine (July 2008). For more information about The Music Hall and its schedule of events, visit [www.themusichall.org](http://www.themusichall.org).