



Repro Freedom Arts Names Playwrights for New Project Exploring Reproductive Freedom and Environmental Justice

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By: [Chloe Rabinowitz](#) Feb. 01, 2024



Six playwrights have been named to participate in ReproEco, a new project launched by Repro Freedom Arts to open theatrical explorations on two key topics: reproductive freedom and environmental justice.

The commissioned writers will develop short plays that probe the connections between these two contemporary concerns. The project is sponsored by ReproFreedomArts.org, a nonprofit theater company in New York City that has produced and toured works that support reproductive health, rights and justice for 24 years.

The six playwrights in the cohort are [Cassandra Medley](#) (NY), Laura Annawyn Shamas (CA), Mildred Inez Lewis (CA), Diane Breeser (WI), Alinca Hamilton (NY) and Cindy Cooper, who is also coordinating the project.

While reproductive freedom and environmental justice are both at the top of the news, the connections between the two are largely underexplored. ReproEco will use theatrical storytelling to address these interconnected subjects.

The plays will address how environmental issues affect the ability of people to live healthy lives, and raise children in a safe and healthy environment. Topics may include the effects of unsafe drinking water on healthy pregnancies; 'forever' chemicals that can travel in human bodies; toxins and industrial waste that enter the air supply and cause cancer or affect child development; endocrine-disrupting microplastics in consumer products such as toys, cosmetics, furniture and food; environmental racism that causes disproportionate effects on communities of color, and experiences of scientists and leaders who are advocating for change.

The project begins with artistic investigations with leaders in the field. Margie Kelly, a communications expert with experience on environmental topics and reproductive rights, is a consultant to ReproEco. Others joining the discussions are from the Blue Green Alliance, the Abortion Conversation Projects, and the Shirley Chisholm Legacy Project.

Environmental justice, as described by Green Action and other groups, holds that all people have the right to environmental protections and benefits, free from harm, pollution and threats to their bodily integrity and to the ecosystem at large, and to live in an environment in which children and adults can live healthy and satisfying lives. Reproductive justice, as identified and developed by leaders of the SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective, is the right to bear children or not, to be able to parent children and live in a safe and healthy environment, and to experience bodily autonomy.

ReproFreedomArts.org is a platform of the award-winning Words of Choice, Inc., which has toured performances on reproductive rights to 20 states, published a book *Short Plays on Reproductive Freedom*, and conducts Reproductive Freedom Walking Tours in New York City. ReproFreedomArts.org most recently released a multimedia production, *WE DISSENT: Voices of Reproductive Rights*, directed by Janet Bentley and presenting the gripping words of the three dissenting U.S. Supreme Court justices who objected to overturning *Roe v. Wade* and to the removal of nationwide protection for abortion care. *WE DISSENT* has been an Official Selection

of the International Film Festival Docs Without Borders and the New York Arthouse Film Festival.

For further information about ReproEco see www.reprofreedomarts.org or contact ReproFreedomArts@gmail.com