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THE THEATRE NOW PLAYING

Separate and Equal

In this high-octane work of physical theatre, the playwright and director Seth Panitch imagines an illegal basketball matchup between white and black teens in nineteen-fifties Alabama. Jim Crow legislation extends to the game, and the social dynamics on display oscillate between friendly teasing and violent confrontation. The boys don't seek amity and connection so much as fall into it, only to be pulled back by the weight of law and tradition. Some of the language is perhaps too on the nose, as when one of the white players sloganizes about "how great we've been, and how great we can be again."

Other contemporary borrowings, though, are put to dazzlingly good use. In staging the performers' dancier movements, the choreographer Lawrence Jackson draws on some of the grandest maneuvers in N.B.A. history, like Michael Jordan's iconic dunk from the free-throw line.

— *David Kortava*

Through Sept. 30.



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