Crafting Together: Paper Collage Quilts with Constance Moore with Constance

Chapter 1 - Crafting Together: Paper Collage Quilts with Constance Moore

Paper Collage Quilts with Constance Moore

- Hi everybody. Welcome. We're gonna wait a minute or two for people to trickle in. In the meantime, if you have any questions or just wanna say hello and where you are joining us from, please use the chat. You can open up the chat conversation with a little bubble icon at the bottom of your screen. We've got folks from Montreal, from Ontario, from New York, from Ohio, from Louisiana. Wow, Indiana. Okay, tell me if you're quilt makers. Tell me if you're picture book fans. Margo from Watsonville. We're here with Constance Moore. We're gonna wait just like one more minute for people to join us. People from Washington, Hawaii, Maryland. Becky says I do anything, paper, anything fabric. I bet that resonates with a lot of people. Venezuela, Maine. Picture book fan and crazy quilter wannabe. I love it. Collage artist and quilt maker. I love all of this. Well, welcome everyone. My name is Courtney Cerruti. I'm the editor in chief of Creative Bug. I'm a picture book lover and a quilt dabbler, and we're joined with Constance Moore, who is a creative book instructor, a local art educator and children's book illustrator, and now author and illustrator with your newest book, A Language of Stitches, which comes out in July. Welcome, Constance. Thank you so much for being here. - Thank you for having me. Excited to be here. - So March is National Quilt Month and National Craft Month. And so I thought it would be really fun to have you talk to us a little bit about this newest book that you both authored and illustrated. So previously you've done, you illustrated the picture book Black and the Picture book Blue. And forgive me, I forget the other - and Brown. - Brown - And Brown, those three. Yes. But this is your first author and illustrated picture book, so congratulations on that! - Thank you. Thank you. - And you chose to do all of this, the, you know, create this picture book on the life of Rosie Lee Tompkins. And Constance is gonna give us a little presentation, a bit about Rosie Lee Tompkins. But can I ask you, before we even get there, like what inspired you? Like how did you find out about Rosie Lee Tompkins? - Yeah, I first encountered her work at the Oakland Museum and they had an exhibit called I think Half Squares and Yo-Yos and her work was there and it really like blew my mind and kind of opened up my idea about what quilting could be. And then I was just hooked ever since. And she's local or she was local and so a Bay Area artist and I kind of just kept my eyes out on her. And then when the BAMPHA exhibit happened, I was really thrilled and excited, - Super excited. So both Creativebug and Constance are in the San Francisco Bay area. We're on the East Bay and Oakland and Berkeley. So Rosie Lee Tompkins was local to our area. And we're talking about the Oakland Museum and BAMPHA, which is the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive which is right next to the university, next to Cal Berkeley. And for you, Constance, are you a quilt maker? Are you a picture book lover? You're obviously an educator. Tell me a little bit more about your relationship to both quilts and picture books. - So I am not a quilter, but I have a lot of quilting in my family. As you know, my cousin Sarah Bond was a prolific and amazing quilter. And so we grew up with quilts, but I'm not a quilter at all. And, but I'm a quilt appreciator and lover. And my main job, my main gig is I'm an elementary school art teacher and I'm always introducing my students to different artists, different types of art. And that's one of the bridges that kind of got me into this idea of doing a picture book biography of Rosie Lee Tompkins. because her work is so amazing and gorgeous and her story is really interesting. But there was nothing available for my students. You know, I have to make it myself, which is normal. But I thought, wow, every, all students should know about her. She should, you

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know, she's like this amazing American artist and there should be a bazillion books about her. - I love that. I have to laugh 'cause it's so incredible that both you, Constance Moore and e bond, who's also your cousin, are so like, well respected in the quilt world. And I think when this book comes out you'll be in that same bucket, but neither of you are quilters. It's just so amazing. But I love quilt appreciator, that's such a great term. And I'm personally so excited for this book because I also was only familiar with her work in various museum shows. I saw both her work at Oakland Museum and at the BAMPHA Show, like you were talking about. And I think too, that we're sort of women's work in general, you know, women of color especially. It's like, I feel like this is getting more traction and more certainly with Instagram and social media and so forth, but I, that's the one place where these kind of communities of social media allow us to really see like, wow, look at this prolific history and let it share with a wider audience. And then of course, the schools, I mean, that's the foundational place we all get our education, right? So I'm super excited that you chose a picture book format to really tell this story. - Yeah, yeah, yeah. I did. I guess I would never have thought to like, I'm not gonna do a research book about her. I mean, there are a few - there's the exhibit catalog, which is a phenomenal catalog. It's one of the best ones ever that I've ever read. Like I've read it from page to page. So it's really good and it's really well written and interesting in this way. So that book is good. But obviously it's not, you know, it's not for kids in any way. Right, right. But yeah, I would only think about doing it as a children's book. That's kind of my love language, you know? - I love - It. You share that like a collection, like a - collector. Absolutely. And if you haven't seen Constance's Daily Practice where she takes you through an art project or process or technique, all inspired each day by a different children's picture book, I highly recommend it. Like Constance said, I'm a long, long time, I've been collecting children's books since I was a teenager and they're, they really are - they're art books in and of themselves. And of course looking at your books, Constance, Black, Brown, Blue, and now Language of Stitches, which I cannot wait to get my hands on July - it comes out in July and we'll be doing a giveaway too, so stay tuned on more info for that. They just, they're such a beautiful representation of something. And the work is amazing. I mean, that's why children's book Illustrators' original pieces are in fine art galleries. And so a lot of work goes into them and a lot of love. So for folks who are maybe new to you, definitely new to Rosie Lee Tompkins, Constance has a little presentation, she's gonna walk us through a bit of Rosie Lee Tompkins's work. So maybe we'll start there. And then we're gonna, she's gonna guide us in a little collage activity that speaks to how she created the illustrations for her picture book. And feel free to ask questions in the chat and we will answer them. We'll save a little time for some Q & A as well. And for anyone who's just joining, this is Constance Moore and we're talking about the life of Rosie Lee Tompkins, which inspired Constance to both author and illustrate an upcoming children's book called A Language of Stitches. It's going to be published by Abrams and it'll be out in July. So welcome everybody, and Constance, if you wanna share your presentation, we'd love to hear a bit more about Rosie Lee Tompkins and how your life with her has intersected. - Okay, here I go. Let me get it organized here. Hold on. - Where did you go, Rosie? Okay, okay... here we go. Okay. And did it share? - No, - There it's not - Sharing yet. Oh, there it goes. - Okay. Alright. - Okay, let's go back one. Oops. Why want it go back one, there we go. Nope, it's going the wrong direction. There we go. Okay, there we go. All right, I got it now. Okay. So the book is called A Language of Stitches, the Radical Quilts of Rosie Lee Tompkins. And on the left is the book cover, the cover illustration. And on the right is an image of Rosie Lee Tompkins that was in the New York Times. Roberta Smith, who was like this amazing art critic for the New York Times, wrote this phenomenal review of the BAMPHA show and just talking about Rosie Lee Tompkins and the power of her work and its place

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in the canon of American art. And so this photograph is kind of stuck with me and was a little bit of the inspiration for the cover of the book. The cover of the book, though you do at the very end, after you've gone through the whole thing. So it's kind of a funny way of working backwards. So this is Rosie Lee Tompkins, and - Do you know Constance how old she was when she was making these quilts? 218 00:10:35,820 --> 00:10:36,820 - I don't, she was, she was born, her actual real name was Effie Mae Martin in Gould, Arkansas. And so she'd been sewing her whole life and quilting her whole life. So, you know, the quilts kind of have a long range of 225 00:10:59,640 --> 00:11:00,640 - of time. You know, she moved to Richmond, CA not kind of a straight shot. She went up to the Midwest. First she moved to Richmond, and when she was only 22, you know, she left segregated south, really harsh environment in terms of like racial segregation, Jim Crow, et cetera. She was born in 1936, I believe. I can't believe I don't have that date seared in my brain, but right now it's escaping me. But I believe that is when she was born and she left at 22, which is really young to be by herself. She traveled to Richmond and then she, there, she became a nurse and she became a mother and stepmother. Married, and then she had some struggles with mental health, which seemed kind of a reasonable response to life as a young mother with small children far away from family in this new environment. And not knowing, you know, we don't know what her early struggles were in Gould, Arkansas. So it seemed like to me like a very reasonable response to life, the pressures of life. But during that time, she kind of went more inward and she'd always been deeply religious, very a deep faith. And she kind of pulled on both her faith and her basically her artistic training as a child. And those things kind of pulled her out of that space and helped her, you know, carry on with her life. And she really went into quilting in a much more, she just sort of went whole hog into quilting after that. So you can see, let's see. I dunno why this, okay, so this is an, the, the opening, like, what do you call it? Spread the opening spread for the book. And, you know, without the text in there, it's just my original artwork. And she grew up working with her mother. She had 14 brothers and sisters, and she learned how to quilt. And a lot of really traditional quilt things were the original quilt things. - Is that watercolor, that illustration stance. - This, oh, oops, why are you going back? Go the other way. Ah, stop it. It doesn't wanna go backwards. Sorry. People. All right. Hold. - Okay. They're here for the art, not for the tech. - All right, thank you for that. Okay. We'll go all the way back here and go there. Yes. I should say that to my students too. You're here for the learning, not for the tech, because I'm always having tech problems. Okay. So this one is a combination of watercolor and color pencil. - Lovely. - So kind of a mix of the two. Yeah, yeah. Lovely. And I had a lot of fun. I have many different examples of the, you know, I tried this page many, many times because it was almost, it was just so fun to do it. Yeah. Hard to be like, okay, this one, okay, this fine. Kept doing it over and over. And also, I don't do anything on the computer, just as you can see, I'm not that, I'm not, tech is not always my friend, but I, I really enjoy the process of like physically drawing and painting and I don't like doing it on the computer. So yeah, it would make my life easier, but - I still don't think, I mean, I've seen really beautiful work made on an iPad and so forth, but I still feel like an original watercolor, you know, piece of art is not the same - As, yeah, seeing the hand is like important, which is one of the things I really like about her quilting. You really see her hand in Yes. In the quilts. Yeah. So this is another spread from the book. It's her journey from Gould, Arkansas up to, she goes to Illinois, then to Wisconsin, and then over to Richmond where she starts, you know, stitching together a new life for herself at that point. So these are just some of the traditional quilt patterns that she may have grown up, most likely grown up learning, but then you can see that she starts to really go play with them and she just explodes the whole idea of, you know, kind of an organized traditional quilt pattern. And, and I love this one with just black and white where it's, it's

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like that pinwheel in the middle, it just starts spinning out and creating this movement and just incredible. So. Oh yeah, this is from 1987. So that will give you an idea. - Yeah. Amazing. - Yeah. Beautiful. Okay, so there, here we add color in there. And so you can see in this one, really one of the things that she does a lot is play with scale. So you got the tiny checkers and then kind of the medium and then the big triangles and you know, just explodes. You can also tell on this one the shape. I think this is a little bit smaller than a normal quilt, but even the shape you can see it's not really intended to go on a bed. It's a painting. She's painting with fabric and, - And is it velvet? It looks like velvet. - It's velvet. - It's velvet, 335 00:16:53,450 --> 00:16:54,450 She painted a lot with velvet and velvet. And which if, I guess people were on here who were quilted. Well, no, it's kind of difficult. It's slippery, it's, you know, it buckles and whatnot, but she really plays with it. And you can see in the next one. So we're gonna talk about this, how she uses it to really like, absorb and reflect light. Really, really like operating like a painter, you know, really. Oh, ah. And this one is just so dynamic. And then she's got this, you know, primary blue, you know, and then across, she's got the, the oranges and then sort of that analogous colors there that really pulled this. So she, she was a color, you know, she was a master of color, like she with scale and fabric material. And she was just such a master of color and understanding how color works together and plays with it. And then there's always these little fun things in there, these little, so you can see in this bottom left corner, there's this little green, it's almost like a mini quilt inside that quilt. Yeah. Beautiful. And I love that, that like, that was one of the things I enjoyed about the exhibit, going and seeing these surprises that, - Yeah. Incredible. Do you know if she was machine stitching? Partially hand stitching? Partially, - Yeah. But both going back and forth and she didn't do the, she mostly made the quilt tops, - Right? The, - She didn't do the quilting itself. There was a couple of women who in the Bay Area who were kind of known quilters. Irene Bankhead is one of the most famous ones who would take other people's quilt tops and quilt for them. And partly that was due to Leon Eli, who was the man who collected a lot of her quilts, Rosie Lee Tompkins quilts. And so he would get her quilt tops from her and then he would pay the, these other women to actually quilt them together. So, yeah. Yeah, it's fascinating. So, okay, I just lo I could just sit in, look at this and be like, okay, done an incredible - Sample. We had one person in the chat. We are, we are gonna do a collage together after the presentation, but we're learning about Rosie Lee Tompkins, who's the quilt maker who inspired both con's forthcoming picture book, and is going to inspire the craft that we're gonna do together in a few minutes. - Yeah. Okay. So again, just talking about this color family, she uses that primary yellow and then the complimentary purple, and then those analogous colors over here. Beautiful. This, this in particular, this color way comes up again and again in her work. She repeats it over and over again. And we're gonna talk about that when we get to the craft part. So another type of quilt that she did were they strip quilts where they, you know, this long strip, each one then sewn together. And again, you can see her playing with scale, right? And then suddenly mixing it up with the triangles here. So she does a lot of that. And then like this pop of pink and playing around. Same with the, the blue jeans. So this is kind of the model of what we're going to use for our, our quilt. And you can see here, and oh, this is another one. And this one is inspired in the book. You can see on the, on the, the back this, it's kind of a similar inspired that one. So, okay, so this one is called Three Sixes and it's inspired by sixes and the birth dates of three of her family members. So like I said, she was far from home and, but she felt deeply connected to those family members. And the way she connected to them was through quilting and by picking this art, picking these colors that had meaning to her that, and they represented each family member. And so she repeats this, this purple, orange, yellow thing over and over again. And you can see here two really dynamic, really

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fun quilts. So that's what we're gonna do. So beautiful. Yeah. So we're gonna pick a color. You can, you don't have to, but this is the way I'm doing it. I'm gonna pick a primary color. So I picked blue and it's opposite is it's complement orange. And so I have kind of a range of orange and some other things here. Yep. And I'm just gonna start cutting. I'm using a really small, I haven't been into these really mini, like, quilt collages lately, so that's what I'm, I'm gonna use this, but you know, you're welcome to use whatever size paper people want. And I don't know, do you want me to, - Let's, can we finish the slideshow and then we will, that way we can switch the camera view so everyone can - Hold on. Okay. So just have a couple more examples of student work that I, I did in another workshop. These are all teachers who are working on this. So, and this one just got the blues and then she, she kind of just came in this family here and what people were just thinking about a color that brought them joy and had meaning to them that was significant to them in their lives. And that's what we worked on. Then these are just two more kind of different, she did the complimentary colors and then this one, she had lots of colors and it came out really beautiful. Yeah. So you don't have to limit yourself to, to lots of colors. And then I just added a few more rosy quilts on here so people could see 'cause they're so luscious and beautiful, so Wow. Really fun to look at. - Yeah. What a prolific maker, - Right? This incredible. - Yeah. - And then this one, and then often she would put the stitching in words and sometimes bible verses and just all kinds of different stuff. - Beautiful. Oh God, look at that. Use all the colors, all the colors balanced, you know, it's still so balanced. Yeah. Like you really moves around, it's like light and dark and saturation and Yeah. Yeah. - And then the stitching, you know, kind of adds this, it, it kind of mutes it out a little bit over here, but it, it just, I love it. - Yeah. Someone in the chat, Laura is saying it's very much like a crazy quilt. Definitely has some of those elements and then the obviously is also a crazy quilt. Common material. - Yeah. - The stitching. So that's really fun. - Yeah. And I think I have one more. Yeah. Dark, nice. - Jane's asking, do you know Constance if these were mostly improv pieced or if they were planned out in any way? - I, what I do know is that she would shop for fabric, you know, both at the fabric store but also at like secondhand clothing places. She was looking for the materials. Sometimes she uses dish towels or you know, different things. But she was so there, you know, it was intentional in, in that what she, the fabrics that she chose. But I do think, I believe that they are improv kind of, you know? Yeah. It goes in with a plan ish. - Totally. But they're not like, obviously nothing here is like cut with the template or anything like Oh, I would say yeah, they definitely have an improv style, right. So - Yeah. Yeah. - Come to come to the piece with some design inspiration in mind and a color palette. But then, - Yeah. Yeah. It's like she, I mean the thing the one of the hard things is you don't really know. There's not a lot. She was an intensely private person when she was alive and there's not a lot of on the record of her speaking about her work, which is really sad, but I understand. So, so that is a little bit hard to know, you know, because we don't have Right, we don't have any knowledge. - Yeah, absolutely. Do you know when she passed? When she died and then is it early two thousands or? - No, - No, she was, I'll tell you, I'll just look - In the bucket. - Let's refer, refer to the source on this, the picture - Book. Yes. She was born in 1936 and she died in 2006. - Okay. Yeah. Audrey in the chat saying that too. Okay. Yeah. 'cause we were seeing some things from the eighties and nineties in the, yeah. So wow. She probably worked a really long time. And Dorothy is saying yes, this is a perfect example of improv quilting. If you haven't checked out improv quilting before, we have a lot of classes on it on the site. Sherry ly wood is one of the artists that does a lot with improv, quilting, and she speaks about quilt. - Her classes are really fun. - Yeah, exactly. Rachel is saying, I also am learning the Korean traditional hand stitching where pieces are of leftover fabric are pieced together to make a larger piece feels very similar. Yeah. Right. Like yeah,

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the concept of quilting that make do and men kind of tradition is like across many cultures, you know, there's different iterations of that. But for sure people, the history of this is with scraps and what you have. - Absolutely. Yeah. Yeah, yeah. And I'm, I'm certain as growing up that that in the her, you know, her fa her family was sharecroppers, so there wasn't a lot of extra anything. Yeah, totally. Yeah. - Absolutely. Well thank you Constance for that overview. Maybe let's stop sharing the presentation so then we can see, we can focus on the camera with the art supplies. One other question, Carol's asking, are these images from mfa, the ones that you used in the - Yes. Yes. They're from mfa. - Cool. Beautiful. Okay. So we are going to use that as inspiration for making our own collage quilts. Like sort of like some of the images you showed us, what do people need to have in front of them? So they had to pick a color? - Yeah, so I would pick a color and let's see, I, so I picked blue. I like to pick a primary color, just 'cause I, I feel like that's an easy start for me. So I picked a primary color and I then I've kind of got an assortment. - Is this painted papers? Scrapbooking paper? What is this? - Yes, yes, yes. - Okay. It's all the things. - Yeah. I have some kind of a random thing. I think I have. Yeah, like an envelope. - Yeah. - Inside an envelope. I have a, a paper that I printed on and painted on myself. This is actually from the book Blue, some leftover. Oh yeah. And then just regular construction paper and some paper I, I painted with temper paint and probably from my classroom, leftover classroom. And then this is from Uppercase magazine. Yeah. You know, they give you, al always has a nice fun papers in there. So that's one. I'm, I'm down to just a little bit. I love it. And then you, and then I have some, I think from jelly printing liquor and you know, card style instruction paper. So I'm going, so I went across the color wheel to the oranges. So I'm going to use those. That's kind of where I'm gonna start with my blues and my oranges. - Okay. And then you've got scissors and then what kind of glue I stick what other people have? - I have, this is my favorite glue stick is what I use. It's school with kids. I use the, I've stopped using glue sticks 'cause so wasteful of the plastic and everything. And I'm using regular glue and they're, and I'm using little tiny glue bottles and it's really working quite well, so. Okay. It's been great. So, but for me, because I know how to take care of a glue stick, I'm using this and I also, someone gave me this. - Oh yeah, yeah. Your, this is a rice glue - And I like, I like this. It's fun to squeeze out this glue. - Nice. Ivy, could we just pin consciences like overhead camera and then Perfect. Okay. So hopefully everyone can see Constance work surface. And you said we're gonna, we're gonna do like a smaller quilt, right? We're gonna, - Yeah, I'm using a five, five by seven. I have a pad of these papers and so I liked using them and what I've been doing when I've been doing this is doing two, no, I lay it out here and then when I glue it, I move it over here. - Okay. - That makes sense. - Lay it out on one side and glue it on. - Yeah. Yeah. - I feel like this is a nice, it's a nice card size. If you wanna send somebody like a get well card them a little paper quilt to get well soon. - Yeah. A nice hello. You know. Okay. So yeah, if people have questions or wanna, - So are, are we cutting things into like rough squares? What's the process? Yeah, - I'm gonna cut them into like yeah. Little rough squares. I'm gonna do a bunch before I lay them out. - Okay. So we'll start by, - Yeah. Kind of squared and rectangles. - Okay. I feel like a little muffin tin would be helpful. - Yes. Support - All these little, - That would be helpful. - So all these little things, I have origami paper just 'cause that's what I grabbed, which I don't, it's nice. Doesn't have as much texture variety as your fun pile of paper. But I had it from when we did the Lisa Conden collage in January. Nice. Sitting here on my desk. I love this. So is, so it sounds like in the book you did a variety of watercolor colored pencil and collage - Yes. - With the illustrations. - Yeah. Mostly. Yeah. I think it's pretty, pretty, even a lot of the quilt spreads are collage, kind of a combination of collage and watercolor. Yeah. So I'm gonna get all my blues. I'm gonna put some of this texturey blue in here. Well just to kind of mix it up. I'm probably gonna

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cut more squares than I'll need. But - Yeah, I, - I like to have some variety that I can play with as I'm working with it. I like to put the textures and I guess I'm cutting more like rectangles for some reason. - Okay. - Today - More like rectangles. I will say Leanne and I just went to Quilt Con, was that last. Oh wow. Really? Or we were just there for like 48 hours basically Trip. I know he wasn't there this time. And of course we miss Sarah. But yeah, I just, just looking at all those beautiful quilts of Rosie Lee Tompkins. I was also thinking about the G's Ben Quilters who did have an exhibit at Quilt on this year. And also have a similar approach to that improv, improv patchwork that then just is like, has all the, all of the foundational principles of like traditional fine art, you know, and that's all self-taught, self-learn from just the practice of stitching and flipping together. Just so powerful. - It is. Yeah. It's amazing. I mean that is one of the things that's a little bit different about Rosie Lee Tompkins is, is that she worked alone. - Oh, absolutely. - A lot of her quilting was not as like a quilt. - Not a bee. - Not a bee, yeah. Just, just her. And I heard someone say that she liked to listen to opera and disco music while she quilted. Oh - Really? - Yeah. And, and Lawrence render, who was one of the curators, an organizer of the exhibit and had met her before, had done her original exhibit, I think with, at Oakland Museum. - Yeah. - Said that he had, he's one of the few people who was allowed to visit her home. - Okay. - And he, he, I, I read, I listened to an interview of him saying that, you know, she had a lot of art books in, in her home. Oh. So, you know, she was looking at other artists, thinking about other artists. - Yeah. - You know, so it's, it's just interesting her trajectory. - And she didn't, someone I think in the chat earlier said that at the MFA show that the like little informational placards accompanying each quote had a lot of information. I wonder like, but she didn't, there's not recordings of her talking about her work. But did she leave any, like making notes or diary or anything about - No, not that I know of. I think what, what they would've known would've come from - Like family members or something. - Yeah. Or no, from e Yeah. From her. Her son is very much involved in like her state and what's going on with her art artwork. And also from Leon Eli. Yeah. Leon, Leon, Eli. I always mix it up. Leon, Eli, Eli. Anyway, he, who was her collector of, of her, her work. And they were good friends. So he, she would've talked to him a lot about her, his, her process or, you know, what she was enjoying and not you, everything. So I think a lot of the information comes from him. So it's - Okay. - Secondhand. - Did you work with him when you were putting the book together? No, - No, - No. - I just, he passed away. - Oh, I see. Okay. - And, and he, he had, so he had collected this enormous amount of quilts by African American women, a lot of women in the Bay area. But he traveled all over and he kind of had this determination to get the artwork, like recognized by museums. He didn't want it so much to be in a private collections because he felt it was part of the national treasure, if I'm understanding it. Right. And he wanted, you know, the public to have access to this work that he felt was really significant and important. And so he would collect the work and he would try to convince museums to have shows, you know, to show the work and to say that it was an, you know, important work. And, and then when he got, he was sick and dying, you know, sort of people were worried across the quilt world about what was gonna happen to this massive collection that he had. And then in a surprise twist, he ended up giving it to the Berkeley Art Museum, but nobody had had anticipated that. - Wow. And is that, that's the, those are the collections that was just in the African American quilts in California show. Right? That was at Bako. - Yeah. Yeah. So her work and then the show that they just had Yeah. Was those were all part of his collection. - So I put a link in there for the Black Quilt Makers show that was at Van Felt also the same place where the Rosie Lee Tompkins retrospective was prior. Okay. So Constance, how are you laying this out? Are you just, you're improving it or you're just pulling what you like or what, what are you doing - It? And I can already tell I'm gonna move. I'm gonna

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move it around a little bit. - Okay. So you're just laying stuff out. You're not, are you thinking like, you know, warm, cool, blue orange, what are you, - I'm thinking like, you know, those drawings used to do when your kid and you fill, you make the squiggly line and then you fill in different areas, but no two colors can touch. - Okay. - That's what I'm thinking about. Just not having the same colors touch the same - Oh, that's interesting. Because that's one of the things I was actually really drawn to in some of her quilts was like, yes, as somebody who thinks about like artistic principles and balance and it's like you have odd numbers and like you want things, you know, if I'm putting together quilt, I would definitely be looking for like, oh, I don't want two of the same fabrics touching. But in many of her quilts they are. And it creates these like, interesting vortexes, like visual. So that's funny. - Yeah. So that, that's kind of what I'm working on. Just getting these, I think I'll probably end up moving things around a bit, I think. But just kind of, - Are you trying to also avoid like white space? Or is that come down to when you start to glue it? - Yeah, I'm kind of am trying to avoid it, but I think I'm gonna have to fill it in later, you know. - Okay. - I'm gonna have to figure it out later. Yeah. - One's gonna have to be a very tiny quilt. 'cause I only have like four colors. - You can do a lot. Look what she did with just the red and black or just the - Yeah, that's true. - Yeah. I, it's just thinking that it's, you know, those, there's people who like paint in public, like paint. I, I don't know how people do that. I feel really stressful to, to be like on, to - Be composing on camera. Yes. Well, when people paint in public, they don't usually have an audience sitting. They just have password. They're like, oh, are you an artist? And then they say, my five year old's an artist. And you're like, yeah, all five year olds are artists now. Now we have to keep it, we have to keep them being an artist until they're an adult. That's true. - Yeah. Or just thinking artistically, I think you don't have to be an artist, but you have to - Yes. Notice. - Yeah. - I little experiment to do this in paper on a miniature scale. - It's a nice challenge to my emotional wellbeing. - It's almost feels like confetti. I mean, part of it's 'cause I'm using the origami paper. It's so thin. But yeah. And I don't know if people are working along with us, but we'll leave a little time at the end to see if you do wanna share whatever you've been collaging or laying out. We'll see. - Yeah. I would love to see what people are, are making. - So when you were working on the book, Constance, how long, like, when you had the idea, I mean, you already had a relationship, I assume it's with the same publisher you did the, the other three books with, how long did it take you from like, here's the idea and working on the manuscript, doing the illustrations? - I would say it took about three years altogether. - Yeah. - Total. The, the illustrations solidly a year. Yeah, for sure. And then the writing may a little bit longer. Yeah. Yeah. And a lot of revisions, A lot of having to, you know, kind of to find the story in the story, you know? - Yeah. - Yeah. It was, it was, it was definitely a, a a lot of work, but good, you know, good work fun, fun work that I enjoy. - No, you hear like, when people invent something, it's like, oh, I invented this because I, I had a need for it in my life and it didn't exist. And like, that's basically what you've done with the picture book is like, oh, as an educator, this is like somebody I wanna teach about. And the the right resource isn't there. And I think about that a lot as somebody who loves picture books. And I also am an educator 'cause I teach workshops, but I also have a 6-year-old and my favorite author is Toni Morrison, which I probably talked about in a few glimpse on a few lives. But I've been seeing a lot of picture books about Toni Morrison. And yesterday I was at a bookstore and saw a greeting card with a painting of Tony Morrison on it. And like a little phrase and just makes me so happy when these really tremendously important figures both to, like you said, like the full canon of literature art in America. And then for me, like in the case of Toni Morrison, very personally relevant to, you know, like what I love, you kind of get that in a children's book format, you know, because I feel like children's books can be for adults too. Like I

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think it can go both ways. - Absolutely. I mean, yeah, you can learn. I, I find them, you know, obviously they're accessible. - Yes. - And they, the, the illustrations, you know, can the story, you can tell two stories at once. Yes. You know, there can be the words and then the what the pictures are saying. Yeah. And yeah, I I think it's such a great way to learn about history - Absolutely. - Is through. And it is nice to see books about, you know, more and more about people that previously weren't getting, you know, not acknowledged so that young kids can know about different people. - Yes, absolutely. Yeah. - It's - A lot of fun. Yeah. And picture books are also so just so fun. Some of them are so funny, you know, they're just are the best - Ones. I'm taking a little photo of my layout to see if I like it. Oh, nice. Oh, that's a good way to do it. Because I can't hold it up and show it to anybody because it's not glued down yet. Glued down. Yeah. Yeah. Well this process for me is like, normally I would just glue right away. I would not do this and then rearrange and then glue. It seems too fiddly and I know I'm gonna mess it up and not put it back in the same, same place again. - There's no way. I don't think I, I don't know. I mean, I guess there is a way to do it, but I don't know a way to do it where it, it goes, you know, where you - In any other way - Yeah. Where it goes exactly where you originally put it, you know, when I move it over because either if I pick it up, you know, and put blue down one by one that's gonna, is still gonna mess it up. - Yeah. Yeah. Totally. I love this comment from Ruth in the chat that says, I think of every Congress person read 10 picture books a week. It would be good for our country. I agree. I agree. - I agree. - I agree. I mean, I think also if children read 10 picture books a week, I mean, I, hopefully they're getting it in school, but I am sort of like terrified by those videos online where you see kids like swiping phones and not looking at books. Like they go to a book and they try to swipe it and you're like, no. - Oh my god, I've never seen that. Well, thank goodness, I don't wanna see that. - It's terrifying. I mean, everyone learns in their own way, their own way, but it's really sitting down with the book, I feel like is an experience that is hard to replicate in other forms. So hopefully I'll, - I'll stay my, my students love books like they love to read. Even the ones who can't, they love to get a book and sit, you know, like when they're done with their art project, they can, they have a sketchbook that they can work in or they can, or they can read books on the carpet and, and a lot of times they wanna read a book on the carpet. - I love - That. - Yeah. But I mean, think about too for kids, I forget what age group you work with Constance - Elementary. So kindergarten five. - Yeah. - To, to middle to fifth grade. So - Oh wow. So that whole range Okay. Yeah. Yeah. To like 11 or 12. - Yeah. - Okay. Yeah. Because if you think about, like you just said, the, the words tell one story. The pictures tell another for like my kid who's also in kindergarten, she just turned six. It's like she can read, but I, I know for sure she's looking at the pictures first. I mean, I'm looking at the pictures for first Right. Reading for decades I was just reading, looking at something about Enchanted Lion. I really love that publisher. And they put out the most beautiful books and they have a new Im newish imprint that is picture books for adults. - Oh, really? - Yeah. And there's an illustrator, Beatrice Alman, she's a - Oh, I love her. - She's amazing, right? She's an Italian illustrator, born in Italy, but she lives in Paris. Ton of her books have been translated. I think she's very internationally renowned at this point. Her illustrations are absolutely incredible. And she, I think I got this book a couple years ago, it's called, you Can't Kill Snow White. And it's a picture book for adults and it's just like juicy, messy, deep, dark images. It's just so spectacularly special. So yeah. Thank everyone. I have it. Oh, there, it's, - It's gorgeous. - It's so beautiful. - I love it. That's so funny. I, I, I often look at this book, I just - So incredible. - The images are so incredible. Yeah. Yeah. - I got a copy for my mom for Christmas. I feel like I got a copy for E too. I'm not sure, but I think I did. - I think you did. I think that's where I saw it first. - It's such a beautiful book. - It really is a beautiful book. - Do you have any other books on the horizon like that

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you're illustrating or writing and illustrating that you're thinking about? - I, I don't, I have some, some that I are in my mind, but nothing that I've, you know, nothing. - Well, three years is a long time, so I shouldn't Yeah, yeah. Love to get this one out into the world. - Yeah. When I finished this, this book, which was January of this year, no. Yeah. January, I think - It was a few months ago. - Yeah. I turned in the last illustrations and everything. Wow. I, I couldn't come in. I hadn't been into my studio for about a month after that. I just, wow. You know, and then when I finally did come back, I, I was just like kind of cleaning and - Yeah. - It's just taking me a while to kind of re reenter into. Yeah, - No, totally. I hear that. - Yeah. - So you're starting to glue. We, we don't have too much time, so let's just see. Let's, we're starting to glue. - I am starting to glue and I'm changing as I'm going. - You're using the, are you using the rice past or - I'm using this for some, I just, I'm squeezing out a little bit and just Okay. That Yamato Rice. Yeah. - Yeah. I've heard really good things about that glue. I see that like in book bookmakers use it. I'm curious if you could use it for paste paper. That's something I love to make. And you usually use a we, oh, I wonder. You could probably use that, but also I think it's like, you know, in Japan, I think it's a kids' glue. - Yeah. - And I glued this down and I totally like, it's like all higgly piggly now I did one row and now it's like all over the place. - That's okay. Okay. - Like I'm just gonna wing it again. Okay. Nancy is saying, I'd be inclined to lay down a strip of adhesive and place the pieces on the background versus gluing pieces by piece. Oh, I love that idea. - Yeah. - But I think that's probably too why Constance was saying she composes on one side and then glues down on the other so that you have flexibility. Right. You could do like, just put glue all over the whole background and then lay it out. I think that's probably the easiest. - I could have done that if I was ahead Red Nancy sooner. Yeah. - And then Laura's saying you could do fusible with fabric if you wanted to make a mini an actual, which is really fun. I love that. We do have a question about your illustration process too, Constance. Well how do you incorporate water color? Someone's asking. So are in, in your illustrations. I don't know if you wanna show us any from the book. Like you can open up the finished book and show us. - Yeah, I'll, I'll show. Let's see. - Oh, that's beautiful. Oh, look at that spread. - Yeah, so this, you can see it's like these are watercolored pieces and then some of this is collage in like watercolor. - So are, are there any pieces where it's both like you're doing, you know, let's say a giant quilt and some squares are watercolor and some are collage or it's more like elements. - This one I is actually probably gu watercolor up here and then I, I can see some collaged pieces - And that's all made analog. You know, none of that's digitally put put together. - No, not it's all analog. Yeah. - Yeah. I love that. And then in that, in that picture of the hands that are stitching in the foreground, what is that material? - This is probably gu probably. - Oh, nice. Okay. So for anyone who's not familiar with Guash, guash is an opaque watercolor, plays nicely with watercolor, but you can do light on top of dark. - Yeah. Yeah. And that's why I think this is Guash because it's kind of so thick, you know? - Yeah. Are there any other spreads from the book that you wanna share? - Sure. I like, I like them all. - Oh, that's beautiful. Oh so beautiful. That's really gorgeous. Wow. There's the blue. - Yeah. And then here's one of her kind of re creating her name, you know, because it's a pseudonym. And so this is about her kind of in her and coming up with a new new name for herself. - How did she determine, decide on Rosie Lee Tompkins? Do you know? - I don't know. And I haven't found any, anything that would - Indicate - Where, where it came from. I like to think, maybe it's Rosie from Rosie the Riveter because she was in - Richmond. But I don't know that to be a fact. So - Yeah. Well look how beautiful these are - Some watercolor, this collage. Then here's the three sixes. I don't, it's not, the color's not really translating through the thing, but yeah. - So. Wow. Beautiful. So beautiful people in the chat. Agree. Beautiful book. So the book is coming out in July. It's published by, - Yeah. - Yeah. It's published by Abrams. You know, you can

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get this book anywhere, your local bookshop, if they don't have it, ask them about it. 'cause they can always order it and they can pre-order as well. And we'll do a giveaway. We will, we're gonna send a follow-up email for anyone who registered, whether or not you were watching this live with the recording of this. So be on the lookout for that email. 'cause we'll include details on how to enter the giveaway. Okay. Constance, so you're adding your last touches here? - Yeah. - Or not your last touches, but you're getting to the gluing stage, I should say. - Getting to the gluing stages. Yeah. I didn't realize I was gonna go, so - I've been asking you lots of questions. Questions, person. - No, it's been great. It's been good to, I haven't really talked about the, you know, I, it just sort of finished it, so I haven't really taken it out in the world in any way. It's kind of nice. Thank you so much for the opportunity to share it and - Yeah, - I haven't shown it to my students yet. - Oh, I bet they're gonna love it. Yeah. Oh my goodness. What an amazing thing for a class full of picture books to be like my, my teacher made one Mrs. More made one. Yeah, - Yeah, they, they, because the, my district was really kind and my, our first book that we came out Brown, they bought one for every teacher in the district, which is, that was a while ago. Before, right. Before - Constraints. - Yeah. But, so that was really nice. So a lot of the kids know it because they've, you know, their classroom teachers have - That is so cool. Well, even in all the, I'm a frequenter of all the local bookshops in Oakland and Berkeley and I've seen, you know, black, blue, brown in windows and in storefronts and everything else. So I imagine this one will get as much, if not more accolades and presents. And I can't wait to see like what you do at the library or at any of the local bookstores. We've got a link in the chat for pre-ordering concepts', book directly from Abrams. But you can also go to your local bookstore too, ask them about it. And they can pre-order, give, give you a call when it comes in because I, we didn't even finish, I'm gonna guess that not anyone else finished either. But are there any re like remaining questions, feel free to put them in the chat and we can ask Constance before the end. And if you did finish your quilt, you can feel free to put it into the class page once this recording goes onto a class page in 48 hours. Amy says, what an accomplishment I pre-ordered. Thank you for sharing your beautiful work. - Thank you. - And the question about the glues Constance is using the Yuhu glue stick, she said that's her favorite. And then the Yumoto rice paper is what is in the green tube. And you can get that at art supplies like online. And if you have like a local art supply store, you could ask them about it. I think the tube's like about six or $8. Right. - I I, someone gave it to me, so I dunno. But it's Yama, it's Y-A-M-A-T-O. Yeah. And the hoo, you can get at Blick or any really anywhere. - Yeah. Office Depot probably even sells it. - Yeah. Yeah. - Well thank you everyone for joining us. We're at our time. I'm still doing my collage here. I think other people are too. But thank you for joining us and Constance Moore, thank you so much for being here to talk about your forthcoming book, the Language of Stitches, the Radical Quilts of Rosie Lee Tompkins. It's such an incredibly beautiful book and I can't wait to learn even more about Rosie Lee Tompkins. And I thank you so much for sharing it and be on the lookout for the email that has the in recording of this so you can watch it on our site. If you did complete your quote collage, feel free to upload a picture to the gallery and be on the lookout for information on how to win a copy of Con's new book. Thank you everyone for joining us. Thank you Constance. Thank you for being active in the chat everyone. Thank you Su. Susan, I saw your comment there about One Color Day. Thanks so much and we will see you if you're not in the a hundred day project, we'll see you on the next live. If you're in the a hundred day project group, we'll see you on Friday. So thank you so much. Hey, - Thank you guys. Thank you so much, Courtney. I really - Appreciate. Thank you Constance. It's always so fun to talk to you about your work. It's so beautiful. Thank you so much. Bye everyone. - Bye.

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