

## 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/>



Geon (00:05):

Right here.

Geon (00:05):

Yeah. Right here at 11:55, he was shot. I got the call in the morning and they was like, "Mr. Jame's been shot," and it was early in the morning, that some of the neighbors up the street, the guy that used to live across the street found him. Tried to give him CPR and resuscitate him, but they say he had been shot in the chest and then once in the head. He was a working man. He got three children, didn't bother nobody. But they said they shot him right in his door.

Aaron (00:40):

You know what it was about?

Geon (00:41):

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*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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No. No, and that's the funny thing. Nobody really understands what it was about because if you know Mr. James, he went to church, went to work and to see that happen to him, I guess that's what most of the people on the block up. And a lot of people won't stand for the circuit transient acts on the block anymore because he never participated in anything. So it was surprising to most of us around here.

Geon (01:08):

My name is Geon. They call me Mr. G. It's the 1100 block of Ward street. We do have quite a few abandoned houses. Habitat has been coming through trying to improve it, but the image has been bestowed that a lot of people don't want to move on the block because of the history. The previous years of violence that have been here, drug dealing and drug addiction.

Geon (01:33):

So, a lot of people are hesitant about coming to this block. So your first impression would be that it's not a safe block. And actuality, most people are genuinely good people. They just don't have the financial means to be in what people would consider upstanding neighborhood. That's one of my jobs, and one of the things that I'm working towards giving to change the impression, to let people know this is an upstanding neighborhood, even though our income may not be as high as everyone else's.

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