

AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER

Carey Perloff, Artistic Director      Heather Kitchen, Executive Director

PRESENTS

# WORDS <sup>on</sup> PLAYS

INSIGHT INTO THE PLAY, THE PLAYWRIGHT, AND THE PRODUCTION

## *Edward Albee's At Home at the Zoo*

(Formerly titled *Peter and Jerry*)

DIRECTED BY REBECCA BAYLA TAICHMAN

AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER

JUNE 5–JULY 5, 2009

*WORDS ON PLAYS* PREPARED BY

**ELIZABETH BRODERSEN**

PUBLICATIONS EDITOR

**MICHAEL PALLER**

RESIDENT DRAMATURG

**DAN RUBIN**

PUBLICATIONS & LITERARY ASSOCIATE

**LESLEY GIBSON**

PUBLICATIONS INTERN

**MEGAN COHEN**

DRAMATURGY INTERN

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## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

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1. What is the underlying difficulty in Ann and Peter's marriage?
2. In Act 1, what does each character learn about the other over the course of the conversation? How do these discoveries irrevocably change their relationship?
3. The second act of *Edward Albee's At Home at the Zoo* was originally a stand-alone one-act play titled *The Zoo Story*, written in 1959. How does the addition of the first act (*Homelife*) change your understanding of how Peter behaves towards Jerry in Central Park? *Homelife* was written in 2004, and *At Home at the Zoo* is set in the present day. How does *The Zoo Story* work differently in a contemporary setting?
4. Why do you think Jerry went to the zoo? What is his need to tell Peter about it?
5. Why does Peter stay when Jerry begins abusing him?
6. What is Jerry trying to tell Peter with "The Story of Jerry and the Dog"?

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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