

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/>

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



Bishme:

It's the music that I listened to every day.

Speaker 3:

You literally have calluses on the backs of your knuckles from those scissors.

Bishme:

And then a permanent mark where the scissor lands at. If this is not a sign of dedication, I don't know what it is.

Hello. My name is Bishme Cromartie. I am the owner designer of Bishme Cromartie and my studio is here on 218 West Saratoga Street.

I'm a big fan of origami. I love certain folds. I love clean lines in all my garments and the key thing I make sure that I incorporate in my designs are shapes. It might not be a shaped shoulder, but you

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might see a nice cut in the bodice or in the sleeve or a nice peplum or exaggerated peplum with the shape.

Played football. I played lacrosse. I hated it. I would rather design the outfits for lacrosse and football, but I was always told you had the body frame to play football. You'll be good for football. And I'm like, no.

My family, they looked sideways, but once they saw how serious I was and that I actually knew what it was that I wanted to be, they let me live a little bit.

These mannequins that I have, these are the adjustable ones. So you can adjust their waist, their bust, and she can go from a size zero to a size four just by changing the notches.

Speaker 3:

Tell me what you're doing, what you were increasing there with a turn of the knob.

Bishme:

I was increasing her bust. She was a 32 and then I just changed her into a 36. If it was only that simple.

I've dressed Jazmine Sullivan. I dressed Jill Scott for the CBS tribute for Stevie Wonder. Recently, I just dressed for the BT Honors, Toni Braxton's sisters. I made their garments that they were wearing while they were performing backup for her.

It's a lot of stuff. I'm still heading to get to where I see, but I'm also appreciative and I'm inspired by what's come my way and how much I accomplished.

If it caught your eye, I've done my job.