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**Theatre on Fire and the Charlestown Working Theater to Present THE AMERICAN DREAM
and ONE FOR THE ROAD, Two Short Plays by Two Theatre Titans**

Written by Edward Albee and Harold Pinter (respectively), Directed by Darren Evans

THE AMERICAN DREAM

By Edward Albee

ONE FOR THE ROAD

by Harold Pinter

Directed by Darren Evans

Presented by Theatre on Fire; Darren Evans, Artistic Director, and the Charlestown Working Theater

Performing at: Charlestown Working Theater

442 Bunker Hill Street

November 7-8, 13-15, and 20-22, 2008

Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 8pm

Ticket Prices: Thursdays \$15

Fridays and Saturdays \$20

\$10 students and seniors

Box Office: www.charlestownworkingtheater.org

866-811-4111 (toll free)

Boston, MA– Theatre on Fire opens its fourth season at the Charlestown Working Theater with a pairing of two one-act plays by living legends Edward Albee and Harold Pinter, from November 7 - 22, 2008. **THE AMERICAN DREAM** by Albee lampoons the vapidness and acquisitiveness of American society, while **ONE FOR THE ROAD** by Pinter, set in an unnamed prison, lays bare the stark reality of torture and abuse.

Edward Albee was born Edward Harvey on March 12, 1928. At the age of two weeks, he was adopted by Mr. and Mrs. Reed Albee and renamed Edward Franklin Albee III. At age 20, he broke with his adoptive family and moved to Greenwich Village. He never saw his father again, and would not see his mother for 17 years. In 1959, at age 30, he completed his first major work, *The Zoo Story*. The play received its world premiere in Berlin, Germany and opened Off-Broadway the following year. He has since written over 30 plays, including *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *A Delicate Balance*, *Seascape*, *Three Tall Women*, and *The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?* Earlier this year, Albee directed an off-Broadway revival of **THE AMERICAN DREAM**.

A member of the Dramatists Guild Council, Albee has received three Pulitzer Prizes for drama; two Tony Awards for Best Play, plus a Special Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement; the Gold Medal in Drama from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters; as well as the Kennedy Center Honors and the National Medal of Arts.

Harold Pinter, born on October 10, 1930, in East London, is a playwright, director, actor, poet and political activist. He has written twenty-nine plays including *The Birthday Party*, *The Caretaker*, *The*

Homecoming, and *Betrayal*, twenty-one screenplays including *The Servant*, *The Go-Between* and *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, and directed twenty-seven theatre productions, including James Joyce's *Exiles*, David Mamet's *Oleanna*, seven plays by Simon Gray and many of his own plays including *Celebration* paired with *The Room* at The Almeida Theatre, London in the spring of 2000. In 2001, he played the role of Nicolas in *ONE FOR THE ROAD*, in a production by the Gate Theater, Dublin, that went on to perform at the Lincoln Center's Pinter festival that same year.

He has been awarded the Shakespeare Prize (Hamburg), the European Prize for Literature (Vienna), the Pirandello Prize (Palermo), the David Cohen British Literature Prize, the Laurence Olivier Award, and the Legion d'Honneur and the Moliere D'Honneur for lifetime achievement. In 1999, he was made a Companion of Literature by the Royal Society of Literature. He has received honorary degrees from seventeen universities. In 2002, Pinter was made a Companion of Honour by the Queen for services to Literature. In 2005, Harold Pinter was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, the highest honor available to any writer in the world. In announcing the award, Horace Engdahl, Chairman of the Swedish Academy, said that Pinter was an artist "who in his plays uncovers the precipice under everyday prattle and forces entry into oppression's closed rooms."

THE AMERICAN DREAM received its world premiere at the York Playhouse, New York City, on January 24, 1961. An absurdist satire about an American family, Albee describes **THE AMERICAN DREAM** as "an examination of the American Scene, an attack on the substitution of artificial for real values in our society, a condemnation of complacency, cruelty, emasculation, and vacuity; it is a stand against the fiction that everything in this slipping land of ours is peachy-keen."

ONE FOR THE ROAD premiered at the Lyric Theatre Studio, Hammersmith, on March 13, 1984. A searing look at power and powerlessness, the play presents the interrogations of a tortured prisoner and his family. The interrogator, secure in the righteousness of his cause, systematically destroys their humanity, leading to a shocking conclusion. **ONE FOR THE ROAD** is at once simple, elegant and brutal. Pinter said of the play: "This is not a metaphor about anything – it's just a brutal series of facts."

"Yes, I'm making what may be a really obvious political point with the pairing of these two plays," says Artistic Director Darren Evans, "but sometimes you need to point out the elephant in the room. It absolutely blows my mind that we've been having sober argument and debate, at the highest levels, about utilizing torture in this country, and about what precisely constitutes torture versus what is an 'enhanced interrogation technique.' Meanwhile the big news of the day is Britney shaving her head again or athletes taking steroids. Sometimes I feel like I'm living in some kind of Bizarro-America."

Evans adds: "Pinter relates an astonishing story of when he visited Turkey in 1985 with Arthur Miller to investigate allegations of the torture and persecution of Turkish writers on behalf of International P.E.N. The Turkish ambassador reproached him, saying, 'Mr. Pinter, you don't seem to understand the realities of the situation here...You have to bear in mind the political reality, the diplomatic reality, the military reality.' 'The reality I've been referring to,' I said, 'is that of electric current on your genitals.'"

"As pretentious as it sounds," Evans concludes, "I think it's time we got jolted out of our complacency, and that's my goal with these plays."

Theatre on Fire is small theatre company dedicated to producing hot, high-quality shows that take you out of your comfort zone. We don't do cute and we don't do boring. Now beginning its fourth season, Theatre on Fire is proud to be a Resident Company at the Charlestown Working Theater (CWT). Darren

Evans explains: “CWT has given us a wonderful opportunity to grow and thrive in these early stages of our existence. It’s a great organization, a funky facility, and a truly welcoming environment.”

The Charlestown Working Theater was founded on the idea that a theater and a community can engage in a dialogue which results in creative, artistic expression, an exciting exchange of ideas, and a deeper understanding of the people who make up the community. CWT has maintained this philosophy throughout its history and has remained dedicated to serving the cultural needs of Charlestown and greater Boston. CWT’s **Resident Artists Program** was established in 1997 to create the opportunity and environment for area theatre artists to develop, rehearse, and perform creative theatre productions, teach workshops, and engage with our community. Today, the Resident Artists Program is a curated series featuring the work of local, national, and international theatre companies and artists.

Today, the Resident Artists Program is a curated performance series featuring the dynamic work of local, national, and international theatre companies and artists. In addition to Theatre on Fire, CWT’s 2008-09 Resident Artists include storyteller Diane Edgecomb, Argentina’s Roberto and Miriam Uriona, and Beau Jest Moving Theatre. CWT will also premier it’s current original performance “Under the Sailing Moon”, created and performed by CWT’s Jennifer Johnson and John Peitso.

For more information on **THE AMERICAN DREAM** and **ONE FOR THE ROAD** or Theatre on Fire, please visit www.theatreonfire.org.

Tickets are available online at www.charlestownworkingtheater.org, or by phone at 866-811-4111 (toll free).

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