

TAB Storytellers Podcast Transcript of the interview with Connie Stewart, recorded on 6/5/2025.

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Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): Welcome to tab storytellers. I'm Abi Paytoe Gbayee. I'm here with my lovely co-host. We're here to talk about tab, which is teaching for artistic behavior in art, education, pedagogy, practice, methodology, praxis, all the different layers which really comes down to 3 core tenants. The child is the artist, the classroom is the studio, and we explore. What do artists do? And I'm joined here by my lovely co-host.

Jen Ferrari (she/her): Hello, everyone. It's Jen Ferrari. And I'd like to thank you for joining us for tab storytellers. This podcast was established to promote dialogue among art teachers who seek best practices in contemporary art education, and to advocate for tab, pedagogy and practice. This podcast which we lovingly refer to as a Tabcast is published once a month and is a place to share our tab stories with one another. These stories come from tab educators, administrators, community members, researchers, and many more sources. From how we found a tab to implementation in the classroom to advocacy for your program, to dispelling myths about tab practice. We cover everything for more information. Navigate after this tabcast to teachingforartisticbehavior.org. And there you'll find information, inspiration and incredibly helpful items such as teacher created resources and access to an online community of tab educators called mighty networks. All right, Abby, who do we have for our guest today?

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): Joining us for the kickoff of our 4th season is Connie Stewart, Professor Emeritus from the University of Northern Colorado, and phenomenal Art Educator, who has done so much for a lot of the folks in Colorado, myself included, on helping us understand ways to bring contemporary art education into the classroom in meaningful and relevant ways. And so I'm pleased to introduce Connie Stewart. Connie, tell us about yourself. Where are you at, and what are you doing these days?

Connie Stewart: Oh, thank you, I semi-retired, and thank you to Abby for taking on the position of art educator at Unc. And continuing our student-centered approach. That's very heartwarming to me. Since that time I have a hard time really letting go. So I am still teaching a couple of classes working with our grad program and will be part of a professional development Institute. That's in conjunction with, think, 360, which is a teaching artist organization in Colorado. During my career I taught graduate and undergraduate classes, and I directed a center for integrated arts education that endeavored to expand the role of the arts within the schools, and to challenge teachers to see how what they taught could impact their own lives, their communities, and their world.

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): Wonderful, and I have had the privilege of being in I think a couple of your grad classes. So I have had you both as a professor and have followed in your footsteps of being a professor in a program that you have done an amazing job creating and building, and you still teach a couple undergrad classes as well. So we're grateful to have you and the students here are lucky to still have you in their program. So share with us your tab story.

Connie Stewart: I that I was a tab person even before there was tab. My BA is elementary education. I was very influenced by my father, who was also an educator, and in his time he was very interested in the idea of individualized instruction, and that was I guess, a pedagogy that was important to him in elementary education, and so I learned from him and adopted that philosophy that children or individuals within your classroom, and the question of how do you teach them individually? So I got my BA. In elementary Ed, and then I obtained my art endorsement, and I tried to apply that same idea of an individual education within the art room, and I think it's a little bit more difficult, because there's so many children. But I've tried to find ways to allow each child to learn in ways that are most appropriate for them. And I did use a center approach often. Then I ended up meeting Nan Hathaway Dale Zompster was a good friend, and they became very influential with me in working with tab ideas, and by that time I was teaching at the university. So I wanted my university students to understand Tab, and to know it was an option for them when they developed their own philosophies and practices.

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): I met Nan. I think the 1st Colorado Art Education Association Conference in Breckenridge. I think I was still my undergrad in like 2,004, and I think she was like the scribble stage of sculpture. Which was just a fascinating thing, but it is vermont is lucky to have her. She made a big difference in Colorado, for sure. You also have been a part of the Tab Colorado conferences almost like a staple, I think, as part of like helping as part of the conference, navigating again, that contemporary art and presenting a lot for our regional conferences around some of those things. But you're you have such a rich history of scholarly work that does more than just contemporary art education in the classroom. You have a long history of working with some amazing other art educators, late Julia Marshall, and some really phenomenal things, and Tolson's work, and you know there's just some great phenomenal art educators that you guys have done some things around contemporary and social practice, and lived experiences and things as well as integrations and things like that. Do you want to speak to some of what it looks like to have those practices in the classroom or where your work originated, and where you, where you think it can go.

Connie Stewart: Great questions. I was privileged to work with Anne Toulson and Julia Marshall in writing a book, teaching contemporary art with young people. I still go back to those ideas and have the memories of us working together. And it's been very influential for both my personal life. And then my professional life in looking at her ideas of inquiry, basically, which really fits in with the tab concept of how do you get kids to ask questions about their own world, and we did over a long process, identify different artists and look at ways that they could be used in the classroom. I also was privileged to work with Lisa Hockritt and Eli Burke and Toya Northington, and we wrote a book on Critical Conversations in the Art Education Classroom, and that was an edited book where we asked people to submit different chapters. It was very, very interesting. We decided we were writing the book just because we wanted answers to our own questions, how do you do this in the classroom, and found so many different ways as people submitted their articles, and I do feel like that book is important now, even more than when it was published a couple years ago.

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): We will link both of those books in the show notes, for sure as resources for folks because they are, I have found them beneficial in my own practice, both in my K 12 practice and also in my higher Ed practice. They're amazing resources. And I think one of them you've built out a website for yes, I think that has some really great things going on it, too.

Connie Stewart: Yes, we do have a website. It's called Teaching Contemporary art. And I just was working with the web designer today to update some of the links and make sure that it's current and add some

material to it. So I'll be working on that over the summer. I took a little bit of a break after Julia's passing. I just need a little bit of break from it, but I'm ready to go back into it in her honor and her memory.

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): Yeah, I was. I stumbled across it. Looking through some different resources. And I was like, Wait a minute. I know I know this person website. Design is always one of those things that it takes so much more time than you think it should.

Connie Stewart: It sure does.

Jen Ferrari (she/her): Right.

Connie Stewart: But stay tuned. It's going. It's already a valuable resource, and it will be updated, refined, and perfected in the next few weeks.

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): What! Who are you? What artists and art practices do you love bringing to students.

Connie Stewart: I love bringing to students what they're interested in. So I think that's where it fits in with Tab. There's so many I don't have a set list of of artists that was originally the idea of the book was like, we'll do this list of artists, and we do have a list. But it really is a book where you can use those concepts and plug in many, many different artists that are interested. I did write down some that I thought would be interesting to kids. But my 1st advice is, if you're interested in using contemporary art in the classroom that you explore it for yourself. Forget about your role as a teacher for a moment and be an artist and a researcher. And then when you get excited about something, you're going to be able to share that with your students in appropriate language, and I really think you could teach anything to anybody if you use the right words. And so as teachers, we curate, we edit, we choose those things that will be meaningful to the kids in our care as we get to know them.

Jen Ferrari (she/her): You know that's interesting that you mentioned that because I found that when I started embracing Tab years ago, I would visit museums, and I would look at them in such a different way. I was almost looking at them as in like, what can I learn for myself, but also then share out. And it was not something I'd really considered before, because, as someone who had kind of preplanned an artist I want I was going to share, based on a technique or whatever, there didn't seem like much connection when I was going into a museum. But now doing it and seeing through those new eyes, I think it benefits my students greatly, because when they go out into the world and they see these things, they'll be able to kind of relate to them in that way, that perspective that I'm able to offer them now. I think about that every time. Now that I go into a museum, and I love taking pictures, I take so many pictures I have like folders and folders of real art I've seen, and the kids are always fascinated that I've seen the art myself, you know, rather than just pulling it off of Google.

Connie Stewart: I think that's the primary way that you find things that are interesting. So the artists that have been most interesting to me are the ones that I think I present in the classroom the most effectively. The other thing with a tab situation in your classroom. A tab environment is you've got so many themes and ideas that could be happening all at once. And so kids are already interested in some of those big ideas that contemporary artists are. So they're interested in building structures. They're interested in the uncanny. I just saw that in Washington, DC. The Women's Museum has a show on the uncanny, and I'm looking forward to seeing it this summer. They're interested in myth. They're interested in what's right and what's wrong. They're interested in power, you know. Those things come out in their

own work. And then, as you have that folder of pictures of things that you've been interested in, you can show them to them as a group, or individually.

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): So I know that like in thinking of those big themes, and kind of overarching ways of seeing the world and essential takeaways that we want to have. Make sure that kids are bringing from the classroom, from their art, learning, experience. I know that you have very powerful practice of questioning, and I've experienced it as your student, and I have seen it in practice. When I've seen you give presentations. I think that sometimes we get in the weeds of making, and we forget to stop and pause and have those rich conversations. What is your advice for tab teachers in helping them find that space to breathe, and have questions to engage students in their in their own learning.

Connie Stewart: I don't know if I have advice on finding space to breathe, because I don't know if you do. You know, you're so busy? And you've got to be so in tune. It's really an intense job. I think, that questions come from your own personal engagements. So your engagement with a student's work or your engagement with an artist that you're wanting to show the students and have a discussion about. So one of the pitfalls of questioning, and I don't see this as much in tab classrooms as I do in other classrooms. But teachers use questioning as a form of assessment, and it's valid. So you've given information. You want to know if the kids have it, do they have it down? And so they ask questions where the kids know that there's a right answer. And I do see that even at the college level, where the students are very, very skilled at guessing what I want to hear, so I'll ask a question, and they figure out already what I want to know. So in a tap classroom you can develop a culture of questioning, and you do that by letting your students know that I'm going to ask you questions where? I don't know the answer. I want to know what you think. And so it's questions that you really don't. You don't have an answer for. But they're phrased in such a way that there could be multiple answers that are all right. and sometimes that is a practice that takes a while to get your own mind wrapped around instead of always making sure that students are understanding you as the teacher.

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): Do you have any examples for folks who might like this might be suddenly like what I have not like? I mean, I've been in different programs. My own undergraduate art, education, experience, was much different than what I, you know, have come to believe should be the best experience for teaching experiences. so do you have some examples to help people who might not have had that as part of their program, or might have come to art education in a different pathway. They aren't quite familiar with that.

Connie Stewart: The way I introduce it to my pre-service teachers is that there's literal, inferential, and evaluative questions, and so almost doing like a game where you write questions. And so what are those things you want the students to know? What are those things that are inferential? So one of the best is, would this be different if it was well asking them, do you think it was a man or a woman that painted this somebody that identified with either of those genders and students will guess. And then would it be different if it was somebody else? And so sometimes kids can start engaging with a picture trying to figure out what the viewpoint of the artist was.

Jen Ferrari (she/her): This! Oh, go ahead! Sorry!

Connie Stewart: Yeah, that you know. That's I guess the other thing I was going to say is the other thing that seems to be a way to engage kids right away is by asking them an evaluative question. So do you think this would be a more effective picture if they used a red background, or if they used a black background, letting them judge the form, and then you often can get into those questions of who's right

and who's wrong. So think about All artists to use with kids is Cyrus Kabiro, who makes the glasses that he calls stunners out of found materials like. Would these be more interesting art if he used more typical art materials with him instead of trash that he found on the street? And kids can express their opinion on that. Do you think he he was? He was raised in poverty. And now I'm guessing that he's doing well. Why do you think he still wants to use the trash he finds on the street to make his art. So some of those inference requests.

Jen Ferrari (she/her): Yeah, I like to. Ask as many. I refer to them as open ended. So there's no like. Right or wrong, I mean, I phrase a lot of my like essential questions that way, too, which is, I think. what essential questions are supposed to be, anyway, because they challenge you to think critically. Something but you also started me thinking the 1st types of questions you were talking about. I started thinking back to when we were talking to d'ango about vts. and about how, when you're doing that, it's important not to lead anyone. You really are wanting to know what they're thinking. There's no right or wrong. And I love that about the way you can talk about art, because so many other parts of the day they have to have like a right answer to a question, and it's really one of the only spaces that you can offer them. Their opinion like, what is your opinion. So I love that about that line of questioning how it's different.

Connie Stewart: I like that, too, that and I think the real richness of both the Vts strategy and the way I do it, which is very, very similar, but it becomes this richness of the conversation after the initial question. So it's engaging with what the student says like, wow! That's really interesting. What do you think. And so then it becomes not just a question. Answer question, answer format. It becomes a discussion.

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): Some big arching. You talked about myths and fairness. Are there some other big, broad kind of approaches that you have found that get kids engaged in making in ways that maybe we don't always think to ask. I think, about their art.

Connie Stewart: Yeah, I think a couple things come to mind that are very different. One is, kids seem to really enjoy gift giving and gift giving is part of contemporary practice. Also, as people trade their work, or actually, like Linka Clayton, set up these elaborate projects where you're giving gifts. and you can certainly show kids adult artists that are making gifts and giving gifts. So I think that is one. The other thing that I noticed is that kids are very aware that they're only a few years away from ruling the world. And so they want agency already. And so it's those artists and those ideas that help them to express their own opinions about how they're going to do it better than the adults are currently doing it now, because they know it's going to be theirs pretty soon. and they'd like to prepare for it. So I certainly have had kids all throughout my career. Thank me for letting them talk about subjects that often their parents don't want them to talk about, because they don't want them to be upset or have too much pressure on them as children. And I understand that, too. I think we need to protect the childhood of our students. But I also know that in very controlled ways you can engage kids in the topics of current events, and they can express their opinion, and they can make art about it.

Jen Ferrari (she/her): I think that's important, too, because often as adults, I think we forget child's perspective, which is really what Tab seeks to bring back, I think, into the classroom like there's the voice, but that there's perspective behind the voice. And I think when you're having those conversations based on questioning and seeking to understand, you know. I think there's a lot of value in that for both parties.

Connie Stewart: Yeah, I really appreciate what you said that context behind the voice. Sometimes it's like we feel like we've done a good job. If we've just given them the opportunity to say what they wanted to say. but helping them see the context, and you appreciating the context, I think, is very interesting.

Jen Ferrari (she/her): Well.

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): I have found that sometimes the things that kids are worried about are really interesting. I used to do a project that was, there's a big organization. I think it's like the dream line project but we eventually did it. We just kind of did it internally, we didn't necessarily engage with it on the global level. But it's across like 20 different 27 different countries. Or it was last time I looked, but it's they ask kids to write down kind of like their dream world on a piece of fabric that's 9 by 12, and they then almost kind of like Tibetan flags. Beautiful. And so I used to do it as kind of like a, let's be part of a bigger global community. But letting kids write down what they wished or hoped for the world. Sometimes they were funny, like, I wish my cat would love me. You know, like. And some kids were worried about like environmental things. And some kids wanted to make sure they still had hunting rights when they became adults, and you know, just but like asking them what they really wished for, the world was really super fascinating. And it said a lot, and sometimes sometimes they were. They were funny and quippy, and sometimes, you know, it was. It gave voice to kids to deal with things in their life that when they had people dealing with addiction in their family, or some harder topics that they hadn't really been given any space to have agency around having a conversation in their art. And so that was it is. It's that that way creating ways. I guess. I also, the student asked me like, well, how do you? How do you let kids talk about things, you know, because we don't want to be in trouble, for, you know. getting out of our lane as art educators, and you know, indoctrinating kids into a you know. And I was just so do I. So a lot of times I just let the kids bring those things to the front themselves, if they, you know, making your space safe enough to be able to be trusted to have those conversations.

Connie Stewart: That would be my answer also, as you let the kids bring it up. But you can discuss what adult artists are doing. Also, without indoctrinating. I think of an example that I did during my sabbatical I worked in Wendy Oster's room in a middle school, so it was a wonderful, wonderful experience, and showed him one of the artists that I really like, which is Ibrer Muhamma, who wraps huge buildings with gunny sacks. But those gunny sacks were originally used to transport cacao beans for chocolate. and then, after that they were used for rice, and then they were used for those different grains that would be used within the country. And then, finally, when they couldn't be used anymore for food, they were used for charcoal. and he would buy them from the people and stitch them together and cover huge important buildings with them. So he's done buildings in Europe and buildings in the Us. And I saw it in Venice, and it was the smell that was the most empowering for me, because you could smell all those different grains. And then the chocolate that had been in the gunny sacks. So I tried to describe that to the kids and that his interest was looking at international commerce between Ghana and the Us. Or Ghana and Europe. and that, of course, is a little bit hard for kids to relate to. But I found some information about children working to collect those chocolate beans, and it was a new idea that kids didn't go to school. They had to go work at very young ages. So once I talked about kids being involved. Then they were very interested in his work. and later on I showed him several different artists that dealt with home. and he was one of their favorites, because they said, we need to know about that. They need to know about what kids are doing in the rest of the world. And I think that that type of child-centered presentation of contemporary events isn't indoctrination. That's teaching kids about the rest of the world.

Jen Ferrari (she/her): Hmm.

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): I think I think that's important.

Connie Stewart: It is. And I, you know, I know right now that teachers aren't sensitive and I think they should be and we need to make sure that the teacher's viewpoints aren't part of the curriculum, but that we teach kids how to find their own opinions and their own ideas.

Jen Ferrari (she/her): Yeah, that's always the viewpoint that I have had. If I've had someone question like, why, something was incorporated into the curriculum. That's but what Abby was talking about earlier is always one of the things that I never understood about how like I never understood the staying in your lane. From people, because contemporary art in particular is about sharing ideas. So that is essentially in a contemporary art education classroom. If you don't have that as part of it, then you're really doing a disservice to what you're there to do for kids. So that's always the the stance that I've had, and I try to share contemporary, almost exclusively contemporary artists, especially of color, so that this way my kids are represented from, you know, their their backgrounds, but also so that they can see relevant things to them.

Connie Stewart: I would totally agree that that's and then they're going to come up with the ideas and the questions. Once you've developed that safe space for them to do it. and I very much. I don't know what in your lane means. I don't know what my lane is, because art is.

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): I was told, painting and drawing one time by an admin that was it.

Connie Stewart: Painting. Well, what do you paint and draw about at.

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): Not contemporary things.

Connie Stewart: Teaching reading. We're just supposed to teach reading. But what are kids supposed to read, you know, read about, you know, both literature and the arts are inherently integrated with everything else that you're learning about the world. So they're integrated with science. They're integrated with social studies. They're integrated with you're using all those things to to make art to say something.

Jen Ferrari (she/her): Well, that's where I think, being a like knowledgeable like I was, gonna say, educated, but like knowledgeable about what it is you're teaching and why you're teaching it so that you can advocate for it if you know those things, and you can talk about them to someone else, especially using maybe even educational, speak that like Admin or someone else in general, education might be familiar with. I think that's really important. I always try to make sure I know everything I need to about what it is I'm doing so that this way, if I was gonna talk to someone else about it, I could help them understand. Not to say that they are wrong, but like, when you're having a conversation. you do need to know why you believe something and have something there, you know.

Connie Stewart: Yeah, I think that's really important that you have those purposes and why you're doing what is why you're doing what you're doing and why it's important. So that you can explain it. And I I think that many administrators have the same goals as you do. They? They want kids to be curious about the world and interested in learning lots of different things. They just have a lot of other pressures on them, too.

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): So it you brought up integrating into other subjects and things you have advocated for a long time for integration of the arts. And so what does meaningful arts integration look

like for you? because I I there's there. I have seen integration done well, and I have seen it art be the afterthought.

Connie Stewart: I think integration really is centered in the art room because art's integrated. So as you're looking at what the kids are doing as you're looking at the artists that you bring into the classroom. There's so many different threads and connections that you can make where you can work with another teacher in the school, or you can ask those questions and find out and inform yourself. One of my favorite examples is Tomos Saraceno, who does his entire body of work about spiders. Well, it's definitely an art form. He draws spiders, and then he creates these cases, and he has spiders make the webs inside of them. and then he did an installation where it was in a building where you could be up several stories, and you would climb up the stairs, and then you could walk out on a net. and there was the sound of spiders that was reverberating throughout the space, and you became the spider. You started to understand what it was like to be a spider. So since that time I've been incredibly interested in spiders. So I think, as we look at what artists are doing now, it's going to integrate us in the rest of the world, and it's going to do it naturally. rather than using the arts to develop a skill that will be tested. That's not what we're doing. But we are looking at curiosity and inquiry and continued adult interest in the world.

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): I think that that that's something that really became a focus when I was teaching middle school was I? I mean, I guess I hold the belief that you know curiosity drives creativity. And how to make kids curious became kind of like an endeavor like I did a lot of trying, you know, different scaffolds and supports and getting kids to think when they didn't want to, and, you know, move beyond. Because I think that we do sometimes. I mean, there's that balance of you know, in Tab, like there's a kid that gravitates towards the center, and all they want to do is that one thing does that because it's safe, or is because they have an inquiry that they need to go deep on. And when when do you push them to be more curious. And you know and how do you push them? To be more curious? And I think that those are all it is. It's an individualized thing, student by student kind of thing. But also when you have a whole group of kids, I found a lot especially coming from like when I would get them from different elementaries around the city. I kind could kind of tell where they were coming from, based on, you know, they'd been with the same art teacher, you know, for 5 years before me they had some traits that they were going to hold on to and working to help them become more curious was something that. depending on where they had been was more of a challenge or not. And so All of these kinds of ways of connecting to other content and other ways of understanding things, to create questions. Became such a huge.

Connie Stewart: Focus of what I was trying to do in education. Towards the end of my time in the classroom. I think you've really got a good point, because it's the younger kids are going to be naturally curious. So you've got different challenges when you're teaching elementary, especially younger, elementary. But that idea of curiosity. They're just absorbing everything around them. And so they are curious. By the time kids get to middle school, school's more of a game, and part of it is showing that you're not interested in anything. So how do you get beyond that? And let them know that this is still a place where they can ask those questions, and you know I don't have the answer for that, I think modeling. It is one thing showing your own curiosity, and how what you do leads to other questions, and even helping them find the answers to your questions.

Jen Ferrari (she/her): Yeah, I've actually found one of the best ways that you were just kind of mentioning is, if a kid asks me something, I just say I don't know. Let's go figure it out. And so sometime,

and that and that also, aside from showing them that you don't have to know everything shows them that they can be empowered to ask the question and then find the answer, which is curiosity? Right?

Connie Stewart: Love that follow up of. Let's find out like, Wow. I don't know that I haven't even thought about that, you know. Let's find out together.

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): There's some things that I've had intentional amnesia about. All the time, time, all knowledge around airplane construction. Right? Definitely, I have intense, purposeful amnesia, because as soon as they realize that I can make a fasting faster flying, you know. Plane. I end up doing so. I'm always like, no, you're gonna have to do some research on that. I have no idea, no idea. I've never seen an air paper airplane in my whole life, not even.

Connie Stewart: Excuse me.

Jen Ferrari (she/her): My favorite. I love feigning ignorance. cause they're like, you don't know I'm like no, I don't know. It's so fun.

Connie Stewart: Yes, you tell me, and you find out, and you you've modeling curiosity for them. So that's but then I have my own curiosities, you know.

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): Gonna ask you, what are you curious about right now?

Connie Stewart: Oh, I'm very curious about native plants in Colorado, and learning all of the different names of the parts of plants, figuring out what plants have been introduced and what plants were here a hundred years ago 200 years ago. So yeah, that's my my new learning thing when I have a chance. I'm looking through my plant books, trying to learn all the names of the different plants. So I'm interested in the dirt. I'm interested in mushrooms. I'm interested in root systems. And just recently I was thinking, I just need to relax. And so I just decided to sketch the clouds within. I knew there were cumulus clouds. But then all these questions about like, where am I seeing the hot air drafts coming up from the bottom? And what are the most characteristics, aspects of a cumulus cloud? And when do they change into where they really become a different form of cloud, and they become the thunderhead and I had to look it up. And then I thought, Well, it's really hard to draw clouds with pencil, you know. How did John Constable do it. So I looked up. John Constable. So you know I could share all of that as a way of integrating what I'm doing with the knowledge around me.

Jen Ferrari (she/her): So I have a question that was unplanned, related to what you were just saying. Do you find that, being semi-retired and having maybe a little bit more time than us working folk might have helps to foster your creativity. Because and the reason I ask is because not a curiosity. Sorry to foster your curiosity, and the reason I ask is because I saw this I forget who it was, but I saw this real sorry to bring up social media. But I saw this reel, and it was saying that as kids don't have as much time for play, their curiosity disappears. And so I think maybe that's 1 of the benefits of Tab is that it leaves that space for curiosity. But anyway, back to my original question, do you find that being semi-retired helps you with that.

Connie Stewart: I need to know how to control it. I've got so many interests that I've got to figure out what's most important and prioritize them because I am. I'm curious about so many different things, and now I think that I have time to pursue them all. And so I'm learning to manage my time that way. But yes, it has given me freedom to pursue other things that I really care about, and to be more curious about

the world. So, and I do agree with kids and play just watching my grandkids. You know, they're the most curious. They're really learning the most when they're playing.

Jen Ferrari (she/her): No.

Connie Stewart: And so hopefully, Tab can fill that need.

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): I know that we've been off and on topic. Kind of throughout this. Is there something that you had like wanted to say, or that you think of, like as we've had conversation that you'd like to bring up and share with tab educators.

Connie Stewart: I think, to keep learning yourself, you know, when you've got it down so well, which is the way it should be. So you're not putting as much energy into planning every day. Often I see teachers then find other interests that they use, which is fine. They've got the time to do that, but also to continue to stay. Curious about what they're teaching, who are artists that they could bring in to continue looking at some of those things that you can find online that will help inform you. Continue to go to museums, continue to read, continue to be interested for yourself, so you can convey that to the kids. and I think Tab is a great venue for being able to show your own interest and model for them how you follow up on a question and make something.

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): Yeah, I think that's there's a great part about being able to be a learner with students. Because I don't think. There's not a lot of places in educational systems where we create space for people to learn alongside. And also that we're not asking for them to have a set outcome or answer. And so it's It can be disconcerting, I think. Sometimes. And that's that's definitely where scaffolding comes in and supports. But I think that it's What we have is really beautiful in that space, of being able to get to know students through questions and asking them questions and having them think through things. That is That's also a skill.

Connie Stewart: And the wonderful thing about Tab is honoring the individual child wherever they are. In that spectrum of curiosity they may want to do the same center the whole time, and that may be fine. That's where they are learning. Other kids may be having some great idea and use lots of different centers to explore it, and Tab allows for that individuality and learning.

Jen Ferrari (she/her): Yeah, but you so much for thank you so much for Joining us, and for your the final thoughts that you had I am finishing up the year now, and my professional practice goal and my student learning goal this year was related. We both myself and the students kept a visual journal, and in the visual journals. This was the 1st time I had done it for them. I had attempted in the past, but this year, since it was a goal, I held myself to it. I had to do it and as we were doing them and learning about them together. we would share out about them things we would learn. So I love that you mentioned modeling the behaviors that you want your students to have, because I really think that is like a 1 of the biggest factors that you could affect for children is to model what you want them to be able to do So thank you for bringing that up. Because in my own perspective. it it really also gave me, like. I think a stronger personal connection to my kids because we were able to relate to each other. So yeah.

Connie Stewart: Same thing. I love that example. that example of learning together, too. You're both doing this. Project, and journals are great. It was powerful.

Jen Ferrari (she/her): And thank you so much for joining us. I look forward to doing many other learning things or or things with you in the future. for those that well, I don't know if I've mentioned it on here

before. But I approached Connie after the last National Convention, and I was super interested as a tab educator to bring what I do. and about contemporary art to others. And I was like, who could I possibly? And I said Connie. Connie is the person. So maybe hopefully, we might be able to team up and do something in Chicago. as soon as we I find out on this podcast I will let everyone know. But if you've enjoyed this, podcast this tab cast and you're going to Chicago next year, maybe there will be more content about contemporary art and artists in the tab classroom.

Connie Stewart: I hope so. I hope we get a chance to do that. I think it would be a wonderful presentation to work together. There's so much in contemporary art that you can use and can engage yourself and your students. I appreciate the invitation also. So thank you.

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): And for people who hear this before the end of June. That's when proposals are due for the National Art Education Association.

Jen Ferrari (she/her): Yes, apply, apply.

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): Chicago, and if you're not just as a way of knowing you are welcome to put your submissions under multiple categories. If you put it under elementary. The elementary division will review it. If you put it under Choice Interest Group, the Choice Interest group will review it. So kind of where you market is who sees it, and how much competition you have. So just Fyi. Maybe if you're a choice person or a tab person, consider putting stuff under the interest group rather than the division. Just helpful, helpful tips and tidbits. And if you have not joined interest groups do that too, because the more people belong to an interest group, the more sessions they are given, it is given on a numbers basis. So the more members that belong to an interest group. The more number of sessions they're allowed to have in case you didn't know. The more you know.

Connie Stewart: Good information.

Jen Ferrari (she/her): Yes, very helpful. Thank you for bringing that up, and for those of you who are seeking to submit. I look forward to seeing those presentations in Chicago, because I will be there, regardless of whether or not Connie or I have the privilege to present. So I can't wait.

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): See people there, and.

Jen Ferrari (she/her): Abby will be there. We'll be there.

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): My last rodeo on the board. So thank you so much, Connie, for for being here. We really appreciate it.

Connie Stewart: You so much for inviting me. I've really enjoyed the conversation and appreciate the work that both of you do. So keep up the good work, and enjoy your summer.

Jen Ferrari (she/her): Oh, thank you will do. It's 1.

Jen Ferrari (she/her): All right. Oh, before we go I should mention, as I usually do, that if you've been listening, and you are like Oh, my gosh, I want to keep talking about all this stuff. Or find out more. Then you can navigate after this teachingforartisticbehavior.org. And then that website. If you go up to the right hand corner, there's a little teal blue button that says, Join our community, and that will lead you to mighty networks which is completely free. I think you just register you could put in your gmail or

whatever email address you use. and once you register, you're able to go in to have all kinds of conversations and different topics. You can actually reach out privately to message people to ask questions. You can locate educators in your area that you could go visit, which is some of the best professional development you could do. So. There's so many opportunities on that platform. So please do go to mighty networks and join us there. We'd love to see you and have you.

Abi Paytoe Gbayee (she/they): Yes, thank you again, Connie, and we look forward to wanting to see you in person soon and later. So.

Connie Stewart: That sounds great.

Jen Ferrari (she/her): Thanks. Connie.

Connie Stewart: You bet. Thank you.