

The Peale, Baltimore

Out of the Blocks Storytelling Series

Recorded by Aaron Henkin; Photographs and Music by Wendel Patrick

Produced for the Out of the Blocks website, created by the Peale, <https://ootb.thepeale.org/>



Christa Rompala ([00:00](#)):

Let's see, my story is I've been doing ceramic tile work for 30 years in the Baltimore area, one of the first women to do so. So I'm proud of that. I love people. I'm a people person. So I'm always meeting people, beautifying their homes, and adding my touch. Christa Rompala, 637 Deepdene Road.

Alice Rompala ([00:22](#)):

I'm Alice Rompala, And I'm the mother of Christa Rompala.

Christa Rompala ([00:27](#)):

My mother just moved in with me.

Aaron Henkin ([00:29](#)):

How is that going? Are you guys getting along well?

Out of the Blocks is supported by PRX and produced with grant funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Cohen Opportunity Fund, The Hoffberger Foundation, Patricia and Mark Joseph, The Shelter Foundation, The Kenneth S Battye Charitable Trust, The Sana and Andy Brooks Family Fund, The Muse Web Foundation, and the William G. Baker, Jr. Memorial Fund, creator of the Baker Artist Portfolios. This program is supported in part by the Maryland State Arts Council (msac.org).

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Alice Rompala ([00:34](#)):

We both have temper, let's put it that way. When I say one word, then my daughter blows up at the other end.

Christa Rompala ([00:40](#)):

Well, it's like mothers and daughters. It can be great and it can be not so great.

Aaron Henkin ([00:46](#)):

What do you think is the moment, the most defining moment that made you who you are as a person?

Christa Rompala ([00:52](#)):

I'm 58. So coming about of myself and being a gay lesbian woman was never an easy thing, and I think it made me who I am today. A proud, gay homeowner on Deepdene.

Aaron Henkin ([01:12](#)):

What was it like for you as Christa's mom, when she got older and sort of came into her own as a person and with her sexual identity, as a lesbian?

Alice Rompala ([01:22](#)):

It was kind of tough for me because I wasn't used to anything like that. It was a hard time till we got through it and I'm proud of her. That's all I can say. You have one child and that child turns out to be gay, so you're not very happy as a mother to find that out. But the person that she is, she is a free bird. She likes to do what she wants to do, and that's it.

Christa Rompala ([01:51](#)):

At the end of the day, I think you come around and you love your children for who they are.

Alice Rompala ([01:56](#)):

Basically, she's a wonderful person.

Christa Rompala ([01:59](#)):

I love her. I love her with all my heart.

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