

## 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 ([00:00](#)):

What do you want to teach me how to say in Greek?

Gus ([00:02](#)):

I want to teach you in Greek you say, [foreign language 00:00:00]. I love you very much.

Speaker 1 ([00:07](#)):

[foreign language 00:00:08].

Gus ([00:09](#)):

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Bravo. You said that perfect. Are you sure you need the Greek lessons? You sound better than me. This is Gus [Assimos 00:00:19] and I'm going to put a CD here and do some song for you guys.

Hello? Hi. Okay. (singing).

When I was back in early fifties, I was walking up in North Avenue with the WFBR radio station there. It was Sinatra singing. I told my brothers, I want to know who sings that. He says, that's Frank Sinatra. I said, Where you have to go get that CD? I have to learn Sinatra's song because I want to listen to Sinatra.

Speaker 1 ([01:11](#)):

Wasn't CDs back then though.

Gus ([01:13](#)):

No. It was just a small record. Was the 45's. I don't know what size they were.

Speaker 1 ([01:19](#)):

I wonder, if you might want to give us a quieter version of a song like an acapella version, maybe even an old Greek song.

Gus ([01:26](#)):

I have a lot of Greek songs. You want to hear a Greek song?

(singing).

I'm so happy I'm in the United States with my family here and I become a citizen back in 1960. I went to City College, which it was across the street from Memorial Stadium. And I'm proud to say I passed the questions, hundred questions of writing because I want to become a citizen. I want to be like everybody else who was born and raised in this country. I grew up very, very poor, but I thank God all that it happens to me because they make me a better person.

Speaker 1 ([02:29](#)):

Is it true, Gus, that you sang the national anthem at Memorial Stadium?

Gus ([02:33](#)):

Yeah. We went there with a group from the [paint body 00:00:02:37]. Yeah.

(singing).