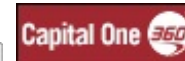


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# Arts Beat



## The Culture at Large

December 30, 2013, 2:24 pm | 11 Comments

### The Starting Lineup: As Othello, a 6-Foot-3 Running Back, No. 27, Eddie George

By ALLAN KOZINN

When Eddie George retired from football in 2005, after nine years as an N.F.L. running back, he was 32 years old and had racked up some enviable statistics: 130 consecutive regular-season game starts, 10,441 rushing yards and 68 touchdowns, along with the Heisman Trophy he won at Ohio State University in 1995. Since then, he has started a [string of businesses](#), including fitness programs and a landscape architecture company, opened a sports-themed [restaurant](#) and been a motivational speaker.

But Mr. George may also hold a record for which there does not appear to be much competition beyond Paul Robeson: former



Elsa/Getty Images

Eddie George on the field for the Tennessee Titans in 2003.

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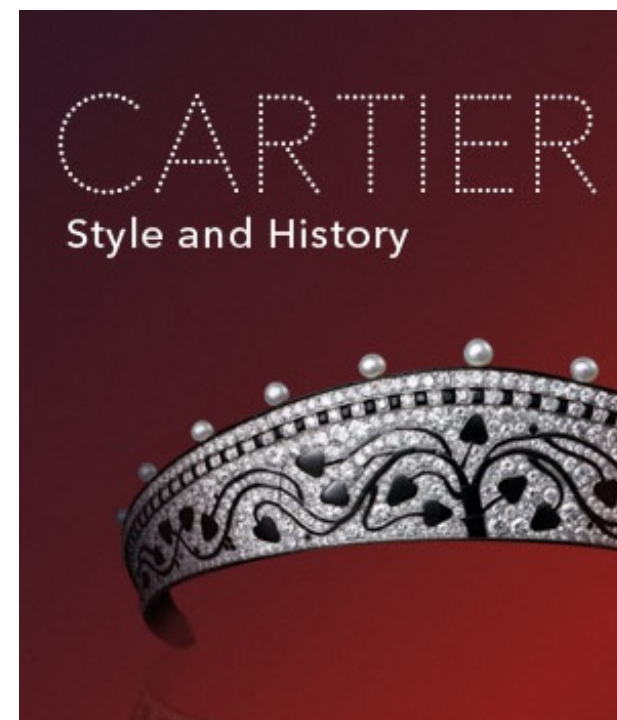
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N.F.L. players who have performed Shakespeare professionally. (That doesn't count the halfback for the Notre Dame Fighting Irish, in the 1930s, [whose name happened to be](#) William Shakespeare.) Having already made his debut as a Shakespearean actor [playing the title role](#) in the Nashville Shakespeare Festival's production of "Julius Caesar" in 2012, Mr. George is returning to the festival for a second, heftier Shakespeare role: the title role in "[Othello.](#)" The [production](#) runs from Jan. 9 to Feb. 2. (Mr. George will take a break from Jan. 17 to 24, when Byron Brooks will take his place).

In an [interview with The Tennessean](#), Mr. George said he found a way to relate the role to his own life, noting that Othello was a military commander without a war to fight, just as he was a football player who was no longer on a team.

"It's very much about that transition," he told the paper, "about the psychological standpoint of how it affects you. How that energy matures and evolves, and takes on a life of its own."

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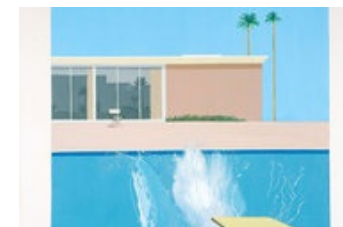


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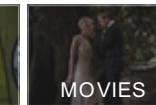
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BY BRUCE WEBER

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