

## **PR Statement from Ben Crystal, Curator, The Shakespeare Ensemble**

The NY Times recently ran the headline, 'Digital Theatre isn't Theatre, it's a way to mourn its absence'.

The *What You Will* project came out of weeks of meetings and discussions on how an ensemble might collaborate at distance, irrespective of lockdown.

It is built on all we've witnessed from the creative output of our sisters and brothers in the industry.

This is a *Yes, and...* to what has come before, and offers a step towards a virtual theatrical promenade.

Moving beyond the regular Zoom world, it interrogates what a Theatre experience can be, right now. What is theatre when audience and performers can't breathe the same air, or listen to a shared space? What might a theatrical experience in the digital world look and feel like? How can performers connect with each other in a medium that struggles to transmit atmosphere and empathy? What more can the Digital Arts be? And how does Shakespeare sit in this viral, distant world?

Through the fatigue and the struggle of these months, we've also been asking, how does an international ensemble work and play together without financial or climate strain? Should we try to create while the world is raging? Can we not?

As we spend days neglecting our bodies, slumped at screens, *What You Will* offers a different type of interactive theatrical experience for our audiences, and an open invitation to choose your adventure.

*What You Will* is a response to 2020, an innovative offer of congregation and interaction, an hour's thoughtful entertainment for these difficult times, as we all find ourselves together, alone -- so much shared, from so far away.

The three showings are *Free For All, or Donate What You Decide*, and all proceeds will go to support the freelance creatives who made it happen. Come one, come all.