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Theater

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Joe Turner's return

by [Eric Grode](#)

On *The Death of a Salesman* & *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*.

Win a Pulitzer Prize, it is often said, and the first line of your obituary is written. Win more than one, especially in the drama category, and the focus becomes less on how the world will talk about you and more on how you'll talk about the world.

Only seven playwrights have received multiple Pulitzers, and, with the exception of the tight-lipped Edward Albee, each has rebranded himself as a playwright/pontificator. Exactly one statement from one of them has achieved any level of cultural notoriety—"Satire is what closes on Saturday night," courtesy of George S. Kaufman—but that didn't stop the likes of Eugene O'Neill and Thornton Wilder from routinely stepping out of the rehearsal room and onto the bully pulpit. One of them, Robert E. Sherwood, even managed to parlay his newfound career into a speechwriting gig for Franklin Roosevelt. (Sherwood did coin the ph ...

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