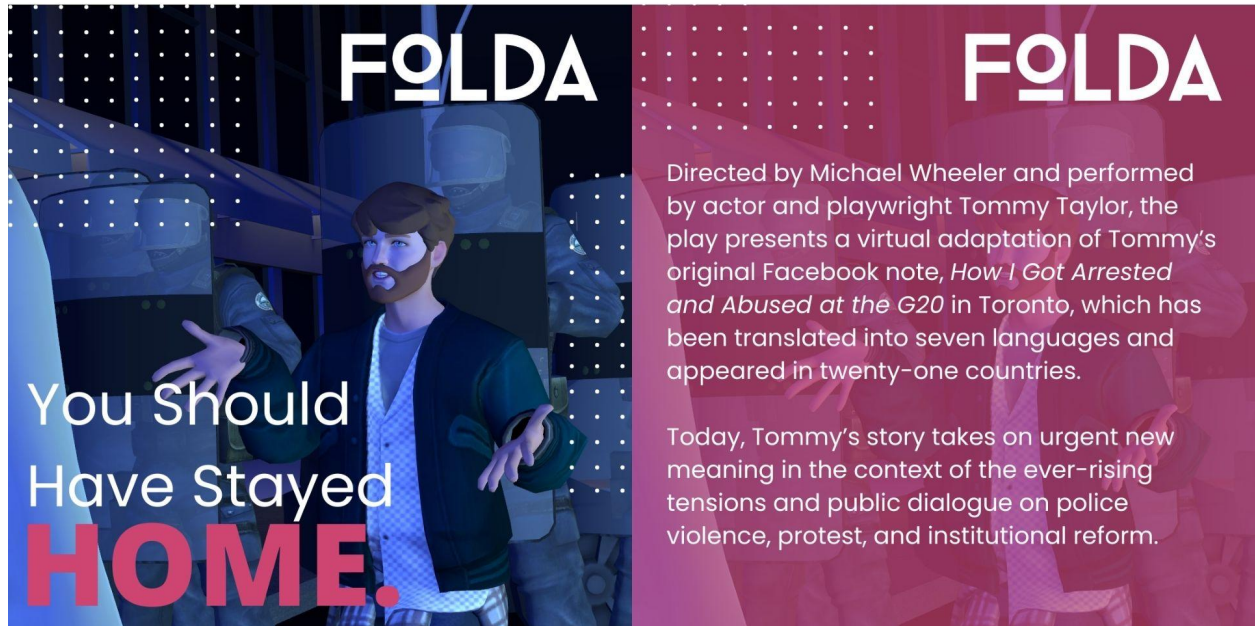


Tommy Taylor takes us back to the Toronto G20 protests - in virtual reality



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In a period where political activism seems more polarized than ever before, Tommy Taylor revisits a pivotal moment in Canadian politics - and Canadian theatre - in virtual reality.

In 2010, Toronto actor Tommy Taylor went to observe the G20 protests and unwittingly became part of the largest mass arrest in Canadian history. His provocative award-winning play delved into his deeply personal - and, at times, absurdly humorous - account of those unforgettable 48 hours. Tommy has adapted this theatre performance for a virtual reality presentation to be premiered at this year's Festival of Digital Art. It is a compellingly immersive experience for every Canadian who believes in freedom of speech and peaceful protest.

“Virtual reality lends itself perfectly as a format for this presentation. As I went from simple observer to deeply immersed - and literally captivated - at the G20 protests, moving this performance piece to virtual reality breaks the bounds of the fourth wall in a uniquely compelling way.” - Tommy Taylor

In keeping with FOLDA's commitment to access and equity, the development of the tools to add theatrical lighting and sound to VR Chat for this performance will be open

source and available for VR artists. This is unusual in the programming world where developers and producers can be highly proprietary over their work.

You Should Have Stayed Home will have four showtimes throughout the festival in VR as well as an in-person livestream at the Film & Media Lab in the Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts. The piece will be ASL Interpreted with captions available.

Like all FOLDA performances, tickets are pay-what-you-choose \$15/ \$25 / \$50 and are on sale now.

For media inquiries, please contact:

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Performance description:

BETA— An auto-biographical re-telling of the frightening events that took place on the streets of Toronto during the 2010 G20 summit protests, which saw the largest mass arrest in Canadian history and resulted in a \$14.6M class action lawsuit.

We join Tommy Taylor as he recounts his journey attending his first ever protest in the “Free Speech Zone” at Queen’s Park before being swept up in a mass arrest and detained at the Eastern Avenue Detention Centre.

Originally a stage play that toured Canada in 2013, You Should Have Stayed Home now occurs in virtual reality and is presented in three modes:

In-person audiences at The Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts can watch Tommy Taylor perform in-person, while the action unfolds in VR on screen; 10 audience members can join the performance in VR using an internet-connected VR headset (Quest, Vive, etc.); and On Friday June 10, a livestream will combine in-person and VR footage to be experienced remotely on-screen.

Directed by Michael Wheeler and performed by actor and playwright Tommy Taylor, the play presents a virtual adaptation of Tommy’s original Facebook note, How I Got Arrested and Abused at the G20 in Toronto, which has been translated into seven languages and appeared in twenty-one countries. Today, Tommy’s story takes on urgent new meaning in the context of the ever-rising tensions and public dialogue on police violence, protest, and institutional reform.

Credits:

Tommy Taylor – Playwright and Performer	David Mesiha – Virtual Sound Designer
Michael Wheeler – Director	Seyed Tabatabaei – Lead VR Developer
Laura Levin – Dramaturg	Anthony Aloisio – UDON Developer
Jayna Mees – Assistant Dramaturg and Research Assistant	Rea Goldson – Avatar Designer
Justine Katarenchuk – Stage and Production Manager	Anna Villeneuve, Associate Producer
Beth Kates – VR Theatre Consultant / Virtual Lighting Designer	Flora Diep – Student Developer
	Michaelah Wales – Student Developer
	Zarrin Tasnim – Student Developer

Content Warnings | You Should Have Stayed Home contains:

-Images of police brutality and physical violence	-References to ableist remarks
-Descriptions of physical and emotional abuse	-References to racial profiling
-Homophobic remarks	-Temporary use of colourful flashing lights
-Sexist remarks	-Temporary exposure to confined spaces
	-Possibility of experiencing VR motion sickness

Acknowledgements:

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PRAISE FOR YOU SHOULD HAVE STAYED HOME

“I left the theatre furious. That’s a good thing... there’s something essentially optimistic about You Should Have Stayed Home... there’s hope in sharing anger that’s directed at the powerful who are dismantling our democracy.” – Colin Thomas, [The Georgia Straight](#)

“You Should Have Stayed Home is riveting and alarming...a moving account of one man’s resilience” – Roberta McDonald, [The Tyee](#)

“The show moves between humour, charm, anger, despair... a must see show for every Canadian. Go see it while you have the chance.” – Adam Brownfield, [Vancouver Vantage](#)