

# Reproductive Rights: Art About Choosing to Be Childless

POSTED BY CAROLYNCASTIGLIA ON JANUARY 27TH, 2012 AT 4:26 PM



The International Museum of Women has a beautiful and interesting online exhibit on display currently called **MAMA: Motherhood Around the Globe**. It explores the idea of reproductive freedom, of women being able to view motherhood as a choice, not simply a rite of passage or, in some areas of the world, an expectation. In their statement of intent, the program coordinators write, "According to the United Nations, all women should have the right to make informed choices about childbearing and have access to reproductive health services, free from violence and coercion. Yet in too many places, that right to control one's body and destiny is not recognized."

It's hard to believe people still feel vitriolic toward women without children

In an essay, Kavita N. Ramdas posits that "our world depends on **women's ability to freely choose motherhood**." She says, "the ability to determine whether and when to become pregnant is far more than 'just' a question of assuring women's basic human rights – it is also a proven health and development strategy. When a woman can control the number and spacing of her children, she, her family and her community are healthier as a result." And a New York artist, Miriam Schaer, has created a series of almost disturbing pieces about the perceived value of a woman who chooses not to reproduce. When I looked at Schaer's work, it cut me to the core, so I thought I'd share (no pun intended) it with you now. I think you'll find Schaer's toddler dresses embroidered with expressions of both confusion and disdain, hurled at women who choose not to have children, both unsettling and thought-provoking.

Take a look:



**CHILDLESS WOMEN...**

"CHILDLESS WOMEN LACK AN ESSENTIAL HUMANITY."

*PHOTO VIA IMOW. CLICK TO READ MORE ABOUT MIRIAM AND TO VIEW HER ARTIST'S STATEMENT.*

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