

# Samuel Ntiro, 'Chopping Wood', 1967



P1-3 Pilot Learning Resource

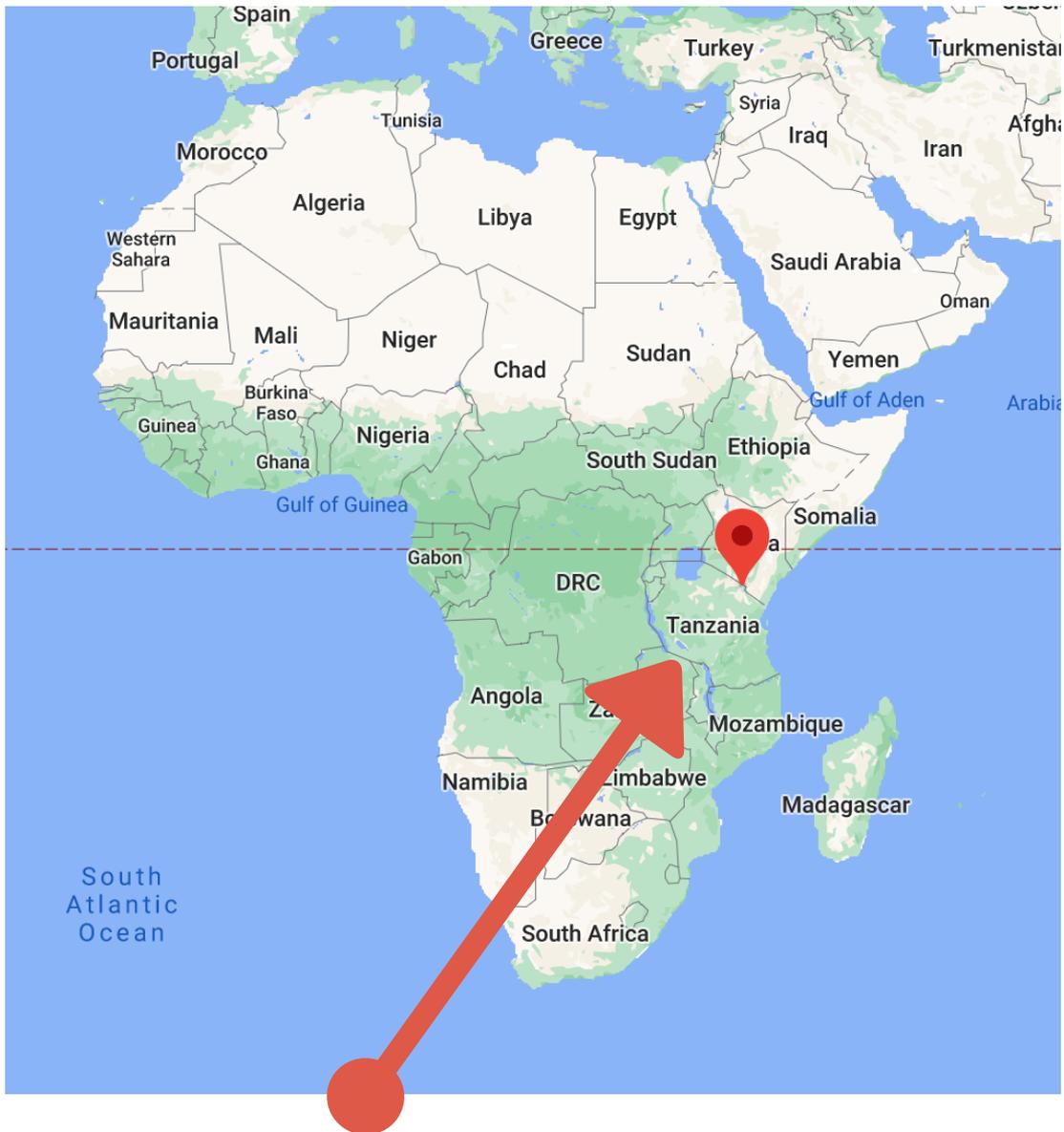
Samuel Ntiro was an artist from Tanzania. He grew up in the countryside around Mount Kilimanjaro in the north. He went to the famous art school in Uganda called Makerere College to become a professional artist. He always chose to use his paint to show what life was like in the place where he grew up.

Sam's family were members of the Chagga people, a group who have been farmers around Mount Kilimanjaro for a long time.



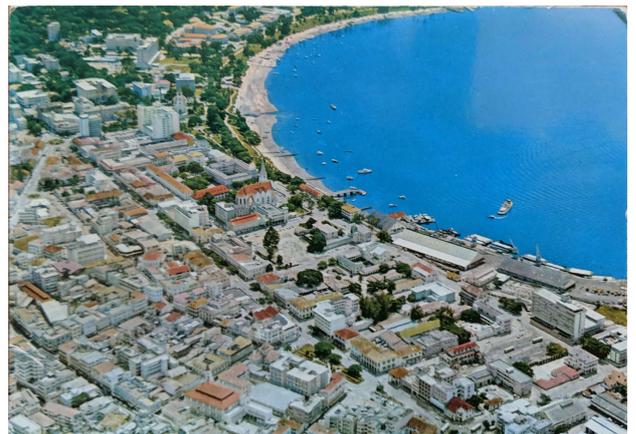
Sam liked to use paint to show things from village life, like building traditional houses and making banana beer. ***What does he show in his painting, Chopping Wood? What are the people doing?***

Sam did not live in a Chagga village when he grew up. He moved to Tanzania's biggest city, Dar es Salaam, where he became an important artist and a champion of Tanzanian art. The leader of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, asked Sam to be an ambassador and he came to Britain to represent his country.



This is **Tanzania** on a map.  
It is a big country with mountains,  
lakes, plains and seaside.  
The red spot shows where Sam  
came from.

The big city called Dar es Salaam  
is just below that, right on on the  
Swahili coast. There are lots of  
beautiful beaches there, as you  
can see in this old postcard!



Even though Sam moved away from where he grew up, he never forgot about the where he was from and the ways in which people worked together in the village.

***How does his painting create the effect of people working together? What does he do to make the people look like they are all one group?***

This is a photo of Sam. When he sent his painting, 'Chopping Wood' to live in Argyll, he included this photograph because he wanted everyone to see what he looked like.



***What does the photograph tell you about the things he thinks are important?***

Here are some other examples of Sam's work:



This one is in the Museum of Modern Art in New York. It is called 'Men Taking the Banana Beer to the Bride at Night' and it shows men carrying a type of drink called *Mbege* being carried through the forest to a bride before her wedding.

***Does it look like the painting you have in Argyll?  
How is it the same or different?***



This painting is called 'Monkeys Feeding' and it is in Lakeland Arts in England.

***How many monkeys can you see? What type of monkey are they? Do you think the people in Sam's village liked having monkeys living so close?***



This painting is called Buguruni Village and it is in the Government Art Collection in London.

Buguruni is not near Mount Kilimanjaro and the Chagga villages that Sam grew up in, but on the outskirts of Dar es Salaam. A long time ago it was a place of coconut plantations. ***Can you see any coconuts in the Sam's painting?***

Sam was interested in recording what places looked like back in time. As Dar es Salaam grew to be a big city, Buguruni looked less and less like a village.

***Here are some ideas of things you could do using Sam's painting and his photograph:***

1. Create a painting or a drawing like Sam's that shows important things about where you come from.
2. Make a picture that shows lots of people working together.
3. Use natural things, like sticks and leaves, to make a picture of the forest like the one in Sam's painting
4. Look up Tanzania on a map and draw a picture of the amazing Mount Kilimanjaro or the busy city of Dar es Salaam.
5. Use a map to see how far Dar es Salaam is from Argyll. This is how far Sam's painting has travelled!
6. Draw a picture of an artist, or a picture of Sam if you like!  
What are some of the things that let you know that someone is an artist?

**Have fun!**

*This pilot learning resource was developed by Kate Cowcher (University of St Andrews). Please share any comments / feedback: [kc90@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:kc90@st-andrews.ac.uk)  
See [www.dartodunoon.com](http://www.dartodunoon.com) for more information*