

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](#)):

There are little things you notice as there's like a regime change from father to son. And I'm just... I don't know. I'm like Sweden, I'm neutral.

Vasilios Filippou. My job here, I fill in wherever they need me. So I mean, officially I'm a server, but if they need me in the kitchen, I work the kitchen. If I need to be a host, I'm a host. I'm kind of all over the place. So I guess I'm a Jack of all trades, master of none. My family and Jimmy's family were friends for a long time. So I came to him and I wasn't old enough to work in the restaurant just yet, but he would hand me a few bucks here and there to clean the sidewalks, do a few dishes here and there. And then when I was old enough to start working at 14, 15, I was brought in as a bus person. And now, here I am 10 years later. Now I'm actually family, because Jimmy's son George is married to my sister. I guess you can call it job security.

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This neighborhood, I've seen a change over my lifetime. When I was much younger, it was a very strong... A lot of Greeks. You couldn't go maybe two doors without bumping into a Greek person. All the neighbors knew each other. I mean, for example, my parents had to leave to run an errand when I was younger and they had to leave me in the house alone for a little bit. And they told me, "Do not leave this house. Don't open the doors. Don't go anywhere." I didn't listen when I was a little kid. So what do I do? I grabbed some change, hopped on my bike. And I rode down the street to Royal Farms to get a little Slurpee for myself. And I thought I got away clean because I got home before my parents got home.

Little did I know, the Greek lady across the street had her eye on me and ratted me out. So let's just say I lost my bike for a week after that. So it was a very tight knit community. Everyone knew everyone's kids. Everybody knew everyone. Now, it's still a tight knit community, but the radius of that tight knit community has been decreasing slowly over the years. So the church here is at the center of it. And I would say it stretched out maybe five miles each way, just all Greeks. Now, there's an influx of a Latino population, a lot of Asians coming in. So it's turning into a melting pot again.