

Mugalula Mukiibi,
Modest Wealth (Cattle), 1963



Who is the artist?

The artist of this print was called Mugalula Mukiibi. He went by the name **Mukiibi** or **Mukibi**. He was born in Uganda in East Africa. He grew up on the outskirts of the capital city, Kampala.

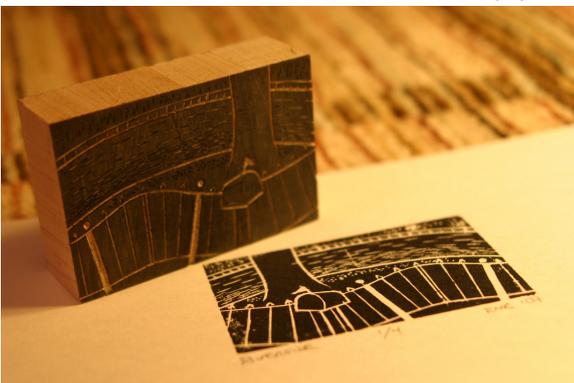
He made art at school and was encouraged by his teacher. Mukiibi then went to study art at the most famous art school in East Africa, at Makerere College in his home town of Kampala.

Making prints

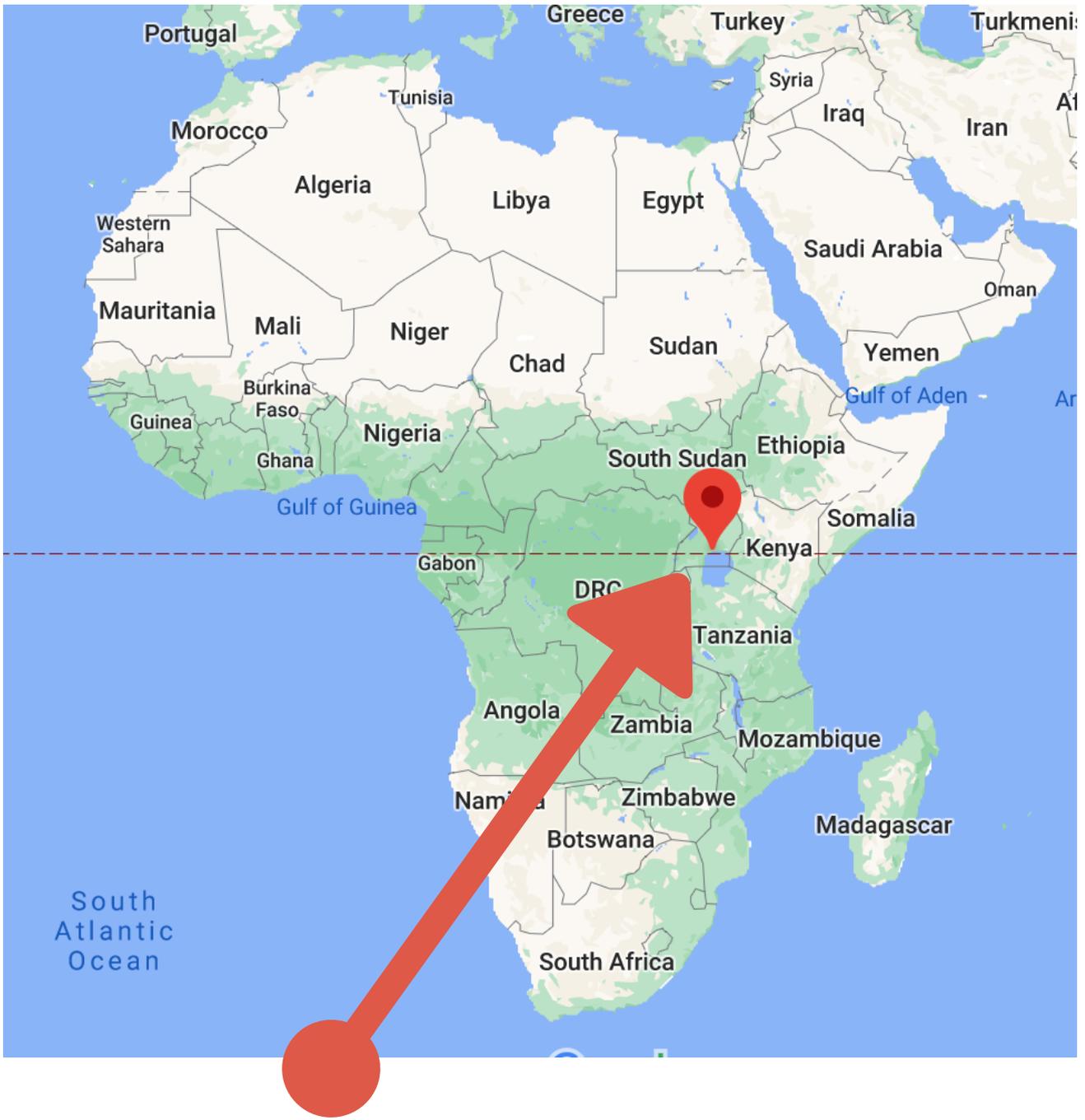
At art school he learned how to paint and how to make prints. A **print** is a type of picture that you can make lots of copies of. There are different ways to make one. The basic idea involves a base 'plate', like a piece of metal, into which you scratch a picture. Ink is then added to the plate. Finally, you place a piece of paper on top and put it under something very heavy to make a copy. You can use your plate to make lots of copies.

On Mukiibi's print you can see a '1/10' on the left side. This means it was the very first print that Mukiibi made from his plate, and that he made 10 in total.

Here are some different types of prints being made:



Mukiibi made his print of the cattle using a special printing technique called **etching**



This is Uganda. It is a landlocked country which borders Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan.

The capital city of Uganda is Kampala. It is in the south of the country, on the shore of Lake Victoria.

Kampala is a very busy city and it is where Mukiibi lived all of his life.



Why did Mukiibi make a picture of cattle?

In Uganda, cattle are very important. Over 1 million households own at least one cow. Mukiibi grew up in the city, but he knew that cattle were important: the more cattle you owned, the richer you were. Mukiibi's son, Enoch, suggested that the print should be called 'Modest Wealth', because the herd here are valuable, but not enough to make someone very rich.

There are several different breeds of cattle in Uganda. The most famous is the **Ankole**. Ankole are called the King of Cattle because of their amazing horns.



Ankole cattle are very important. They produce milk and beef. The milk is also used to make yoghurt and butter.

Ankole cows are special because they are very tough and can live in a very hot and dry places.

In his print Mukiibi shows this by creating the effect of **cracking** on the cows' skin. It suggests the dry land on which they live. He also includes **trees and long grass** so the picture has **interesting textures**.



Ugandan barkcloth

After art school, Mukiibi set up a gallery in Kampala where people could come and buy his work. He sold his paintings and some prints, and he developed a special type of print on a material called **barkcloth**.

Barkcloth is an important material in Uganda. It is made by taking the bark from a **mutuba tree** and pounding it until it is soft and like fabric. Ugandan barkcloth is a rich red-orange in colour and is worn by the *kabaka* (a king).



Mugalula's family had been expert barkcloth makers for a long time. He combined this tradition with his training in printmaking, to develop a type of printing on barkcloth. Lots of people came to his gallery in Kampala to buy these prints.



Now that you have learned some things about Mugalula Mukibi's work, here are some ideas of things to do:

1. **Make a picture of your favourite cows!** Highland cattle live in a very different climate to Ankole cattle. Could you make a picture of Highland cow that shows people in Uganda a little bit about climate they have to live in?
2. **Make a potato print.** Potatoes are a good way to learn about what prints are. A grown up can help you to cut a potato in half and make a picture by scratching or cutting on the inside. Dip the cut potato in paint, and print it on some paper. Remember you can make lots of prints using the same potato, by just painting over your design and printing again. How many prints can you make? How do they look different from each other? Does the paint make the exact same mark on the paper every time?
3. **Make a bark picture.** Can you find some bark from the trees where you live? (Don't pull it off the tree! Just see if you can find some on the ground.) Different trees have different types of bark. The mutuba tree bark is very special because it can be made into a strong fabric. Can you find any pieces of bark which you use to make a picture? How many different types of bark can you find?