Join me in the audio garden to cultivate our collective wisdom,
nurture creativity, and spread love.
My name is Martha Senator. Welcome to Listen and Be Heard.
Welcome back to the audio garden, my friends. A place to grow and also to heal.
Vulnerable to storms and acts of war. It is precious when we have peace around us
and can synchronize our pace with the rhythms of the garden. Today,
the bell tolls for people and flora and fauna. Author and professor Doug Tallamy
will join us here in the audio garden to talk about what oak trees have to do
with our future, and why planting one near you is an important thing to do.
We will also listen to the third and final part of my conversation with Eileen
Tabeos, Diane Gatell, Kate McMullen, and Annie Groover, talking about the landscape of
distribution for small presses after the closure of SPD. But first,
some poetry. Our featured poet today is Mossab Abu Toha.
He is reading from his new book of poems, "Forest of Noise," on a democracy now
web -exclusive from October 25th during an interview with Amy Goodman.
This is "Under the Rubble."
She slept on her bed, never woke up again. Her bed has become her grave,
a tomb beneath the ceiling of her room, the ceiling, a cenotaph. No name,
no year of birth, no year of death, no epitaph. Only blood and a smashed picture
frame and ruin, next to her. In Jabalia camp, a mother collects her daughter's flesh
in a piggy bank, hoping to buy her a plot on a river in a faraway land.
A group of mute people were talking sign when a bomb fell, they fell silent.
It rained again last night. The new plant locked for an umbrella in the garage.
The bombing got intense and our house looked for a shelter in the neighborhood.
I leave the door to my room open so the words in my books, the titles and names
of authors and publishers could flee when they hear the bombs. I became homeless
once but the rubble of my city covered the streets.
They could not find a stretcher to carry your body. They put you on a wooden door
they found under the rubble. Your neighbors, a moving wall.
The scars on our children's faces will look for you. Our children's amputated legs
will run after you.
He left the house to buy some bread for his kids. News of his death made it home,
but not the bread. No bread death sits to eat whoever remains of the kids No need
for a table. No need for bread A father wakes up at night sees the random colors
on the walls drawn by his four -year -old daughter The colors are about four feet
high next year. They would be five But the painter has died in an airstrike.
There are no colors anymore. There are no walls.
I changed the order of my books on the shelves. Two days later, the war broke out.
Beware of changing the order of your books.
What are you thinking? What thinking? What you? You?
is there still you? You there?
Where should people go? Should they build a big ladder and go up?
But heaven has been blocked by the drones and F -16s and the smoke of death.
My son asks me whether when we return to Gaza I could get him a puppy. I say I

promise if we can't find any.
I ask my son if he wishes to become a pilot when he grows up. He says he won't wish to drop bombs on people and houses.
When we die, our souls leave our bodies, take with them everything they loved in our bedrooms, the perfume bottles, the makeup, the necklaces,
and and depends. In Gaza, our bodies and rooms get crushed. Nothing remains for the soul. Even our souls, they get stuck under the rubble for weeks.
That was Mosab Abu Toha, reading "Under the Rubble" from his new book of poetry, "Forest of Noise." He read several poems from the book during an extended interview with Amy Goodman for Democracy Now. You can find the video at democracynow .org under
Web Exclusives. We will also have a direct link to the video at listenandbeheard .net. His previous award -winning book is called "Things You May Find Hidden in My Ear" poems from Gaza. Mosav Abu Toha is a columnist with recent essays in the New York Times and the New Yorker, a teacher and founder of the Edward Said Library in Gaza. My name is Martha Senator, and this is the Listen and Be Heard Hour for Readers and Writers. The bell tolls for us all when there is war, and for the flora and fauna which were here before us and intrinsic to our survival.
Our guest in the audio garden today has written several books about how property owners can help to restore habitats for wildlife where we live.
I'm so happy to welcome today to the audio garden author Doug Tallamy also professor at the University of Delaware. He's the author of Bringing Nature Home,
The Nature of Oaks, Nature's Best Hope, and the co -founder of Homegrown National Park. And I think kind of a YouTube superstar amongst native plant societies around the country, which is how I first discovered you, Doug. Welcome to Listen to Be Heard Hour for readers and writers. Pleasure to be here. Thank you. I have been reading The Nature of Oaks. And one thing I appreciate about it is that it's written by each chapter name is a month of the year. And it kind of invited me to slow down on the reading of this book and perhaps just examine each chapter as the year unfolds sort of in tree time, I guess you could say.
Oaks are keystone species. Maybe we could start with talking about why the nature of oaks is so supremely important for us all to understand. - Well, the keystone species concept comes from what a keystone is in that Roman arch.
It's that stone in the middle of the arch, and if you take it out of the arch,
the arch collapses. So if you take keystone species out of their ecosystem, the ecosystem is transformed usually in a very negative way. In terms of oak's contribution, they're supporting more biodiversity,
more other creatures than just about any other tree species or tree genus in North America anyway. So if you remove them from an ecosystem, you've really devastated the diversity of life in that ecosystem. They're particularly important in terms of supporting caterpillars. And caterpillars are particularly important in terms of supporting birds during the breeding season and many other things. they're known as the bread and butter of terrestrial ecosystems so if you, if you have plants that make a lot of caterpillars then you have very diverse ecosystem. Just to give you a

brief example, it takes six to nine thousand caterpillars to get one clutch of chickadees to the point where they leave the nest. So we need plants that make a lot of caterpillars if we're going to have breeding birds. What would people be trying to observed this time of year, if they actually are aware of the oak trees that are present around them. The most obvious thing about oaks in October is their production of egg corns. People often notice, "Well, gee, this was a year where there were a lot of egg corns or not very many egg corns." And when there's a lot of egg corns, it's called a "mast year," and it only happens once every two, three, four years, when there's a little, very few egg corns, we don't call it anything, but that type of reproduction is, it's very asynchronous and it's unusual in plants.

So there's a number of hypotheses about why oaks are doing that, but that's the thing that people are going to notice the most. Those egg corns, each one of those egg corns is a really important package of food for an awful lot of animals. A number of birds, the big birds, turkeys, the small birds, jays, the big mammals, bears depend on acorns to make it through the winter. So it's one of the most important contributions that oaks make and that's what you're going to notice in October. And so here where I am in Greenville, South Carolina and we're also heard up in Asheville, North Carolina, we had a storm that nobody would have even thought would happen here. And now I'm driving around and I see trees piled up in the ditches and I've actually received probably five loads of wood chips from various arborists who are cleaning up behind the storm. I wonder what you might say about, you know, the state of oaks in this situation and what might be the best way to utilize fallen oak trees. - Well, we tend to plant our trees when we're planting them in ornamental situations. We plant them as specimen trees. They're isolated from other trees, which means they're really vulnerable to blow downs in a storm like you just had. You get the ground saturated with water and big wind and there's nothing holding the roots there in place. So over they go that's not particular to oaks, but you know a big spreading oak can be top -heavy and it's vulnerable to that. So what we're suggesting is that we actually start to plant groves of trees. They don't all have to be the same species, but you plant plant them young and you plant them close together so that they can interlock their roots the way they would in a forest, and then they become much more stable and reduce that blowdown risk quite a bit. This storm was really a big storm and very tough on all kinds of trees.

But oak wood, of course, is very dense, high energy. It's one of the best woods for burning. So if you heat with wood, if you have a wood burning stove, you're in good shape now for several years. So get that oak to deliver to your yard.

You want to dry it out, of course. You want to be burning it this year. What about, though, these piles of trees that I'm seeing people waiting for the city to come collect? I understand a lot of people just You know, a big tree trunk sitting in their yard, but perhaps people have some different options to help mitigate future floods by utilizing some of this that has fallen. Plants in general help to reduce the threat of floods. Now, you know, you're in a mountainous area and the storm hit those mountains and dumped all the rain. And there's not too much that a landscaper

can do in that situation. But the better your yard is planted, the more resistance it's going to be. If you have downed trees, we call it coarse woody debris. Wood that is on the ground is actually a valuable resource to east and deciduous forest ecosystems. So you might consider keeping some of that downed wood in your yard, probably not your front yard, but if you have areas in your backyard where you could have it, a lot of biodiversity is associated with fallen logs from carpenter ants to carpenter bees to just a numerous number of invertebrates that are depending on that that would, you know, the nature of Oaks, I would say that the book seems to be driving at, you know, well it doesn't seem to be, it's strongly encouraging people to plant oaks in their yards and all of your books really focus on what we as individuals who take care of property and landscapes can do for nature, well not so much for nature, but be more in line with nature, and this has become increasingly urgent over the years. Could you tell us a little bit about your journey from this first book, why you wanted to write these books, and how you feel now that they're out in the world. What difference it's making? I think some of the difference we could point to at Homegrown National Park, so maybe you'd like to talk about that project as well. Sure. You know, I started working in this area for a number of reasons. We're in the middle of a very serious biodiversity crisis. We've got climate change, and people think that's the only environmental issue we have, but we also have a biodiversity crisis. And if we had no climate change, we would still have a biodiversity crisis. What do I mean by that? I mean, we're losing the plants and animals that run the ecosystems that provide the life support that keeps us around on this planet. So it's serious business. If you've followed the headlines at all, we've got global insect decline, North America's less 3 billion breeding birds in the last 50 years. The UN says we're going to lose a million species to extinction in the next 20 years. This is not good. We've got to turn this around? Who's going to turn it around? We have parks and we've got preserves, but all these things are happening anyway. So I think we have to start practicing conservation outside of parks and preserves, and that's on our private properties. And that makes private property owners the future of conservation, whether they know it or not. You know, we have this idea that we can we can own a piece of the earth. Well, if we own a piece of the earth, we also own the responsibility of taking taken care of that piece of the earth. So that's why I've written these books, trying to get people to understand the urgency of the problem and what their role in finding a solution to this problem is. I urge people not to think about the entire planet because that's depressing. But if you just worry about the piece of the planet that you can influence, and that's where you live, that's your private property, you can make a difference. .....

K Sarah. naturally. K K. Si executed. K specialty K Tu個 fino로 andillo envisioned j NT Graduateрı Si khi себе Whit Hate paper showcushiuse bombing I'm Martha Senator here in the audio garden with Doug Tallamy, author of The Nature of Oaks.

So there are real things that homeowners can do. They can watch nature return.

You can feel good about that. And it's also why we created what we call Homegrown National Park. If we cut the area of lawn in half, that would give us 20 million acres that we could restore right at home, which is bigger than all of our major national parks combined. So we call that Hungro National Park and that it would be the biggest park in the country. All you have to do is go to our website, hungronationalpark .org, and register your property on the biodiversity map.
So your location and then the amount of area that you're pledging to be a good steward of maybe you really are going to reduce the area of lawn maybe you're gonna plant that oak tree maybe you're gonna do something as small as put an aster in a flower pot all of that counts and then your little piece of your county will light up that where you are with a firefly that's our little emblem and of course the object is to get the entire country to light up homegrown National Park is designed to get the message to the people who don't know that they're the future of conservation. We call them the non -quirer and there's millions of them.
We use social media, we use the biodiversity map, the states are color coded so you get to see how well your state's doing. So there's a little bit of competition involved here But we're trying to use every trick we can think of to to educate the general public about their conservation responsibilities. I have to confess, though, that I get really discouraged sometimes. I drive around and I see, you know, lawns everywhere.
And, you know, if I try to talk to people about some of these things, they come up with some common objections, which you also talk about in The Nature of Oaks, maybe we could try to address that for some of our listeners who might be considering for the first time, at least, you know, diversifying their lawn or, you know, I've tried to reduce the lawn around here to pathways and allow wildflowers and other things to come up in whole designated areas that did not get mowed this entire summer. But of course, there's not any three -foot tree grew this summer in any of those patches. So how can they start thinking about this differently to where maybe they would be driving around hoping to see less lawns and more oak trees. - Yeah, well, you've hit an important point there. I don't talk about getting rid of lawn. I talk about reducing the area that's in lawn. Lawn is the perfect plant to walk on. So wherever you consistently walk, and I know that most people don't walk outside at all there. So, there's a lot of area we can reduce there, but it's also, we call it a cue for care. You know, it occurs to me, some people don't walk out because of the heat, too, and the trees could actually provide some real cooling effect from the heat,
which the lawns tend to reflect. Yeah, no, you're absolutely right. And if you plant that oak, it will reduce the temperature under the oak by 10 degrees, which is substantial. And I know what people think, oh, if I plant an oak, I'm not gonna live long enough to enjoy it. I planted my oaks as egg corns, which means they were free. Now it is 23 years later, but those trees are pushing 70 feet tall now. They are real trees. They have reduced the temperature of our property. So you really can turn around the physical nature of where you live by getting some shade into your yard. It doesn't take that long. It doesn't have to be expensive. I

encourage you to plant small oaks because they will develop their root system. When you plant a large oak, they have to trim the roots in order to move it or...
When you say small, you're referring to the age of the oak, is that correct? The size of the oak. The size. Yeah. Okay. But I mean, not the ultimate size, but the size when you plant it. Yeah. Now, we do have, we do have species of oaks that don't very big. Most of them do get pretty big. And if you have, I mean, that's what's going to give you the shade is a large tree. But if you have a small property and you only, you want a small oak, I would consider a quickest prinoids, which is dwarf chestnut oak, or in in your area, um, Quercus Georgiana, it's, it's, uh, the Georgia oak is occasionally in the trade. That's also a small species. So there are small species that are available. But, um, if you have the space, don't shy away from the white oak and the red oak and the turkey oak and chestnut oak. There's a lot of, a lot of options for you. But back to the lawn, let's use it as a cue for care, meaning the lawn you keep is going to be mowed, it's going to be manicured, you do not have to fertilize it, it will stay nice and green without that.
But it shows that your neighbors that you, you weren't, you're fitting in with the culture, you know what the culture is, you're not going to be a rebel, you're not going to reduce property values, you're just going to have less lawn and more plants on your property. And when you approach it that way, it's far more disagreeable, far less disagreeable to the neighborhood than, you know, there's this idea that if you use native plants, it's wild and messy, and you're not taking care of your yard, and it is going to reduce property values. It's not true at all if you do it properly. So I'm on a larger property. It's like six, six and a half acres.
But there's people, you know, in the city who have windowsills or rooftops, there's people with a quarter acre yard, they can still be a part of this regeneration of our ecosystem. Yeah, 82 % of us live in cities, so that's a common challenge. And we have a section on our website, HungroNationalPark .org, That talks about container gardening for native plants. It will give you the best native plants that do well in containers for your eco region So the person who lives in an apartment if they put plants out on their balcony They're gonna help pollinators pollinators are very very mobile They're gonna help that migrating monarch and if everybody in that apartment complex did that you would take a pile of bricks and turn it into a valuable resource. So the idea that I live in a city and there's nothing I can do and it's incompatible with nature, it's a challenge, but we can do a lot more with cities than we typically do.
- Doug, tell me, how can people get in touch? How can they, first of all, find your books, The Nature of Oaks, Bringing Nature Home, and nature's best hope. Well the major bookstores carry them they're of course on Amazon so that's that's probably the cheapest place to find them. We always like to encourage people to go to independent bookstores and I'm sure that they could go there too and ask for your book if it's not actually in the bookstore can they do you have a website where they can go as well? We don't sell them on the website there there you know website, the links are there. And again, all of our information

is on homegrownationalpark .org. And how have you found,
what kind of life has these books taken on? I just wanted to know a little bit
about your journey to get them published. And then, do you feel like that has
helped you to advance answer this message to people if this is creating community or
what has been the life of these books? It's been far more lively than I ever
thought it would be. I wrote Bringing Nature Home. That was the first book. It was
a response to questions that people had asked me. I was already giving talks about
our research here at the University of Delaware, looking at the impact of invasive
species on food webs, on insect decline, on the nature of host plant specialization.
You know, most of the insects that eat plants are host plant specialists just like
the monarch butterflies. If you take away milkweeds, you lose the monarch. If you
take away the native host plants of all of those caterpillars that the birds need,
then you lose the caterpillars and you lose the birds and everything collapses. Well
we were doing that research and people were very interested about it and they said
what can we read what can we read I said there's nothing to read and finally I
said I would I will write a pamphlet and the pamphlet became bringing nature so it
was it was really a demand by the public and that continued so that led to
nature's best hope. We have three chapters in Rick Dark's The Living Landscape to
give you some visual encouragement. These landscapes can really be beautiful.
Then I wrote The Nature of Oaks and I've got a new one coming out in April called
How Can I Help, which actually answers 499 questions that people have asked me over
the years. These are people that have read the books and heard the talks and they
still have really good questions. So we'll see how that goes in April. I really do
appreciate the time that you did spend with us here in the audio garden. Doug
Tollamy, professor at the University of Delaware and author of several books all
explaining to you, caretaker of where you live,
how you can help to restore our ecology and environment. Thank you so much for your
time. I appreciate the opportunity.
Thanks to Doug Talamy for joining me in the audio garden. You can find the unedited
video interview at listenbeheard .net. I'm going to go check on the baby goats and
then meet you on the other side of the bridge when we'll talk a bit more about
the phenomenon of banning books and I will welcome back our SPD panel for the third
and final part of our discussion about the closure of small -press distribution and
the future of distribution for small presses.
This is Listen and Be Heard Radio, WLBH .org.
This is the listen and be heard hour for readers and writers
Once it's published, it's not going to 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 their psyche. And they can't get rid of it.
I
mean, I think honestly that that's the direction where the United States is going
with the censorship of these books, you know, and it's, I mean, it goes without
saying how dangerous it is because, you know, black and brown writers, they're

writing for our sake, but they're also writing to preserve our history And like who we are and our stories here and the fact that these are the books specifically being banned You know, it's that it's that I mean I almost feel like you need to make up a new word for evil for that You know and it's dangerous because it's you know you take away these the literature and you take away history for us because like You know for us the bookstores called medicine for nightmares and people often asked us what we mean by that and for black and brown folks, literature is medicine. It's medicine against the colonized nightmares. It's medicine against the patriarchal nightmares, against the racist nightmares. So that idea of like books being censored and banned, I mean, I can't emphasize how evil and dangerous that is, you know? I mean, obviously for black and brown folks, 'cause we're gonna be the first ones to get our books and our literature taken away, but I mean, we need to fight that as much any way that we can on all fronts. I mean, that's not something that should be allowed in any capacity.

Thank you to Jose Luis Alderete, co -founder of Medicine for Nightmare's Bookstore in California for his comments about banning books. And as each of us heads to the ballot box, perhaps pause to consider what a its record is on censoring free speech. Free speech can be stifled in many ways on the path to publication.

One way is to never be published at all. Another way is for a book not to have broad distribution. Small press distribution, known as SPD,

provided that for decades for books that might otherwise never have been ordered by anyone. And its abrupt closure has left a bare spot in the literary community garden where busy bees used to be buzzing. You can find part one and two of our SPD roundtable conversation on episodes 32 and 33 at listenandbeheard .net.

Today we will talk a bit about the future and how you can support small presses. We start with Diane Cattell, Executive Director of Black Lawrence Press and Kate McMullen, Editor at Hub City Publishing. Also joining us are writer Eileen Tabeos and Annie Groover, Manager manager of Hub City Bookstore in Spartanburg, South Carolina.

Not only is small -press distribution gone, but the whole media landscape has changed over those 55 years. People can get electronic versions of books,

So maybe books are even changing and the concept of distribution would have to change along with it. What has this closure made maybe have you contemplating in terms of electronic distribution and other forms of books? Well,

at Black Lawrence Press, and I'm sure that this is also you know, my other small press editors in the room. You know, we were looking at e -books, audio books, you know, other forms of, you know, digital media for a while.

At Black Lawrence Press, we do publish both poetry and prose. But poetry is a big part of our list on a given year. It's somewhere between 60 and 70 % of what we publish. And poetry does not translate well onto the digital page.

You know, line breaks are essential to get right in poems. They're in some cases as important as the language itself. One of the things about eBooks that's really wonderful for accessibility is that you can size up and size down the size of the text. Well, that will absolutely wreak havoc on line breaks. So we do not currently publish our poetry titles as ebooks. It's a decision we've made in communication and

with the input of our authors. We tried a couple of titles and they wound up looking like just a mush of text on the page. And So, that's one reason that we don't publish everything as e -books. We do sell most of our prose titles as e -books. Those sales continue. Our sales of print books are stronger than our sales of e -books. And I do think that there is, you know, something that is, you know, a visceral pleasure of holding the book in your hand. I don't think that that's going to ever completely disappear. Certainly not in my lifetime as a publisher. So we have, and we've dipped our toe into the world of audiobooks. Audiobooks are very expensive to produce well and is an entirely different kind of marketing. So we will continue to work on those things. And I'll also say one of the reasons that we were so sad to see small press distribution close, is it seemed that they were on the cusp of being able to offer more services to small presses, that they were going to start offering e -book distribution, potential audio book distribution, even international distribution. They were so close and unfortunately clearly fell short. And is there anyone on the Landscape who was maybe trying to step into those shoes. I think the closest would be asterism In terms of you know trying to replace what SPD did I know other presses that have gone with asterism and are pleased with that Asterism has a different model than SPD did they offer some services that SPD didn't they don't offer some services that SPD did. So it's not really a direct replacement, but I would say that they are the closest. Kate, you wanted to add something. I do. I do know for tiny, tiny micro presses that some of them, and I can't name names because I didn't see, you know, kind of who's doing what, but I do know that some really small presses are forming their own distribution co -ops together somehow. I think a lot of them are trading books and selling them direct to consumers through their own websites and that kind of thing, which is much more scrappy than something like SPD was able to provide and something like Asterism can provide now. But I do think a lot of the very small guys are trying to figure out how they can kind of come together and then go into distribution as a package or something like that, which I think can work. I think they have the toughest hill to climb in terms of just discoverability. So someone like, you know, as PD was helping them out quite a lot. So I think maybe some kind of like cooperatives will come out of, you know, just trying to pull things together and presses finding fits with each other and that kind of thing and I hope that can can work out. And I wanted to say too on like the e -book and audiobook front which Diane pointed out these things are expensive to produce and so they're not like a discoverability option for someone who's really really small. So that's who I worry about the most I think it's just like tiny little presses who I think are the ones who have suffered you know the most under this you know the closure. And I hope that they can figure out, like, some kind of, yeah, co -op or some kind of thing. I don't know what that would be. But I know people are looking into it. CLMP, the community of literary partners, is working on webinars to, you know, help those people out. And there is kind of community effort, you know, literary community effort around it. But those are the, those are the

presses that I'm the saddest about. - Yes, and I should mention CLMP, their website actually has a lot of resources on there for people feeling the effects of this closure and even now can go there and find maybe some helpful resources for their neck of the woods. - I also wanted to add another option that my publisher Marsh Marshall Press has instituted, that I think might become more common because of what's happened with SPD. As books go out of print, or as people decide not to reprint books because the huge demand isn't out there, you have two options. You can switch to either a print -on -demand model, or or you could...Marshark Press has started to put for free on its website the entire PDF of an out -of -print title. They've done it for two of my titles. And I'm actually very, very pleased with that because as a poet I noticed years ago that I get more readers through by making a poem available online than trying to sell it on a print version. So that's certainly one option, which lends itself well to something like poetry, because it's not as if hoarding poetry would make you a lot of money. So putting the poetry book online for free, although I suppose some people have done it and do charge an access fee, I personally wouldn't bother because the matter is poetry, but that's an option. Well, I want to thank each and all of you for spending some time here in the audio garden with me today to talk about the closure of small press distribution and share your points of view. I'd like to give you each an opportunity maybe to make some final comments with your thoughts about this discussion that we've been having.

I guess I'll start with you, Diane, the executive director of Black Lawrence Press.

Sure. I mean, I would say to anybody listening who wants to do something to support small presses and our authors, the very best thing you can do is to engage with the work that we are producing together.

If the easiest way for you is to purchase one of those titles through Jeff Bezos company, you can certainly do that. But it's even much more meaningful if you step into your local independent bookstore or purchase directly from the press through their websites. We are a rich and wonderful world of literature.

I often say that deciding to only ever read from the Big it's just is deciding like you're only ever going to dine at chain restaurants. There are great chain restaurants. Some of them have Michelin stars, but you're not going to taste everything that's out there. So, you know, take a look at your reading diet and see if you have small press titles within it. They will enrich your world. Well, thank you for that. And people can go to your website at blacklorencepress .com.

Thank you, Diane and Kate McMullen, the managing editor of Hub City Press.

I just want to echo, yeah, all that Diane just said, definitely a lot of these presses do direct to consumer ordering, which is a really good way to do it if your bookshop is just not able to get that book in, especially as we've been talking about in the midst of all of this kind of turmoil here. now that SPD is no more.

Yeah, hubcity .org is where you can do that exact thing from Hub City Press. You can also donate to us, we're a non -profit. You can learn more about, I won't go into it, but you can learn more about that at hubcity .org /support, which is a

great way to help us out. We're basically crowd -funded, except for some grants here and there. And we have been for almost 30 years, so your support helps quite a lot. I'll also recommend a book because if you're listening to this, you might be interested in publishing and in the kind of bigger picture ideas and kind of forces behind publishing. The book is by Dan Sineken and it's called "Big Fiction, How Conglomeration Changed the Publishing Industry in American literature, and this is a great read if you're interested in those specific things. He goes into the kind of changing landscape of publishing since some of the mergers of the big presses in the 80s, including Penguin Random House and some other things. And it's a really, really interesting idea, some interesting ideas anyway, about how All of those conglomerations have changed even just the nature of literary fiction and the publishing industry in general, so if you like this conversation, you would like that book. I wanted to shout it out because it taught me a lot about my own job. Well, I'm going to have to add that to my reading list. I have not read it. So thank you for that recommendation. Annie Grover, you're the manager of hub city bookshop in Spartanburg, South Carolina. Do you have some final comments for us today? - Yeah, I think I learned a lot more than I contributed, but I really like what Diane was saying about, if you only shop from the big publishers, it's like only eating at chain restaurants. And yeah, there's some good stuff there, but you find some hidden gems in off -beat places and I think indie bookshops you know I don't think they'll ever go away just because we can cultivate something for our our public and you know in the broader culture as well so I think it's just good to keep in mind that we have a vital mission whether we're a nonprofit or not. Well thank you for that and I guess it's it's similar to hub city press but how can people go right to Hub City Bookshop? It's the same website. It's hubcity .org and you can see lovely pictures of our bookshop. More information about our press titles that Kate is in charge of. We have a cat. You can come see pictures of Zora, our cat, who is the biggest draw to our bookshop. I think she brings in a lot of customers. And yeah, So you can see more about us there and what's going on. We have a lot of author events, things like that. - Well, thank you both for joining us. Hub City are only indie publisher in South Carolina here where listening to be heard hour for readers and writers is produced about an hour. We're here in Greenville and Spartanburg is not that far away. Eileen Tavios,
- You're the prolific author in this scenario. Do you have some parting comments for us about just the whole landscape of publishing and distribution? - Thank you. I guess sometimes when I look at issues, I look at the systemic nature of these issues. And I think part of the challenges that small presses and indie presses face relate to how the system currently works. So my husband happens to be a lawyer and I know that big law firms have this setup where they, it's called pro bono, where their lawyers have to represent people for free for X percent of their business. So I think that maybe the publishing industry should have some sort of system where, And I don't know how bookshops and libraries work, but where, let's say, X percent of your inventory has to be from small presses, or X percent of what's bought into libraries have to be from small presses. Will

you develop a system? Will you actually make that mandatory? And in a way, if I understand publishing history correctly, this used to exist at big publishing houses Yes, they're they're publishing hopeful bestsellers, but they those bestsellers like fiction was supposed to subsidize The more niche items like poetry or whatever So I think those systems have to be you know strengthened or put back in place in support of the kind of books that are actually considered niche when Ironically They're the ones expanding the landscape for the genre, for example, in poetry, experimental poetry is among the least commercial, and yet they're the ones who are pushing outward and expanding the landscape for poetry.
So I think if there were systems that supported the so -called niche or small presses, that would be great. Sort of like research and development. Yeah, absolutely, absolutely. Yeah. Well, that sounds quite brilliant
a year and see where we are and what you might contribute to the conversation then.
For now, I want to thank you all for Eileen Tabeos, Annie Groover, Kate McMullen, and Diane Cattell for joining me here in the audio garden. I hope you'll come back soon. Thank you. Thanks so much for having us. This has been really a lovely conversation, I so appreciate it, and it's been nice to meet all of you too.
Thanks again to all four of the women who joined me in conversation here in the audio garden about the closure of SPD. You can find parts one and two of that round table at listenandbeheard .net in our two previous episodes.
This is episode 34. I recently read a book of essays entitled "Homing, Instincts of a Rust Belt Feminist" and will welcome the author, Sherry Flick, to the audio garden next week. Here is a little bit of our conversation.
Part of what I started realizing as I was writing, I came to this interesting connection between labor and intellect. I was a baker in,
when I left Western Pennsylvania and I went to New England, I got a job baking bread, you know. And I loved it. And I realized not then,
but when I was writing these essays many years later, that it was that combination of labor and what I was learning in my classes. And I worked at a bakery that was a very feminist bakery. It was all women with an excellent owner who was 20 years older than me. So I had these kind of big sisters leading the way in this kind of feminism with community, you know, that dealt with providing a safe space to eat, you know, in a kind of simple domestic way, but they were all sort of just completely strong and amazing women. So I came to feminism in that way.
It was a dual purpose feminism where I wanted to use my hands and labor and that's, I'd grown up in a mill town and that was the kind of world I was surrounded by as far as the Rust Belt part goes. And I was learning feminist theory as an undergrad and I didn't want that to be isolated. So, you know, weaving those two ideas together is who I am as a feminist, how I sort of sit in that definition. All along as I was writing this book, I was thinking there would be a pigeon on the cover. There isn't a pigeon on the cover, but I was thinking of the idea of homing pigeons. And this idea that we have this natural impulse to return to places even though we don't know why, or maybe even reluctantly return to a

place. So I was exploring that idea throughout the book, throughout the essays, kind of asking the question, Why am I here? And what is this place that I should know well, but I seem to overlook constantly. So home,
homing, all of those ideas sort of were the impulse behind drafting the essay.
It has been good for me to spend this time with you in the audio garden.
Thank you for your company. Sometimes my heart is heavy and I come to this spot to listen. We started this hour with Palestinian poet Masab Abu Toha,
reading his poem "Under the Rubble," and I listened and held that in my heart.
I read Living with Oaks by Doug Tallamy and I contemplated all the species already lost to us forever here on Mother Earth and I wonder how can we go forward and do better. I listen to the wind, the chimes, the birds,
the trees and my beating heart And sometimes I just sit with all that and I write a poem. Here is, under the words,
under the words.
Beneath our tongues, our bereaved hearts, our plotting feet,
we are connected by root and fungi to dying children and decaying deserts.
We see faces of ghosts in ephemeral wildflowers. Our love can only water the garden.
We look in the pond and see violence, a reflection of home,
roosting in the pain of where we came from.
Thank you once again for joining me here in the audio garden. I'm Martha Senator.
Our featured poet today was Mossab Abutoha, author most recently of "Forest of Noise." His reading was part of a Democracy Now! web -exclusive video interview by Amy Goodman, available at democracynow .org. I spoke with Doug Tallamy,
author of "Living with Oaks" and co -founder of HomeGrow National NationalPark .org.
Banned book comments were by Jose Luis Alderete, co -founder of Medicine for Nightmares Bookstore in San Francisco, California. Our SPD Roundtable guests were author Eileen Tabeos. Her book, Bolly Bion Artist, is coming to your favorite bookstore very soon. Diane Gatell, Executive Director of Black Lawrence Press,
Kate McMullen, editor of Hub City Publishers, and Annie Groover, manager of Hub City Bookshop in Spartanburg, South Carolina. Next week, we will welcome Sherry Flick to the audio garden to talk about homing, instincts of a rust -belt feminist.
Our associate producer is DJ Jeannie Hopper, editing Jeremiah Coethran.
Music is by J. Rodriguez Sierra, and the band Book Theme is by DJ Jeannie Hopper with the voice and words of Yvette Murray. My name is Martha Sineter,
your host and producer, and I want to thank you for listening and for the opportunity to be heard.
Livin' it, givin' it, havin' it, takin' it,
shakin'
it, Livin' it is luck.
Livin' it is sewing a coat, investing each stitch with magic,
creating a unique design, putting it on and wearing it the rest of your life.
Livin' it is, knowing that what you see, what you hear is tangible. It's bein' a rock in the river and bein' the river too.