

Bio

Christine Palamidessi, Artist

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Christine Palamidessi grew up in Western Pennsylvania into a family of artisans (carpenters, welders, taxidermists, ceramicists, and flower arrangers), restauranters, and people who sang, danced and shared a typical spare Tuscan aesthetic sense. When she was 7, Palamidessi was awarded a scholarship to the art program at Carnegie Mellon University/Carnegie Museum, where she spent more than a decade of Saturday mornings drawing dinosaurs, dioramas, and copying masters. Her favorite spot to draw was the Hall of Sculptures: Egyptian, Near Eastern, Greek, and Roman sculptures displayed in a majestic space that communicated a sensation of being very small and alive while being enveloped in the presence of whiteness and time. That experience instilled a love for antiquities.

“I can’t help but think we all know we are artists by the time we’re 4 or 5. We feel like outsiders, witnesses, people who respond to color, to sounds, breath, perhaps to past lives. That awareness compelled me to learn the skills--and be good at them--that I would need to create a life in the arts: draw, write, sculpt. Later, I studied filmmaking. I got degrees, I found mentors, I apprenticed with artisans in Italy.” *interview, Les Femme Folles, University of Nebraska (2016)*

After working as both a film camera operator and a writer in New York City, where she covered the emerging video and independent film scene and hung out with artists such as Basquiat Warhol and Emile de Antonio, Palamidessi moved to Boston and earned a MA at the Boston University Creative Writing program. She studied with Leslie Epstein, Sue Miller and Aharon Appelfeld. After graduating from the program Palamidessi taught writing at BU for 13 years and wrote several novels before re-engaging her early visual art training.

“Inside it felt as if a something heavy had been removed from my brain when I shifted away from verbal. A very primal creative spirit emerged. [blog, “Writer as Visual Artist” \(2014\)](#)

In both the writing and visual art process Palamidessi’s inspiration starts with a snapshot image and a question. For example, for the novel *The Virgin Knows* she pictured a man in a tweed jacket holding his hand on the small of the back of sophisticated, red-haired woman who wore a fur collared coat. Together they strolled down Hanover Street in the North End. Who was this couple? Where were they going? Did they love each other?

A dream about her husband’s surgery provoked her (many) torso series. “I saw his torso opening, like a book. Inside were lights and words--not organs, not blood. A universe existed inside. Is this where we might carry stories and secrets? What is imprinted on the interior surface of flesh?” (*interview, Les Femme Folles, 2016*)

Christine Palamidessi studied with mask-makers and [cartapesta artisans](#) in Venice, Rome, and Lecce, Italy. Her body crests and breastplates have been on exhibit in Boston's State House and galleries in Boston, Washington DC, Woodstock, Vermont, Pittsburgh, and galleries in Otranto and Spongano, Italy. Her work is held in collections in Europe, the United States, Brazil and the Dominican Republic.

She is a [published novelist](#). (pen name: [Christine Palamidessi Moore](#))

[“Grandmothers,”](#) her memoir, is engraved on a [granite monolith and installed as public art](#) at Boston's MBTA station, Jackson Square, on the Orange Line.

She is a long-time Iyengar yoga practitioner and yoga teacher.

Her studio is in Somerville, MA.