

## 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/>



Deleen ([00:03](#)):

This is a JUKI sewing machine, which sews ... It does straight stitch, which goes forward and backward. That's a blind stitch machine, which is used for hemming. These are my snips. And then of course, you need a professional iron. This iron get hot.

Deleen ([00:22](#)):

I take a gown, make it a dress, take a dress and make it a blouse, take pants, make it capri. From capris, you can go to short. I take shorts, make it a skirt. I take long sleeve, make it short sleeve, to a sleeveless. I take a round neck, make it V-neck. I take something that a person can't fit and they might need it three, four, even 10 inches bigger, and I make it 10 inches bigger. Whatever they need, I do it.

Deleen ([00:52](#)):

2443 St. Paul. They call me Deleen. That's the name of my business, Deleen. A unique name, of course, which represent me, something unique. Anything you need for fashion, you could come here and get.

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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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Deleen ([01:08](#)):

Out on this side over here, when you walk in to the left, this is where I do a little consignment for people who bring things here, and I sell them for them for a little percentage. And over here to the right, which is where I sit at, is where I do all of my alteration, my tailoring, my dressmaking, my sewing machines. And this is my workstation, so everything is just under one little roof.

Deleen ([01:37](#)):

This boutique was owned by a good friend of the family named Miss [Rafael 00:01:42]. I came to her asking her could I just rent a little corner of her business to start my alteration business, and she agreed. But it wasn't long after I started working here that she became ill, and she told me she wanted to pass the torch. And a year after that, she passed away, so that's how I got the business.

Deleen ([02:11](#)):

This is Rafael's hat. This is a hat that she gave me and it belongs to her. It's a hat that folds out into a fan, and everybody wants this hat. I done have someone from a museum that was willing to pay me \$50 for this hat. Everybody wants this hat, but I refuse to sell it, let anybody touch it, put it on their head, anything. Because when I come in and I see this hat, this tells me how grateful I am, how appreciative I am, how I was chosen by Rafael to carry on the torch.

Deleen ([02:52](#)):

I've been sitting in this window for over six years now, and everybody know me, everybody see me. Some people call me the lady in the window. But it's beautiful. You see a mixture of different people, and a lot of recognizable face. And when I'm not here, they even call me and ask me, am I okay? So, it's nice. It's a nice view, the perfect view, to be honest with you, and I love it.

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