

Join me in the audio garden to cultivate our collective wisdom, nurture creativity, and spread love.

My name is Martha Cinader. Welcome to Listen and Be Heard. Here I am back in the audio garden where I always love to return, walk around, see the sights and feel the changes in the season, smell all the wonderful things that drift by and the breeze with the leaves falling from the trees.

Today we are going to welcome some special people to the audio garden. Eileen Tabios, author of *The Inventor*,

a poet's transcolonial autobiography, will be our guest in the first part of the hour. Later on in this hour that we have together,

I'll talk a bit about my personal publishing journey and we'll hear comments from Amy Williams and Diane Gatell as we persist to resist banning books.

Also, a conversation with Professor Jonathan Stone, co-author of *A Free Field Guide to the Southern Piedmont*. But as always,

let's start with some poetry here in the garden. Today, we have Phil Talbot, who will be followed by Ann Marina Pellicciotto,

who read during Open Might Night at the Brandy Bar in Hendersonville, North Carolina, a monthly event of the North Carolina Writers Network hosted by Kathleen Cowby,

and thanks to Tony Robles, who was there last week and brought these offerings to the audio garden. In a packet of stillness the Sun presses freely through bare knuckled branches and blesses this do nothing day as holy.

The silence is praised to the deep night yet in morning's wet memory. Wisdom in voice. I, with paycheck, signed,

deducted, worried, twied, and slept ill over into a lacuna of desperate enterprises set forth. I sauntered down bracketed parcels of sanctified emptiness,

threw up a parted river of care and rolled back to it, leaving on far shores the war chariots of death, half-formed pyramids to death.

I clutch my offering to the golden calf. In a largeess of nothing, I got a smile. She knows the smooth tablets from the mount proclaim a blank dogma.

Once past the stash -struck void and past a hollowed brick -fallen foundry, then over what was once a railroad, and through the Forest Street's eye,

late of Pyramid and Tomb Building, grasping the lucra like manna from that self -same staff, now run and wholly abandoned, letting go into nothingness which in fallen times comes as a breach blasted into the productive day.

Death is the flower who plays with an edifice of and a crumbly pyramid locked in an hourglass. And I have crossed over with a fistful left to squander on time in a golden cask.

Got too close, too fast. Moth to light, bright, optimistic fight. Now flight, flea, body nose turn inward into me inside this protective skin hands cradle heart safe mother nature mother's nature not man's embrace until you can trust again yourself again give and take that does not give your sacred hearts away and in that fierce protective goddess power emergence emerges a resonant exhale yes This is the Listen and Be

Heard Hour for Readers and Writers. I'm Martha Sinner. I'm sitting on a bench here with Eileen Tabios and my copy of *The Inventor*,

a Poet's Transcolonial Autobiography, and I have to say it's liberated the playful poet in me. This field guide to inventions of poetic forms encourages endless poems from everywhere and everyone and argues that a poem only exists when experienced in unpredictable ways by readers.

Welcome, Eileen. Thank you, Martha, and thank you for having me. Eileen, you are what I would describe as a prolific writer. I don't know if anybody could argue with me about that fact.

We're here today to talk about "The Inventor," a poet's trans-colonial autobiography. You start off, you finish your book with "Dear Reader," the last chapter of the inventor, a poet's trans-colonial autobiography. And that in itself is unusual. People might expect to see that as the first chapter of a book.

And I think you turn a lot of things on their head in this book. And I'm going to start with the last line. Dear reader, my poetry has never been my words but yours.

Somehow, to me, that's what this whole book is about, The Inventor. Yes, that was deliberate.

Because while the whole book is talking about the invention, so to speak, that I've created through poetry, the impetus for all of that has always been to maximized reader engagement with my poetic work, whether it's a verse poem or a poetry form or other type of poetry invention. The key was always the reader response, if you will,

and so and hopefully one favored response is that the reader also ends up being inspired or moved to write his or her or their own poem.

And so in that sense, I wanted not just interest, not just an engagement of interest, but an engagement in action that could include writing a new poem.

Because I happen to be, you know, I've heard in the past, some people say, Oh, there's so much, so many poets, so much poems in the world, where I take the radical maximum view, there can never be enough poems in the world and so if I encourage maximizing the number of poems in the world I'm happy to do so and this is one way of doing that I think.

Another way is to actually invent poetic forms and invite people to participate in those which is what you talk about in this biography as a as a poet's autobiography.

And so what I'd like to do is speak briefly about each of these forms and what they've meant to you. And maybe we could just stick to the format and go backwards.

You talk about the fluid spelled F -L -O -O -I -D. And the important, probably the most important thing about writing a fluid poem is that anybody who would attempt to do so would first need to perform a good or helpful act.

How would you like to explain that to our reading and writing audience in terms of how that's actually an invention of a poetics?

Yes, and that just follows my own development as a poet. I privilege imagination and creativity in the creation of a poem or any art form,

I suppose. And I never believed in that statement of writing about what you know. I fully encourage others to imagine and then from that imagination perhaps create a poem.

But as we but we are all living in a particular context and as we look up from our writing paths or our computer screens and look around at the world it is unavoidable to see how there's so many problems in the world the world is in trouble and one way to alleviate these problems and ease the troubles that we and the planet are all facing,

is to do our own whatever we can do and I sum it up as a good deed for our neighbor, for our family, for our environment and all that.

So I decided that after decades of promoting and privileging imagination, We live in a certain context. It's a troubled one.

And so it's time to do something about it The poem is fluid enough to accommodate such a desire. I thought and so yes deliberately say have a particular experience first before writing the fluid poem and that particular experience is this whatever good deed is and so that's that's how the evolution of my own thinking, where perhaps imagination is insufficient when it's unavoidable that you're living in a troubled world.

That's how I would, you know, look at that. And there's also a format, though, that's part of that. So the beginning is to perform this good deed, and then there is still a form for the fluid? Yes, because I think the form, by the way, is a five -line or shorter. It's intended to be a very, very short poem. And the reason is twofold.

The first reason is that I wanted the fluid to be taken up, not just by, if you will, professional poets,

but by anybody, people who have never thought about writing poems before. So I didn't want the form to be so, present such a high threshold to them writing a poem.

And I thought a brief form, a short form, might make it less intimidating for a non -poet to try to create a fluid poem. So the briefness of it was simply that,

just a matter of trying to lessen the intimidating action of writing a poem. Now, for each of these inventions that you describe in your memoir,

this is a repeating thing. You're continually reaching out both to fellow poets, as well as people who do not consider themselves poets or may not even have been interested in poetry until you brought it to their attention that this might be something interesting to them.

And this all speaks to, I think, a broader approach that's in the title. When you talk about trans - colonial poetry,

you're both sort of opening it up to like transcontinentally as well as breaking up the rules that sort of hold us all in a colonial state of mind.

Yes. For me, the transcolonial term refers to, you know, I was born in the immigrants immigrated to the United States of age 10.

But I'm fluent really in only one language today and that's English. Yet the only reason I'm fluent in English is because it was introduced to the Philippines through American colonialism in the early 20th century.

And in that sense, I'm a post -colonial. But I didn't want to consider to use the term post - colonial because post -colonial is like post or after the colonial reference and I didn't want to bound myself by my colonial history.

So for me trans -colonial trans really refers to transcending colonialism to being someone where my life and my activities are not all bound by,

by history of colonialism. Perhaps that's, you know, impossible, but that's from an intention standpoint. That's my desire. And the fluid actually to fast track the fluid is transcolonial

because the idea of doing a good deed is actually the opposite of the acts perpetrated through colonialism.

So in a way, there's that circle turning around that way. And there is also, though, this idea of extending this to other groups of people, perhaps other, you know, colonized or, you know, free colonial groups in other parts of the world and here in America. So it's not that you're limiting this form to say other Filipino writers with similar backgrounds?

Correct. It's not in that sense. It's not strictly a Filipino thing. I would, I'd have to, if you, if you think about it, I would have to, I have this like ambition as a poet where that may, you know, whenever I am going to articulate it as I will now,

it risks being self-aggrandizing, but it is a sincere goal and ambition of mine. I want to write where the persona writing is defined as the world, the entire world. So all of the world's concerns need to be of concern to me if I want to be a poet, the kind of poet I want to be. And that importantly reflects actually an indigenous Filipino trait called kapua.

Kapua, simplistically, is refers to the interconnection of all things and all creatures across all of time. So it's a Filipino indigenous trait,

but it's not about the Filipinas. It's about everybody and everything. And so my concerns as a poet relates to anything and everything because that's what kapua means to me, is to being interested in everything and not just actually not just my own community whatever however you define community. This is not by the way a fashionable thing today.

People talk about communities all the time. I do too. But actually, very, very basically, as a poet, I'm interested in everybody, even those who would not consider themselves to be in community with me.

This is the Listen and Be Heard Hour for Readers and Writers. I'm Martha Cinader here in the Audio Garden with Eileen Tabios, who's going to read a bit from her a poet's trans-colonial autobiography,

and then we'll talk a bit more. This is who I am. I loved journalism. I spent my high school and college years working towards my goal of winning a Pulitzer Prize for excellent reporting.

After college, I worked in an entry position at the New York Times with other news clerks who eventually received that Pulitzer. But I fell in love and lost myself in that love.

No need to belabor that story except to say that it cost me to disregard my job and eventually move on to a new career. Since I was covering financial news at the end of my journalism career, I entered the finance industry and later worked for three of the world's biggest banks representing Britain, Japan, and Switzerland. As I would joke 10 years later after switching careers one more time to become a poet,

I thought I had to become a banker in order to become a poet because that's what T.S. Eliot did. I referenced Eliot's banking background several times during my early years as a poet.

I knew it was because I felt uneasy with other poets learning about my finance or non-literary background. My worry ceased when I mentioned that anxiety to the poet with whom I spent much of my first summer in San Francisco after moving there from New York City.

He firmly replied, "I don't judge poets by how they make money, there is no one way to be a poet. Since that poet was Philip Lamontia,

who helped shape the surrealist and beat movements in the United States, I knew he knew of what he spoke. There is no one way to be a poet.

I'd like to go to one of your other inventions, which I found really fascinating, murder, death, resurrection. - Yes.

- This fascinated me for a lot of reasons. One is that you actually, you were feeding lines almost like artificial intelligence to a computer, you know? And it struck me that, you know, we have authors now who are a bit in dismay. Maybe you're one of them. I don't know whose books have been fed to AI without any permission or whatever.

And that's, you know, what AI is now using to produce things when people ask questions and so on. You did that with your own work and produced new work from your old work.

- Correct. And that by itself differentiates it from AI. I was very concerned about, if you will, plagiarism and using other poets' lines and all that.

So I deliberately decided to excavate only from my own work. Being a prolific writer, it happened that I had enough of a body of work up to that point, I think 27 books or so so that I could go back to a big inventory if you will and mine lines from those but I very deliberately chose to mine only my prior words not others for this reason yeah for this concern yeah I guess you've invited other writers to do the same with their work but you've also have some interesting ideas about, you know, what is, I don't know if legitimate is even the right word, but what is poetry? And when you change the order of things, does it change the meaning? Do you still make poetry when you're recombining lines of your own work in different ways like that?

Yes, because I differentiate, and I think I said this in the book, I differentiate, for me to discuss this topic, I have to repeat my differentiation between two terms.

One is poem and one is poetry. The poem is whatever you see on the page, for example, the verse poetry itself to me is an experience.

That includes the before, The writing of the verse poem and the after the reading of the verse poem. So it's an experience It's it's a relationship perhaps between what being read and the reader But because it's a relationship it's not a snapshot like that the verse poem and so to me poetry is not really words So if you start from that idea that poetry is not words, poetry to me is an engagement. I mean, it's many things, but for me for purpose of this discussion, poetry is an engagement. And the words are perhaps not the most important part of it ultimately.

If a poem, for example, moves the reader to take an action, and that action has a wonderful effect on many, many, many people.

To me, the poetry there was what happened in the engagement and then the actions and then the differences that it made for other people. The words in that context are a small part of that. So that's why I say poetry to me is not words. And I guess that can affect how I view the question you raise which is well but you know if you think about it I mean the both the beauty and the a poem is slippery many people can read the same poem and come out with different takes off of the same words so by virtue of these words forming a poem you're already creating a slippery creature as is in my view So I guess I don't trouble myself so much on the formal definitions. Formal definitions become just boundaries on one level and I actually am against that kind of thing.

So for the poem anyway. - And it seems that your inventions have no, no bounds. You describe some of what happens with each of the forms that you invented.

Maybe you'd like to, I don't think we have time to go through what each one specifically is, but maybe you could tell our listeners the different invented forms that are in the book.

- Sure, we've mentioned the fluid, which is do a good deed and then write a short poem about it. We've mentioned the murder death Death Resurrection, which is, I present about 1200 lines, I believe, and then I encourage readers to combine those lines in any number and in any random form. And interestingly, the result can be considered a legitimate poem.

And then the one we haven't yet discussed, but which actually has been my most popular, is which is a tersep, a three -line poem where the first line is one word, the second line is two words, and the third line is three words. A very simple thing. But that Hainaku invention has spread around the world, been taken up by hundreds and hundreds of poets has been translated into,

and written into different languages. And the key element to that, I think it's what relates to what you raised in your question, which is the Hainaku is not just this three -line poem.

I deliberately encourage others to do variations of it. In other words, ultimately, I make them co -authors of the form, not just the resulting poems,

but the form itself. Because I'm really trying to maximize engagement or interest by the reader and other poets. And indeed, there have been nearly a hundred variations by poets around the world that have been created from this simple three -line quarter set.

And of course, what does that all mean? Well, when we say engagement, we're talking about people thinking about and applying this poetry form to their lives, or whatever it takes to create new poems.

And to me, to me that, um, that makes poetry with another one of my goals is to make poetry really be part of everyday lives. And that,

again, is, uh, relates to making sure that when I suppose it put out something, it engages people so that they can also inhale it and make it part of their own lives.

Maybe you could talk a little bit about your process, like how do you, how are you so prolific?

What is your daily lifelike that you're able to produce all these novels and collections of poetry?

And I mean, I couldn't, it would take me a long time to read this list of what you've published. At some point, it becomes seamless. Before I am a writer,

I I'm very much a reader. I read every day, I read all the time. And if you want to be an inventor, how does one invent something new if you don't know what's already been done?

So I read a lot and reading somehow inspires me to write. I read about, I've been averaging, I don't know,

20 to 30 books a month recently. And it's seamless. There's a pile on my book and I read, I am one of those who read more than one book concurrently and I go in and out of that.

Reading, I mean, I guess I love words. I really do love words and words inspire me to write.

There's no other way that I can describe that I would not be prolific as a writer if I wasn't such a attentive reader.

- So prolific reading and writing in your mind goes together. - Yeah, it just goes together for me. - How could people find out more about you and your book?

- Fortunately, I have an author website, EileenTobias .com. So the information on all of my books are there And the inventor itself is out and available through its new distributor,

IPG Books, but it's now out on all the usual outlets. But my website will have all that information. And thank you for your -- I'm so happy to hear of your response to this book. It's very meaningful to me. You're a tremendous influence in the literary world and I think people will understand that and recognize that when they read this book, *The Inventor*, a poet's trans-colonial autobiography, I highly recommend it and I thank you very much for your time today Eileen. Thank you Martha and thank you to Listen and Heard. Thank you very much for having me. This is the Listen and be heard hour for readers and writers. I'm going to go find Amy and Diane in the woods and I'll meet you there in about a minute.

This is Listen and Be Heard Radio WLVH .org. Once it's heard, it can't be unheard. Once it's published it's not gonna be unpublished. Once you read the poem, you can't unread it.

No matter how an individual may try to push it to the side, forget about it, it's still in there. And it's the words, the meaning, the feelings behind it are taking root in There's psyche and the character.

(upbeat music) - Well, obviously I just don't think Banning Books is the answer. You should be able to read whatever you want to read.

Obviously it's impacted our store in just that. We've had a lot of curious people come in and say, what are they, you know, what are they banning and wanting to purchase the books that are banned,

we do a banned book display, here's the books that have been banned previously, here's the books they're currently banning, we encourage you to read those books and see you know why these books are being banned,

why you know why do you think they're being banned because some of we heard a rumor that they're gonna be banning *Romeo and Juliet* you know it's it's it's ridiculous and not something that as Americans we should stand for you know it's it's just ridiculous that was Amy Williams owner of as the page book store in Traveler's Rest,

South Carolina. I'm Martha Cinader and this is the Listen and Be Heard Hour for Readers and Writers. I went to the monthly author and artisan market as the page turns and I spoke to lots of authors,

many of whom were what Meg And at Hub City Publishing Calls, do-it-yourself authors. And proud of it too.

A lot of them seemed to feel that it was a better way to go and had some business acumen about publishing their own books.

And we'll hear some of those conversations next week. Also, you know, I was reading Eileen Tabeo's book that we were talking about in the first part of this hour.

And it inspired me to recycle some of my poetry instead of shredding extra printed copies that I didn't think I wanted anymore. And I've been cutting them up and rearranging them into new hand-made books that I plan to offer at the authors and artisans market in October.

So that's something that has been fun for me and brought out that sort of playful poet that I was talking about. And I was also meditating on my growing list of unpublished manuscripts that I've been pinning to a bulletin board in my writing room and trying to be businesslike about my list.

So I submitted a piece of flash fiction to an online publication so that I could at least feel like something was out there while I tackle rewriting my cover letter for my latest novel and a new list of places to send it to.

And something I've been trying to do with this show is to shed light on the publishing industry for all of us, readers and writers and everybody who participates in different parts of the world of getting books published and reading them and distributing them.

And in that effort, I got to speak with Diane Gattel, who's publisher of Black Lawrence Press, and she will join us next week also here in the audio garden.

And I wanted to give you a little bit of that conversation today as she describes the landscape of publishing in New York,

which I have to say is quite different from here in South Carolina where we have one indie publisher in the state, which I just mentioned,

Hub City Publishing in Spartanburg, which is about an hour from here in Greenville, South Carolina, where I produce this podcast and radio show for the Pacifica affiliate network.

And you can find out more information about all of my guests who has been on previously, who's coming up, by visiting [listeninbherd .net](http://listeninbherd.net) where we also post a lot of videos of interviews that I've done that my co -host Tony Robles has done with authors from all around the country and even from some other countries.

So please do visit us there, join our email list, leave a comment, give us a call. All the information is there at [listenandbeheard .net](http://listenandbeheard.net) as well as a 24 /7 streaming radio station, WLBH which you can get to directly by going to WLBH.org which features all things literary books,

poetry, spoken word. Listen for yourself. Here's Diane Cattel from Black Lawrence Press. I'm very excited about a book that has just come out.

It is called *Us From Nothing*, a poetic history. This is actually an advanced reader's copy, but we do have finished copies that just came in this week. It's by Jeff Bouvier and it is the entire history of our world in prose poems.

We are really in a golden age of humans writing poems and stories and essays. There are so many people that do that work now. At Black Lawrence Press we publish about 24 to sometimes 30 books a year,

but we receive anywhere between seven and 10 ,000 submissions. So there's really, you know, in terms of, you know, competition when someone withdraws a manuscript that I had started getting excited about,

and I hear that it's going to another small press that I really respect, I make a note because I'll make sure to go over to their table at the Brooklyn Book Fair or AWP or the Southern Festival of the Book or wherever I'll be next and get a copy.

It's a it's a much happier and communal ecosystem than than other parts of the publishing world. New York is a really wonderful place to live as a book lover.

It has one of the best funded public library systems in the United States. If you do travel through upstate New York as I do at least once a year And you'll go through these tiny towns through the Hudson Valley and the Adirondacks,

some of them only 10 or 15 miles apart, every one of them has their own public library. And so that's a really wonderful thing about New York State.

Of course, as an editor and a publisher, it is horrifying to see that books that contain useful,

important, enriching, and in sometimes potentially life -saving information are being taken out of the hands of people who could use them most. Thanks to Diane Cattel, publisher of Black Lawrence Press for those comments, and I look forward to welcoming her here in the audio garden next week. Right now I want to welcome Professor Jonathan Storm, co -author of Field Guide to the Southern Piedmont. He's here in the garden with me, which is part of the Southern Piedmont, and he left Spartanburg, which is less than an hour from here where he teaches at South Carolina University of the Upstate, and we're going to walk and talk about his field guide and also what's growing on here at Martha's Kitchen Garden.

Professor Jonathan Storm, I'd like to welcome you to the listen and be heard hour for readers and writers here in the audio garden. - Well, thank you very much for having me.

I'm glad to be here. - We appreciate your taking the time to speak with us. You are one of the authors of the field guide to the Southern Piedmont, and you actually use that guide for your classes at South Carolina University of the Upstate, but it's also available to the public as a CDF on the South Carolina University website, and I will have the link for people to go and download that. Perhaps you could talk first about the other authors of the Field Guide to the Southern Piedmont. Sure.

So the Field Guide to the Southern Piedmont is a free field guide that I put together along with four other authors, one of which is Bridget Doyle, who was the geologist on the book. And so the identification of rocks and minerals from this Piedmont region of the Carolinas in Georgia were put together by her.

And then I've got the reptiles and amphibians put together by Melissa Storm. Plants were done by Julie Smoke. And then I kind of did the rest of the part along with Rachel Furman, an education major at USC upstate of the time. And all of you experts in your fields have identified over 700 organisms in this field guide.

What are the guidelines for creating a field guide? And what have been some of the challenges of bringing all this together? Well, What we were hoping to do is to create a user -friendly free resource for parents, teachers, and just the general public to identify things they might find out in their yard and to do it in a simple visual manner or just the common stuff so that it doesn't overburden you with too much and then also have it be a little bit different from typical field guides where it may just cover trees or birds and have this be more all -encompassing for everything.

In the specific area of the southern Piedmont, which is, can you describe that to us? Yes, so our region is the Piedmont region, which is to the east of the Appalachian mountains and then to the west of the coastal plain, and that's specialized for our book on the curvilinas and Georgia. Field guides have changed a lot in the past years.

They've progressed from being, you know, a published book that you brought around with you in the field. Now we have apps that we can do some of that identification with and your field guide you encourage people to actually download the PDF onto their device so that even if they're not connected to the internet or something they can still look at your field guide when you're out in the field.

So how would you describe you know field guides now as opposed to in the past? And what do you consider the benefits or drawbacks from that?

Well, sort of what I was hoping to accomplish with this sort of version of putting together a field guide is to give a resource for,

I was thinking of kids in particular, because many kids don't have a field guide at home. They may have a bird book, but that would probably be it.

There wouldn't be anything that would go for snakes and reptiles and trees and that kind of stuff. So having a guide like this that's free, that can go on to a phone or a tablet, that's a way for children that don't have those book resources at home or easily available to have that available to them on a tablet that they might be playing with from their parents or something like that.

And they can look at a field guide like this as well. So when we put this together, we were kind of just before the advent of some of the apps that people use to identify things with their phones nowadays and pictures.

But our field guide is similar in that it's still very visual -based, picture -based, simplistic to identify organisms. So it's not technical and we hope it's approachable for children and just the lay public who are not scientists.

So I was wondering if you've seen any Joro spiders showing up around your property. I have no idea. I have never heard of a Joro spider before. Could you tell us what it looks like and where I might see it?

Sure. So Joro spiders were introduced here to the southeast about 10 years ago, showing up in the Atlanta area of Georgia. And they're native to Asia, probably brought over here through shipping of goods here to the U.S. And then they've spread from the Atlanta area east across the southeast.

And so they started to get into the upstate of South Carolina a few years ago. I had not seen one in Spartanburg County until just yesterday when I was off teaching class and I saw like seven or so of them.

And then another. Oh my goodness. I saw some two days ago. So perhaps they're starting to show up a bit more reliably here in the Spartanburg area. What do they look like? So they have long legs and maybe the way to identify them best would be to look at their web.

They form a big web that has sort of a golden yellowish color to it when you sort of look at that web. And what color is the spider?

The spiders themselves have a lot of different colors to them. They're yellowish on some spotting with some there there's several different colors to them but you might confuse them with like a yellow garden spider but they're not as big as a yellow garden spider and they don't have as big of an abdomen as a yellow garden spider so uh and how do you spell that for people who want to look up Joro spider so Joro

spider was spelled J -O -R -O J -O -R -O You are using this also as a text for your adult students, am I correct? And I think another difference from the old field guides is that I imagine you're doing quite a bit of updating on a regular basis.

Yeah, So there is some updating that goes with it. But I mean, there's taxonomic changes that have been occurring, but I don't really bother with that part too much 'cause it's for the general public.

And I stick to just common names with it for what people tend to see there, and not get too technical and keep it approachable for children is what I'm aiming at,

it's like school So you're you're hoping that people will start putting names to things that they're actually probably likely to see if they're living in the southern Piedmont as opposed to making like rare sightings.

Yeah yeah so it's the common things that people would find around their yard when they're just outside playing or walking the dog that kind of thing and they can hopefully figure out what the organism is using the field guide and if they were to really get interested in things, want to go into greater depth, that's where they can go to the public library or purchase one of the more detailed maybe paper -based books to learn in greater detail about something of a particular group of organisms.

But this is sort of The thing that starts the fire of interest in nature and learning about the natural world and the organisms that are out there and That's sort of my hope with the field guide and it's free picture -based approaches to to capture that interest and to get that Started in children and and older adults to who maybe didn't have that interest yet What do you teach at South Carolina of the upstate.

- So I teach courses in biology, everything from freshman to senior level, so that can be introductory biology for starting out biology majors up through ecology and evolution and human and comparative vertebrate anatomy.

Those are the main courses that I teach. - And I presume that your students actually do have an interest in these subjects. I'm wondering what some of their environmental concerns might be about the Southern Piedmont.

Well, there certainly is a lot of concern about the loss of wild spaces with lots of development for new subdivisions and things like that in this part of the country today.

There's a lot of population growth, people moving to the region, building new homes. So those would be a lot of the main concerns. It's just the population growth and the congestion that we see in this part of the world at the Piedmont today.

- As well, I know something that I've been very concerned with and trying to learn as much as I can about is just the need to actually help our native flora and fauna to thrive here where they originated.

And I wonder if you could speak on that a little bit, as far as not only identifying what they are, but understanding what else is around that might be threatening our native habitat?

Yeah, so there's a great importance to have the public learn more about native plants and why native plants are important as opposed to introduced plants from other parts of the world that don't have those interconnections with the natural community that the native plants would provide.

So as one example, everybody's familiar with milkweeds and the need of milkweeds for monarch caterpillars to feed upon, to grow into monarch butterflies. But I think what people may not know yet is that any organism needs to be adapted to feed upon the plants that they are gonna feed upon.

And plants have these natural defenses in them to keep things from feeding on them. And so you have to have this co -evolutionary history with those plants as any organism foraging on them.

So it's important to have those native plants so that you have the organisms adapted to feed on them. And so getting more of those native plants back into our wild space is reducing the amount of non -native introduced species that take away that native plant habitat.

Those are important things to learn about and hopefully through sparking that interest in the natural world through a book like *The Field Guide*, people in the general public can learn about the species that may be introduced and taking away from the beauty of the natural plants that are from this part of the world.

We are standing here under a very large chestnut tree, and I have questions about chestnut trees. My app identified this as a Chinese chestnut, and I know that American chestnuts, they need to make a comeback, and I contemplated whether it's good, bad, or indifferent for me to plant, say, an American chestnut when I already have this Chinese chestnut here. Yes, so the Chinese chestnut is not something that I would encourage people to plant in their landscape. It's not, of course, native here to the eastern U.S. or anywhere in the U.S. It's native to China. Right. This one has obviously been here for a very long time. It's been there a long time. The challenge with the American chestnut is that we still have the chestnut blight fungus out here in the U.S.

And if you do, if you were able to plant one, it's not going to be resistant to that blight and it's going to die. So you wouldn't be able to really plant an American chestnut and have it successfully grow up.

Now I just got some email advertisement for some hybrid American chestnuts that are being sold on you know there's all kinds of online stores for trees so what would you say about that well if you want to try it that's fine they are trying to do hybridization and genetic work to get those chestnut trees resistant to the blight But there's still a lot of work to be done there to get chestnut trees that are resistant to the blight that will grow up to replace what we have lost with the great American chestnut. But there have been people working for decades with the American Chestnut Foundation to try to bring that great tree back.

We will hear a little more from Professor Jonathan Storm next week. For now, I want to thank you for listening and being heard here in the audio garden with me for this past hour. It has been my pleasure. Please let your voice be heard by visiting us at [listeningbeheard .net](http://listeningbeheard.net) or you can even call and leave a message at 864 -397 -5748 share your thoughts about this program banning books a book you're reading my guests today were Eileen Tabios author of *The Inventor* a poet's transcolonial autobiography her website is [EileenRTabios .com](http://EileenRTabios.com) I also welcomed Professor Jonathan Storm, co-author of *The Field Guide to the Southern Piedmont*, which is available on the South Carolina University of the Upstate website, and you'll find a link to that on the post for this episode at [listenandbeheard .net](http://listenandbeheard.net).

Poetry was written and read by Phil Talbot and Anne Pellicciotto and recorded by Tony Robles at the Brandy Bar in Hendersonville, North Carolina for the monthly open mic sponsored by the North Carolina Writers Network. Next week we will welcome Diane Gatell, publisher of Black Lawrence Press to the audio garden. I am your host and producer Martha Cinader. My co host is Tony Robles. Associate producer is DJ Genie Hopper and editing is done by Jeremiah Cotherin.

Music, Jay Rodriguez Sierra, who you can find out more about at [JayRodriguezSierra .com](http://JayRodriguezSierra.com). The band book theme is by DJ Genie Hopper with the voice and words of Yvette Murray whose latest book is Hush,

Puppy, published by Finishing Line Press. Thanks, as always, to Davine Dyle for introducing the Listen and Be Heard Hour for Readers and Writers to the broadcast airwaves on WPVM in Asheville,

North Carolina, and to KCEI in Taos, New Mexico, KEPJ in San Antonio, Texas, and KHOI in Ames, Iowa, among others, for airing our weekly show in your community. I want to thank you for listening and giving me the opportunity to be heard.

Livin' it, givin' it, havin' it, takin' it Livin' it is love Living it is.

Sewing a coat. Investing each stitch with magic. Creating a unique design. Putting it on and wearing it for the rest of your life. Living it is knowing that what you see,

what you hear is tangible. It's being a rock in the river and being the river too. It's here and you'll never be able to do that. Living it is knowing you will do it.

It's speaking the unspoken. It's thinking the unthinkable. It's doing the unexpected. It's quitting.

Living it is giving it,

giving it is having it, having it is taking it, taking it is moving it, shaking it, creating it, loving it.

Living it is loving it. Living it is loving a man you're not supposed to love.