

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



Speaker 1:

I actually took apart walls on the fourth floor to get the dry wall needed to build a studio on the third floor. And I'm not a clean worker and I'm probably not the most organized person, but I grew up in special-ed for 12 years. So you just kind of figure out ways that you work best and then exist that way.

There's transitions when you put drywall on that you need to make flat and smooth. So you just do a lot of layers of the mud that gets you to a flat, smooth surface. But if you do it right, it's kind of like swimming or life. If you're easy with it and you have a smooth process, then everything's going to go nice and swimmingly. But if you're trying to force it, like anything in life, you end up messing it up.

My name is Gregory Lamberson and we are at 218 West Saratoga street in Baltimore, Maryland. September, 2014, I came in to renovate the gallery and they pretty much just couldn't get rid of me. It was right around when I was deciding to get out of the Marine Corps. I needed to figure out what I was going to do and this is a pretty good fit for me because I have an art degree and I have extensive experience in construction, just growing up, doing it.

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I Ended up in the Marines when I was 19. And I ended my affiliation with the Marine Corps last January. So about 12 years. I ended up as a staff Sergeant in the Marine reserves.

Speaker 2:

What's it like now to be done with that chapter?

Speaker 1:

Honestly, there's a large support structure in the military and when you get out, you don't have that. And the transition from being in the military and the job and the performance and the mission, that is your life. And when you're out, you don't have the support structure. And a lot of times, you don't have a mission and you don't have a thing that you're working towards. Whenever you lose that, you kind of lose a part of yourself. So this, in part, is being a part of a group for me. This building and the drive to repopulate this whole downtown corridor and doing it in an impactful way that doesn't slight the communities that have been around Baltimore and around Maryland is meaningful to me.