

# PHILIP MORTON GALLERY

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## *Meet the Artist*

### *Chryssa Wolfe*

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Chryssa Wolfe has had a culturally, ethnically, and emotionally rich life. Raised in a close-knit extended family, she was surrounded by performing and visual artists, and grew up valuing art and artistic pursuits as entertainment. Her mother was a professional writer, her father a concert violinist, and her uncle a renowned painter of frescoes in US and European churches.

Although born in the US, she lived her early years in Greece and returned to Washington, DC speaking no English. Her family life was steeped in Greek customs, values and mores, while her school life exposed her to American culture. Both her parents died at a young age, and she was raised by several aunts and uncles.

Chryssa began painting when she was 13, shortly before an accident that blinded her in one eye and that necessitated several surgical operations over the ensuing years. She attended local public schools and colleges, studied at different art institutes, and has done most of her work in group studios with local artists. She has been married and divorced, and has raised two children.

Her childhood and adult experiences have been challenging physically, financially, and emotionally. She describes her life as being filled not only with deep pain and tremendous joy, but also with the key element of humor, and this is what she tries to communicate through her work. People going through real experiences are the subjects of her work, people moving through distress and leaving it behind, people finding humor in dark hours and using that humor to help move them beyond the difficulties.

Chryssa wants her work to help others get through the challenges of life. Each painting is a story, a positive image of someone turning things around. Although much of her subject matter is clearly relevant to women and women's issues, it resonates with universal emotions. Her images communicate warmth, humor, compassion, love and hope. "Nothing makes me feel more accomplished than making someone feel better," says Wolfe.

Chryssa is well known for her extensive support of non-profit organizations, and she sells nearly half of her work to benefit charities. She has been invited to exhibit her work at some of the following; American Cancer Society (Spring Sensation, Spring Art Auction with the Utah AIDS Foundation); Sundance Benefit to benefit CAMP Rehoboth and Sussex County AIDS Committee; Potomac Community Theatre -Give your Heart to the Arts; Rehoboth Art League Annual Members' outdoor Fine Arts and Crafts Show; St. Francis Church Annual Art Show and many more. Chryssa participates in children's programs at The National Museum of Women and the Arts.

Chryssa is also a very renowned and respected builder in Washington, DC. She's been described as "A home builder with an artist's soft touch, bringing artistic license to each project and creating houses people love to live in."