



Playwrights With HIV Debut Works

Seven short plays were performed.

February 12, 2024 By [Trent Straube](#)

After a 10-week virtual workshop, participants in the fourth annual Write It Out! playwriting program for people living with HIV debuted new works at a December 2, 2023, event at the LGBT Community Center in New York City in honor of World AIDS Day, marked annually each December 1.

Write It Out! (WIO!), in partnership with the National Queer Theater, announced Matty Mahoski as the 2023 recipient of the WIO! Prize for playwrights living with HIV. WIO! founder Donja R. Love selected Mahoski's work UN(IN)SURE from four finalists.

For the event at the LGBT Community Center, actors directed by Dane Figueroa Edidi performed seven short plays created by the WIO! virtual workshop participants, giving the writers a chance to hear their words onstage and in front of an audience.

"The first in-person sharing for Write It Out! exceeded my wildest imagination," Love told POZ. "The level of love and joy that manifested was so palpable. It bounced off each body in the space, creating something so magical."

People in the HIV community have faced shame and stigma, he said, "but this was a night in which there were no traces. Instead, what we cultivated was joy and pride. The wonderful writers of the 2023 WIO! cohort used their words to offer love and healing. It was one of the most transformative nights of my life."

The lineup for Write It Out!'s 2023 final sharing included: First Nigga to Cry written by Aaliy Abdullah Muhammad; 8,900 written by Kodee Stephens; Speak Yo Truth (SYT) written by a playwright who prefers to remain anonymous; Tiger, Max & the Angel of Death written by David Anzuelo; Present Tense written by Mark S. King; Awake written by Ted Sod; and You Lived It written by ZM.

As the recipient of this year's Write It Out! Prize, Mahoski will receive \$5,000 and a year of support to develop a new work.
