



## You're Invited!

We at the Southern Maine Workers Center are writing to invite you, members of your organization, friends, and family to participate in our virtual Cantastoria Workshop on Sunday May 16th from 2-3:30pm! This workshop will be a 90-minute group discussion centered on healthcare, using 5 compelling panels of art as our entry into these discussions. In addition to providing some political education about the co-occurring economic and healthcare crises in the US, we hope that this workshop will inspire participants to act in the fight for worker, health, and human rights. As we enter the 1-year-anniversary season of COVID-19, we believe this is a potent moment to come together and share reflections on the pandemic that has laid bare the deep structural inequities and failures of our healthcare system. We welcome participants to share personal stories and reactions to the art as a way to build community through our shared experiences.

## What Is a Cantastoria?

Originally both a story and a song, in ancient times the cantastoria format helped traveling storytellers sing out while dramatically unfolding their cloaks or wraps to reveal pictures, maps, or diagrams to illustrate the information in their song's lyrics. The cantastoria was a simple, convenient way for the traveler to get the job of spreading news done and, at the same moment, be an exciting and memorable bit of entertainment for the audiences that gathered around. Though the word "cantastoria" is Italian, this art form was familiar in many cultures around the world.

## Our Cantastoria

Our cantastoria is a multi-paneled piece of art created in a collaboration between the SMWC and Maine artists, led by artist and activist Emily Simons. The panels contain painted scenes or imagery that depict history and facts about our current medical system. The panels inspire a hopeful vision for change in a time when many in Maine are suffering from lacking adequate healthcare and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.