Saeed Arida, Siena Jekel, Anara Magavi & Luca Rudenstine of NuVu Studio

Saeed Arida: [00:00:00] We are not always limited also to the team that we have, we feel like whatever that is, the relevant topic outside, we can design a studio experience around that.

Annalies Corbin: [00:00:12] Welcome to Learning Unboxed, a conversation about teaching, learning, and the future of work. This is Annalies Corbin, Chief Goddess of the PAST Foundation and your host. We hear frequently that the global education system is broken. In fact, we spend billions of dollars trying to fix something that's actually not broken at all, but rather irrelevant. It's obsolete. A hundred years ago, it functioned fine. So, let's talk about how we reimagine, rethink, and redesign our educational system.

Annalies Corbin: [00:00:47] So, on today's episode of Learning Unboxed, we are going to have the opportunity to talk with an innovative school program called the NuVu Studio. And joining us today is Saeed Arida, who is the Founder and Chief Excitement Officer of NuVu Studio. And I want to start by thanking him very much for being the Chief Excitement Officer of any endeavor, much less an educational enterprise. That's fabulous. NuVu is a full-time innovation school based in Cambridge, Massachusetts. And I have no doubt that Saeed will share lots of information as we move along. So, Saeed, welcome to the program.

Saeed Arida: [00:01:24] Thank you.

Annalies Corbin: [00:01:25] And joining Saeed, we have three students currently in NuVu. First off, joining is Anara Magavi, who is currently a 10th grader at NuVu, and she focuses on design. So, welcome.

Anara Magavi: [00:01:41] Hi.

Annalies Corbin: [00:01:42] Hello. And joining as well is Siena Jekel, who is a ninth grader at the Innovation School with a specialty or focus on film and innovation. So, Siena, welcome to you.

Siena Jekel: [00:01:53] Hi.

Annalies Corbin: [00:01:53] And finally, rounding out our cohort of conversationalist is going to be Luca Rudenstine, Rudenstine, we had this conversation earlier today, who is a rising senior. And her passion includes storytelling through design, addressing sustainability and equity issues through architecture and art as a tool for activism. So, Luca, welcome to the program.

Luca Rudenstine: [00:02:17] Hi. Thank you.

Annalies Corbin: [00:02:19] So, again, very excited to have everybody here. And Saeed, for our listeners who come to this program from all over the world, give us the 100,000-foot view, first and foremost, about what is the NuVu Studio. And as Founder, why on earth would you do this thing?

Saeed Arida: [00:02:37] So, the problem with answering this is that we went through a bunch of transformation to get to where we get to. So, it's probably easier to kind of just mention a brief history about where NuVu started and where we are now. So, this started as a PhD project when I was a student doing my PhD in architecture at MIT. And I was focused on the creative process that architects go through to produce the amazing work that they usually produce. And at some point, it clicked in my head that we should take that model and apply it to high school and see what happens.

Saeed Arida: [00:03:20] So, I ran a pilot with two other founders with me and with a school called Beaver Country Day School, and I think we had six kids at the time. And that proved to be really successful and interesting. So, the school and us basically decided to create NuVu at the time. And the way it works is that every semester or trimester, 20 of the students from that school would come to NuVu and they would go through this kind of innovation-design-based program, and then they go back to the school. And we did this for probably five years and what started happening is that students would come to us sometimes and they would not leave.

Annalies Corbin: [00:04:04] They wanted to stay.

Saeed Arida: [00:04:06] Yes. So, that kind of started forcing us to kind of change into a full-time school, which was not really the initial goal. We always thought of ourselves as this magnet innovation center, where the kids come only for a shorter period of time. And now, you have three cases here of these brilliant students who decided just to stay. And this is why we call it now a full-time innovation school, because the students are with us, the whole kind of full time. And the other piece that changed is that we started creating these NuVu programs inside schools. So, we have now 12 schools that we worked with all over the world and we worked with them to create similar environments, what we have inside the school.

Annalies Corbin: [00:04:53] So, taking the design studio model, and essentially putting it or embedding it in an existing school.

Saeed Arida: [00:05:01] Exactly. Yeah, So, that's what we call NuVuX.

Annalies Corbin: [00:05:05] NuVuX. Okay. Perfect. Excellent. So, Anara, I want to start with you, and I'm really curious about two things. So, the first one is, and maybe somebody else wants to answer this, but it doesn't make any difference. But how is it that you found out about this opportunity? And then, why did you choose to do this thing? Why leave a traditional school setting that you're probably way more familiar with and become a student at the NuVu Studio?

Anara Magavi: [00:05:39] I think that my parents found out about it from some friends, like they had recommended it, and the reason I decided to come was because I wasn't very happy in like the normal school system. It just didn't really work for me and I didn't have that many friends either. And then, I mean, I kind of just took a leap when I decided to go to NuVu. I wasn't really sure what it was going to be like at all, but I just kind of decided that it would be really interesting to do, even if it was just for like a year. I've been here for three years now. Yeah.

Annalies Corbin: [00:06:23] Yeah. I think that's a common thing that I hear when I talk to students that are in innovative school programs. Largely, what I hear, even though they don't articulate it this way, is it was kind of a leap of faith. It was almost like a, why not? I'll try this thing. If I'm not necessarily locked into it, it might be a better fit for me. So, Siena, you're the freshman, if you will, in

this group as a ninth grader. So, essentially the same question to you, so why NuVu as opposed to staying in whatever school your middle school may have matriculated to?

Siena Jekel: [00:06:58] For me, it was mainly about, I wasn't really feeling good in public schools and it was like I didn't feel like I was learning what I wanted to learn. Like it didn't really relate to my passions at all. And so, I guess, like I saw this opportunity to maybe have an experience of school that could be like really fun.

Annalies Corbin: [00:07:21] Yeah. You were looking for something that felt more like you, I take it.

Siena Jekel: [00:07:26] Yeah.

Annalies Corbin: [00:07:27] Yeah. So, Luca, same question to you, no shockers here, right? But a little bit different twist, because you're going to be a senior next year. And so, your path is getting ready, I assume, to be very different, because you're making decisions and choices, and you're thinking about your future, whatever that may hold. So, I'm really curious about the years that you've spent inside of the school and the program, sort of how you feel like, they not just prepared is not really the word I want to ask you, but you're probably not the same person today that you entered. And your path and your journey along the way, I assume that this environment influenced that. So, what would you like to share about that?

Luca Rudenstine: [00:08:11] Yeah. So, I actually came last spring right before COVID kind of hit. And so, a lot of my time with NuVu has been primarily virtual. And I was super into writing, and I played sports, and kind of was like, oh, my God, what am I doing going to this school that's all STEM-based? I have no idea what I'm doing. And I started off very intimidated, I think. And then, something just kind of clicked and I felt like I could really pursue a lot of almost the kind of like social studies interests that I had had through a design lens, which has also been super interesting in COVID as well, and kind of like problem-solving for that, and thinking about.

Luca Rudenstine: [00:08:50] And kind of moving forward with the college application decision, it's definitely opened to my perspective of what I can do. Like I have friends talking about, I want to go into this major and this major, and I just keep thinking, well, all of my interests are so combined and multifaceted, and none of them I can really pinpoint in a singular place or thing. And so, I feel like I'm honestly putting a lot less pressure on myself to have a specific path and kind of just figuring out as I go what's super interesting to me, and following that for a little bit, and going down all these little paths of interests.

Annalies Corbin: [00:09:27] I think that's wonderful, actually, quite frankly. We've spent too much time trying to box kiddos into stuff way, way, way too early when there are so many things to explore. So, Saeed, I want to get into a little bit of the nuts and bolts, because I know that folks are really going to be wondering. So, what are the grade bands? How many kids are there? Where is it like physically located? Is it co-located in a school? What can you give us in a sense of sort of the makeup of the school itself? And then, we'll dig into some of the program details.

Saeed Arida: [00:09:57] I mean, a lot of these kind of details are evolving. So, people are always surprised that our curriculum and all of that changes on the fly. So, sometimes, it's hard to answer this question in kind of absolute terms. But at this point, we are located in Central Square, which is kind of an area in Cambridge between MIT and Harvard. We have around 50 students, but that kind of fluctuated also between 40 to 60.

Saeed Arida: [00:10:27] Mainly, if we want to talk about the pedagogy side of things and how we run on a daily basis, basically, the whole program is based on these studios that we're on. So, we don't

run courses in the traditional sense. We have built studios that are usually taught by two people. And we have our kind of really talented staff that works with the students in these, but we also try to bring in a lot of kind of fresh perspectives from outside.

Saeed Arida: [00:10:52] So, Siena, for instance, was doing the Visual Effects Studio, and we brought in someone from the outside to work with one of the existing staff members to try to push this idea further. So, our students work in these studios somewhere between two to four weeks. And every day, from 9:00 to 3:00, they are working collaboratively with other students on their projects. And they have to present something at the end.

Annalies Corbin: [00:11:19] Yeah, I love that. And for lots of our listeners, even though it sounds very different, it's also very familiar, because we talk about so many programs that are similar in the sense of, they're really innovative. They're outside of what traditionally folks are thinking. They're not all the same. Very few of them actually that are the same. The innovations are all largely unique, but they don't follow that traditional model. So, I really appreciate that. I'm curious, Siena, since Saeed just mentioned the fact that you completed this particular design studio.

Annalies Corbin: [00:11:51] And so, as you're working in those types of projects, what is the sort of the thing that you're getting out of that the most? Because the other question that people are thinking in the back of their mind is, okay, so Siena is going to spend two to four weeks working this amazing design studio, but how is she getting her math? How is she getting her English? All of those things, right? Those are the questions that people have. So, explain it to us a little bit, Siena, sort of from your student perspective.

Siena Jekel: [00:12:21] Yeah. So, I guess each studios is obviously drastically different from the one before. And I mean, each one is kind of like built for you to learn different skills. So, I guess through the Visual Effects Studio that I did, I learned a lot more about storytelling. And there's also a little bit of physics in there, but we didn't really focus that much on it, but it's there.

Siena Jekel: [00:12:47] And yeah, there's like a lot of small things that you learn. And I think the biggest thing you learn from like all sorts of NuVu studios is problem-solving. And you spend most of the time on conceptual things of your project, and like I mean, our coaches always say, your concept is always the most important part, because in the end, that's what you're presenting, not the physical object, like the concept.

Annalies Corbin: [00:13:15] Yeah. I love the fact that each of the studios finishes off with a presentation. At PAST Foundation, we see that as one of those pieces that's really, really critically important. And so, even when we have kids, we do a lot of STEM stuff and lots of experimental sort of education stuff. So, that's the space you sort of see behind me. But all students, even in the kids who come to STEM summer camps, right?

Annalies Corbin: [00:13:39] So, even if they're only with us half day for four or five days, we make them stand out at the end and present to the world, what did you learn? What did you know? Right? To sort of help build some of those confidence skills along the way. Anara, I want to ask the similar question to you. So, share with our listeners a little bit about something that may be one of your favorite studios that you've participated in. And what was the thing that you got the most out of that experience?

Anara Magavi: [00:14:05] I'm not sure if I can pinpoint exactly what my favorite studio was, but I do remember I really like building and designing stuff. And I remember there was this ceramic studio where we created—well, first, we kind of figured out what we wanted to make, what it was for, and

lots of details like that, and then we designed and made some wood cast, like pieces of ceramics. And with that, we, I guess, problem-solved.

Anara Magavi: [00:14:45] We made them fit, like we created new objects. And we also kind of learned the—I mean, like the actual making part, we learned how to slip cast, and make molds, and like the actual physical skill. Then, I think there's also—I would say there was some math in that, for my project at least. And then, I think with the studios, you don't always notice that you're learning like the classic skills maybe, but you kind of build them up over time, and then realize, oh, how did I learn that?

Annalies Corbin: [00:15:34] Yeah, I would say, Saeed, that was a win, right? The fact that students don't even recognize what they're learning along the way and just those epiphanies that, yes, I did, in fact, I'm capable of doing that, right? Yeah.

Saeed Arida: [00:15:48] I almost feel like I want to jump in and answer this, but they can answer it better than I do, so it's a side win.

Annalies Corbin: [00:15:53] No, I think that's always the case. But before we—because I do have questions for you based on some of those answers to get into some more nuts and bolts, but before we do that, Luca I want to—so since you joined this program, and then all of a sudden, a global pandemic comes to the planet, right? That is not an easy thing to do, to be new in a space, and then suddenly, that the space and the experience has to pivot.

Annalies Corbin: [00:16:22] And I'm sure that there was tremendous effort being made to ensure that you were still being included, and that you can find your way, and you can figure out how to do different components. So, you've done a few studios at this point, I assume. And so, the same question to you, what was something that stood out for you or something that was surprisingly wonderful to you as part of this experience, despite the fact that you had to do so much of it, I assume, virtually, and then ultimately, into a hybrid environment, as I understand it?

Luca Rudenstine: [00:16:52] Yeah. So, I think my first ever studio at NuVu was one of the most memorable. It was called Second Skin with our coach, Amanda, and the guest coach named Katia Zolotovsky. And it was all about synthetic biology and wearable tech, and kind of bridging the gap between the fashion world, and the tech world, and the bioworld, and then we all get sent home, like day one. And so, I think for me at least, the pandemic really inspired my work.

Luca Rudenstine: [00:17:24] I made a piece all about how stress manifests in the body and how to create like a wearable body suit that can address different physical manifestations of stress through heat-conductive fabric, and microsensing of your hormones, and aroma therapy. And so, I was like at home using heat-conductive fabric, and hooking it up to a heart rate monitor, an Arduino, and I had no clue what I was doing, but I just got to experiment.

Luca Rudenstine: [00:17:49] And so many people, like they were sending us materials and they hop on the call. And I think that's why I stayed, because I was also only going to go to NuVu for a semester at first. And even in this pandemic where everything felt so uncertain, I still had this kind of creative outlet, and it was, I don't know, really fun and experimental. And honestly, I think being at home made it even more experimental and broad, and you could kind of get into whatever you wanted.

Annalies Corbin: [00:18:21] Yeah, what an amazing project. Wow. So, Saeed, is that fairly typical then of the types of projects that these students are working on? I mean, I can't say I've had another

high school student talk to me about utilizing hormones, and pheromones, and body temperature, and whatnot to craft textiles and suits to manage stress. That's pretty off the charts, to be perfectly blunt.

Saeed Arida: [00:18:49] Yeah. It's pretty typical and it's always changing. I think we always try with our studio topics to kind of respond to what's happening in the world and try to kind of create these learning experiences that the kids will connect to and feel relevant to the world that they live in. So, yeah, I think that's part of the game for us. It's always kind of bringing in these really interesting people who are doing amazing stuff and have the kids kind of collaborate with them.

Saeed Arida: [00:19:17] And so, I think like you probably also felt some hesitancy with the kids talking about subjects, because when we are doing the studio, we don't really talk about the subjects, that the goal is that you have this problem that you are trying to address or this creative outlet, and medium that you are given and you are trying to create something at the end, so the focus solely is on the concept that you have, and how you can take that concept and turn it into something.

Saeed Arida: [00:19:43] And so, we just focus on that. And everybody said, they obviously learn a lot of stuff along the way, they don't understand exactly what it is that they are learning, but it's a lot that is happening along the way. But I should probably, like we usually don't mention, there is a technical based around the subjects where the students actually do online subjects after school. But when they are at school, they are just doing the study work, and after school, they do the subjects.

Annalies Corbin: [00:20:10] I see. Okay. Yeah. So, they deal online then with the technical content required to meet graduation requirements and all the state processes. So, they're doing all of that, they're just doing it sort of off-cycle from the studio work. Yeah, because that was definitely going to be one of the questions that folks always have.

Saeed Arida: [00:20:29] I mean, they don't do all the subjects, obviously, that there's not enough time in the day, so our construct usually is a combination of the studio work that they are doing, and then the course work that they do outside.

Annalies Corbin: [00:20:39] Okay. And just out of curiosity, because one of the other topics that we cover a lot on this program is around the opportunities for early collegiate, or post-secondary, or technical training credits, stackable credentials, take your pick, as those ideas are woven through programs. The work that these kids are doing is pretty darn advanced, even conceptually, right? So, are the students also earning post-secondary, they're doing dual enrollment? How are some of those pieces, if at all—and maybe that is not even necessary, because these students, quite frankly, sounds like wickedly engaged in the stuff that they're doing, that just getting through.

Saeed Arida: [00:21:24] No, we don't actually do that. This could be an interesting idea. But yeah, we don't deal with that. Yeah. I mean, we are so heavily just focused on the studio itself and the learning experience. And we know that a lot of our or almost all of our kids want to apply to college after, so that is a little bit to focus on that, in making sure that they know which place that they want to go to and making sure that we can help them get there.

Saeed Arida: [00:21:52] Now, thinking about it, it would have been actually very useful to have a graduate of NuVu, who was already in college, because that would also give a different perspective. And I feel like a lot of the kids who go to college, they have a lot of the skills already that the college tries to teach them the first and second year, so it's kind of interesting. Like it starts really slow for them, and then it kind of ramps up the third and fourth year.

Annalies Corbin: [00:22:18] Yeah, I would assume that that's the case as well. So, what does it look like? So, Siena, share with me just a little bit when you are sort of out in the world, outside of your

school environment, talking with other folks about what they're doing as ninth graders, what does that conversation sort of look and feel like? Because are folks looking at you like you're kind of, what are you talking about? You don't do school the same way we are. I'm curious, right? Because in terms of the way the rest of the world relates to your experience, and actually this is going to be a question for all three of you, so giving it some thought while Siena is on the hot seat at the moment.

Siena Jekel: [00:22:58] It's mainly like there's not really a lot of relating going on, because obviously, they're very different school systems, but I mean, in the end, like if I'm talking to somebody, we're both still learning. So, I mean, we can still relate our experiences somewhat. Yeah, they each teach us what we need to know for specific things.

Saeed Arida: [00:23:23] So, do you try to explain to them how you can use one minute of animated film, or not, or it's too hard?

Siena Jekel: [00:23:31] It's not that difficult to explain, I guess. I mean, it takes maybe like five minutes for us to do, like how my school works, but yeah.

Annalies Corbin: [00:23:44] Yeah, I bet, lots of interesting questions. Luca, same question to you. And since you sort of came part way through high school, I assume you still have a fair amount of contact with folks from some of your other educational sort of experiences. How do you explain what you're doing and why you bailed to go do something else?

Luca Rudenstine: [00:24:00] Yeah. I mean, I've always kind of gone to somewhat of an untraditional school, like my last school is also semi-project-based. But when I left, I think I also left as, like we were talking about earlier, college prep was starting, and a lot of kids [indiscernible], and final exams, and that kind of stuff. And I just look essentially at my presentations and my work as like, oh, this is what I'm going to show to college, how do I like show what I'm passionate about and explore what I'm passionate about?

Luca Rudenstine: [00:24:31] And I still have stress. I still work late at night. Some nights, I still have to write some briefs. So, it's not completely isolated from the same feelings my friends are feeling, like we both have stress, but I can at least feel like I'm really engaged and passionate. And so, that stress doesn't just like fester in me. I can put it into something I like.

Luca Rudenstine: [00:24:55] And again, like Siena said, there's definitely a lot of explaining. I talk a lot more about what NuVu is than I actually talk about what I'm learning. I think saying what you're learning feels really intimidating to people, but honestly, it's not when you're in the studio. Like there's just this energy and everything, you're like, you're about to take a test and it weighs on you.

Annalies Corbin: [00:25:21] Yeah, absolutely. Anara, same question to you. What does the conversation look like with your peers?

Anara Magavi: [00:25:28] Well, it always starts off with trying to explain what NuVu is, which is, like Luca and Siena said, takes a while. Well, first off, I haven't really talked to that many people generally, recently in the last year. I've only talked to people I'm pretty close with, but since like most of them kind of already know what NuVu is, I sometimes talk about what I'm doing. I'm not sure if they entirely understand what I'm doing, but yeah, I'll talk about my projects and stuff.

Anara Magavi: [00:26:01] And I think sometimes, people think it's really cool. Sometimes, people just don't really understand, I guess. Then, I feel like it's also kind of—like my siblings, and friends, and stuff, like they'll have finals and they'll be really worried, and it makes me think about how like I don't—I mean, I have stress, things like final presentations and stuff, but it's not nearly like, this is

going to impact my grade, which will impact colleges and stuff. So, it's nice to kind of have a little bit more—like I guess I feel like I have a little more control over like my education.

Annalies Corbin: [00:26:48] Saeed, how do you make the decisions around the projects or the studios that you're going to utilize from time to time? You mentioned earlier that you try to make sure that what's going on in the studios is reflective of what's going on in the real world. But what does that cycle look like? How do you make those decisions?

Saeed Arida: [00:27:09] I think a lot of it is kind of the school and the coaching team kind of working very collaboratively together to kind of come up with these ideas. And these ideas, as I said, they are always changing and they are always kind of responding to what's going on in the world. So, around kind of issues around COVID, and equity, and social justice, and all of that. So, I think this year, we had a big focus on that. So, the coaches that we have, we have engineers and designers, artists, architects, and game designers, and all of them basically come together and they work collaboratively on something.

Saeed Arida: [00:27:47] And sometimes, actually, the students push us towards like a certain area where do they want to explore something. And some students wanted to do a film, and so we brought in a filmmaker to kind of work with the kids and work with another coach on that. The same thing with the visual effects, kind of we did that. So, we are not always limited also to the team that we have. We feel like whatever there is really relevant outside, we can design a studio experience around that.

Annalies Corbin: [00:28:16] So, these coaches, and you're bringing folks in, these industry folks with experience, are these teachers, are these educators? Sort of what makes up sort of the core staff, I guess, or support structure for the students within the institution?

Saeed Arida: [00:28:35] For the coaching staff you mean?

Annalies Corbin: [00:28:36] Yeah.

Saeed Arida: [00:28:37] So, we have, I think, a little bit of a bias towards the architects, because that's kind of the origin of the place. So, we hired a lot of architects for the school in Cambridge, but also for the NuVu Labs all over the world, because they really understand the process. And for us, when the students are talking about concepts, and how do you take concept to the final thing, even if you don't necessarily know the technical detail, this idea that you know how to take something, a concept, and develop it, and then to get it to a final thing, it's something that architects are really amazingly good at.

Saeed Arida: [00:29:14] And so, they kind of become the foundation of the pedagogy that we have. And then, also, they are designers and architects, they are very good at making things and all of that. So, if a studio is around that, around like object or space making, then they can do that. But if it's going to extend beyond that, to film, or a medical device, or a bioengineered thing, then we have to bring in an expert from outside, basically to work with the coaches that we have.

Annalies Corbin: [00:29:45] Right. And that makes sense. But I love the way you're able to completely, and often iterate your team, and make sure that whatever it is that you need, that's the thing that you have, right? You're not bound by the constraints of what already exists.

Saeed Arida: [00:29:59] Yeah. I mean, this is why it becomes like—the traditional school becomes really strange, in the sense like, on this subject, it's the same thing, it's the same textbook. Like once you hear about NuVu and what it is, that concept like seems so fixed and different than what you're doing.

Annalies Corbin: [00:30:17] Yeah, absolutely. So, you have your founder on this call with all of you. And I don't know the structure of the school, how often you actually see him or bump up against him sort of in all your day-to-day experience, but I see this is a great opportunity for the three of you, right? So, I'm going to start with Luca. So, as you start to think about what next, and if the world was your oyster in terms of choosing, what would you like to explore? Because now is your chance, because he'll hear it.

Luca Rudenstine: [00:30:50] This sounds really bad, but I feel like I've gotten a lot of my asks.

Saeed Arida: [00:30:56] They talk to me all the time.

Annalies Corbin: [00:30:58] All the time. Perfect.

Saeed Arida: [00:31:00] This is not like a unique opportunity here.

Luca Rudenstine: [00:31:02] Saeed also is my adviser, the upper hand, but I'm super interested in sustainability and architecture, which is also something I can pursue after NuVu, and kind of biomimicry, and how that ties into architecture as well. And so, I'm always super excited about those studios. And then, again, my wearable tech. I kind of like to push those with my coaches and like slide that in, but it's all super interesting to me, yeah.

Annalies Corbin: [00:31:32] Yeah, those are all great, great ideas. Anara, what about for you? What would you like to explore?

Anara Magavi: [00:31:39] I'm not really 100% sure what. I think maybe a little bit of some kind of thing with cooking and baking. I have done Open Innovation Studio where I played with ramen and constructed it into different forms, like gel, and crackers, and stuff. So, I'm really passionate about baking. So, I have gotten some of that stuff out of NuVu already. I feel like there's a lot of things, different topics and subjects that you learn through NuVu. And I can't think of a specific thing that I haven't really like necessarily gotten out of NuVu that I really want, which is really, like it's nice that there are so many different topics.

Annalies Corbin: [00:32:37] Yeah, that's a pretty amazing thing to be able to say about your high school experience, actually.

Saeed Arida: [00:32:43] Anara on her own does a lot of the experimental kind of work on food, and cooking, and all of that, but she's also our resident baker. So, any time we have a celebration or something, yeah. Aren't you making cupcakes for graduation?

Anara Magavi: [00:32:56] Yeah.

Saeed Arida: [00:32:57] So, it was that, too.

Annalies Corbin: [00:32:59] That's perfect. Siena, same question to you. What would you like to try?

Siena Jekel: [00:33:05] Personally, for me, NuVu has really accommodated what I want to do. I mean, like I told them, I was really interested in animation, filmmaking, and exploring possibilities, and like stuff like that, and then they went and made a studio for that. And it's still going on, so I don't know what next. But yeah, for me, they've really accommodated my passions.

Annalies Corbin: [00:33:35] That is awesome. That's a remarkable thing to hear. So, Saeed, as we sort of get ready to close the program, I think out of fairness, a similar question to you, when you think about the ecosystem that you've created, what do you want to do next or what would you like to see next? Not being held to it, but just sort of pie in the sky. What's that aspiration?

Saeed Arida: [00:34:01] Yeah. I think we are still at the—even though we've been doing this for 10 years, it still feels kind of small, and niche, and experimental. And so, we want to keep that experimental piece, but we want to try to kind of make it bigger and have kids all over the world kind of have more access to the type of work that we do. So, we're looking into moving into a much bigger space now. So, that is one thing.

Saeed Arida: [00:34:29] And we're also looking into increasing the number of the NuVuX schools that we work with, these are the NuVu Labs all over the world. And so, yeah, I think looking into growth and how we can have more kids have access to something like this is really key, and how we are thinking about this, but also just improving what we have here in Cambridge. That's also been always really key, like always bringing new coaches, new ideas, and new perspectives, and keeping the pressure on the staff to kind of always do something different than not kind of settle down.

Annalies Corbin: [00:35:05] Yeah, exactly. Well, it's sounds like an absolutely amazing program. And I always love when I get the chance to have a conversation throughout the studio model and play, because all those similarities are all so uniquely different. And so, I want to thank all of you for taking time out of your day to have a conversation with us. I greatly appreciate it.

Saeed Arida: [00:35:27] Yeah. Thank you.

Siena Jekel: [00:35:28] Thank you.

Luca Rudenstine: [00:35:29] Thank you.

Annalies Corbin: [00:35:29] Yeah. You're very welcome. Thank you for joining us for Learning Unboxed, a conversation about teaching, learning, and the future of work. I want to thank my guests and encourage you all to be part of the conversation. Meet me on social media @AnnaliesCorbin, and join me next time as we stand up, step back, and lean in to reimagine education.