

Christine Palamidessi, Artist

Short Bio

Christine Palamidessi is an artist, sculptor, teacher and published novelist. She works in her Somerville studio and in Salento, Italy. Her art explores the interweaving of memory formation and perception of time. In 2017 she was Visiting Artist at the American Academy in Rome and at Mass MoCA. Her work is held in collections in the Dominican Republic, Italy and the United States. She is recipient of a Barbara Demming Award for Women Writers and an Urban Arts Award. Her public art memoir “Grandmothers” is engraved on a granite monolith at Boston’s Orange Line Jackson Square station. Her installations and sculptures have been seen in galleries in Boston--particularly Atlantic Works Gallery, Galatea Fine Arts, and the State House--as well as in Chicago’s Woman Made Gallery, the Palazzo Bacile di Castiglione, in Spongano, Italy, and the Alfred Gallery in Tel Aviv.

Process

My art often evolves from plaster (or cartapesta) impressions that I cast on people, myself and objects. For instance, in 2015, I cast the huge, historical stone cannonballs that the Ottomans fired from their ships during the siege of Otranto, Italy, in 1483. The casts became containers/templates for an artistic series about violence, about silencing of women, and about the men in my family who were called to war. In 2016, I cast the torso of 108 Yoga teachers as an exploration of breath and how breath reveals itself in a body. For 21 days in 2018, I used my own body and wrapped it in a Saudi abaya. Each day I went about my daily life wearing a black head-to-toe garment: I went to Market Basket, to dental appointments, to Home Depot to buy a drill and I pumped gas into my car. During the coronavirus pandemic I cast my daughter’s face and made two dozen cartapesta masks to chronicle the experience of the pandemic (ongoing).