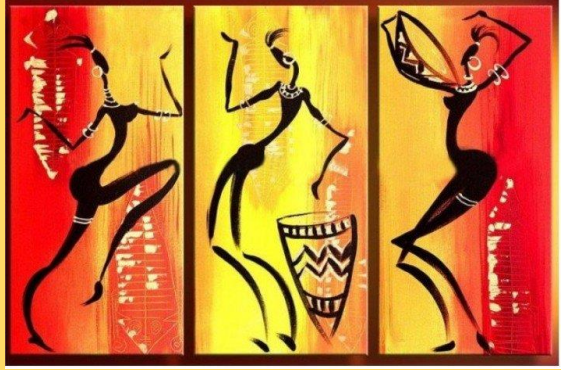




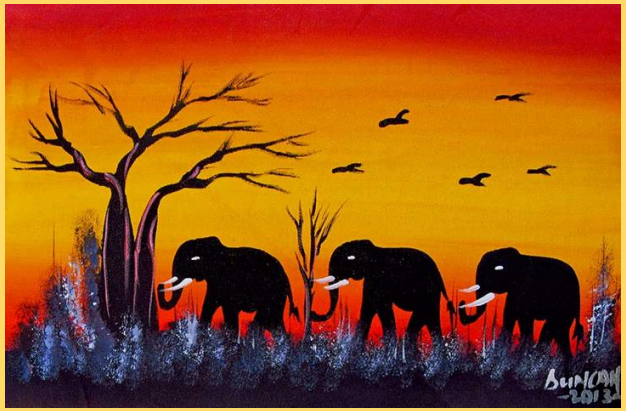




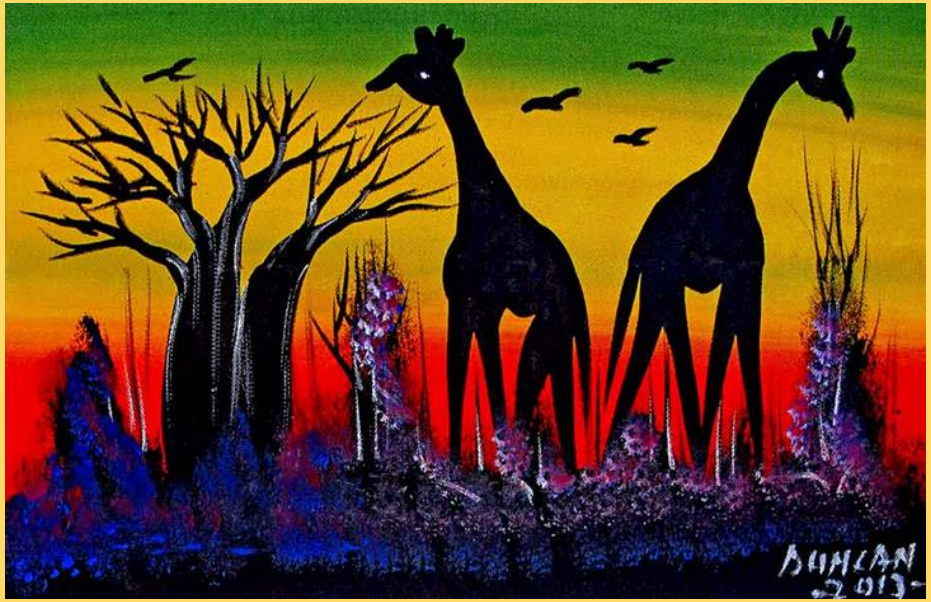




AFRICAN ART



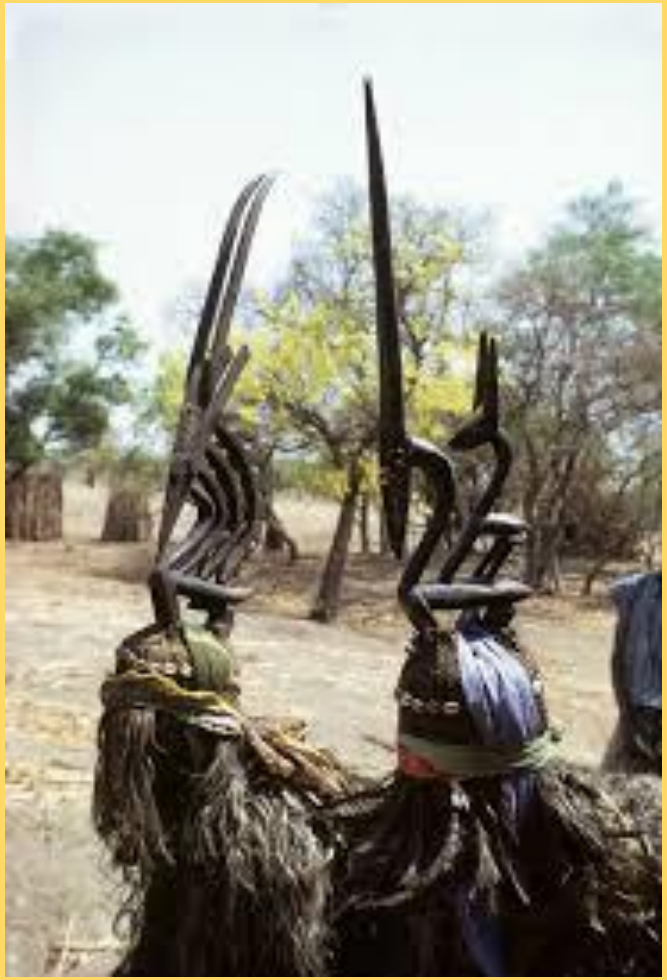




Week 1

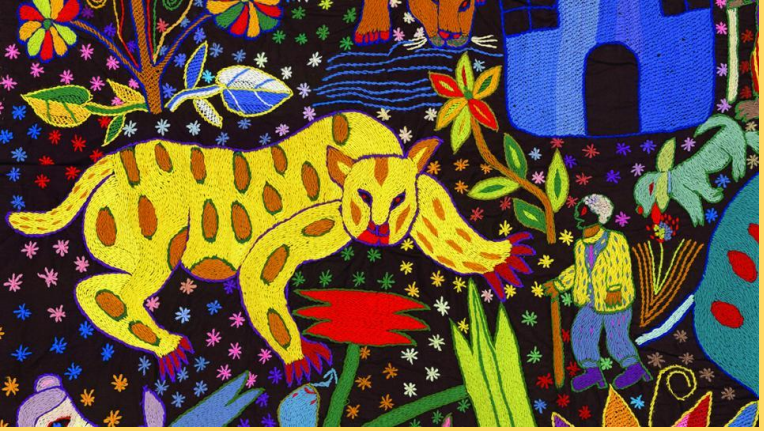
LO: To know that the Bamana people from Mali carve antelope headdresses to use in the Chiwara ceremony





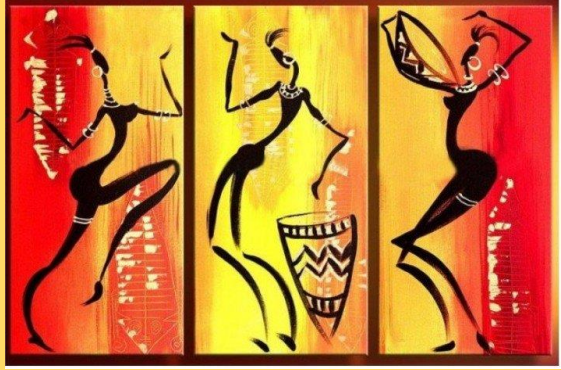
Prior learning:

- What is Africa?
- Where is Africa?
- Do you know anything about African art?
- What do you think it might look like?
- What do you think it might be made from?





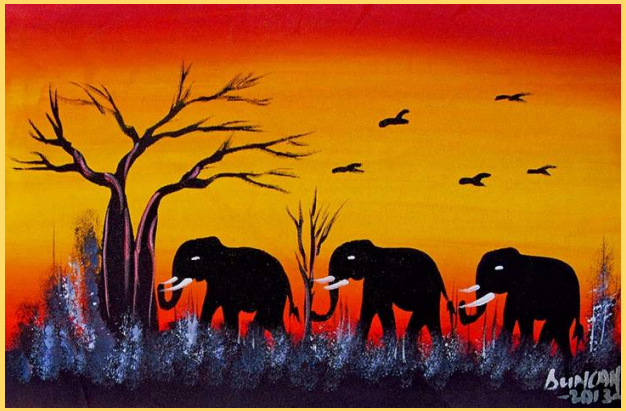




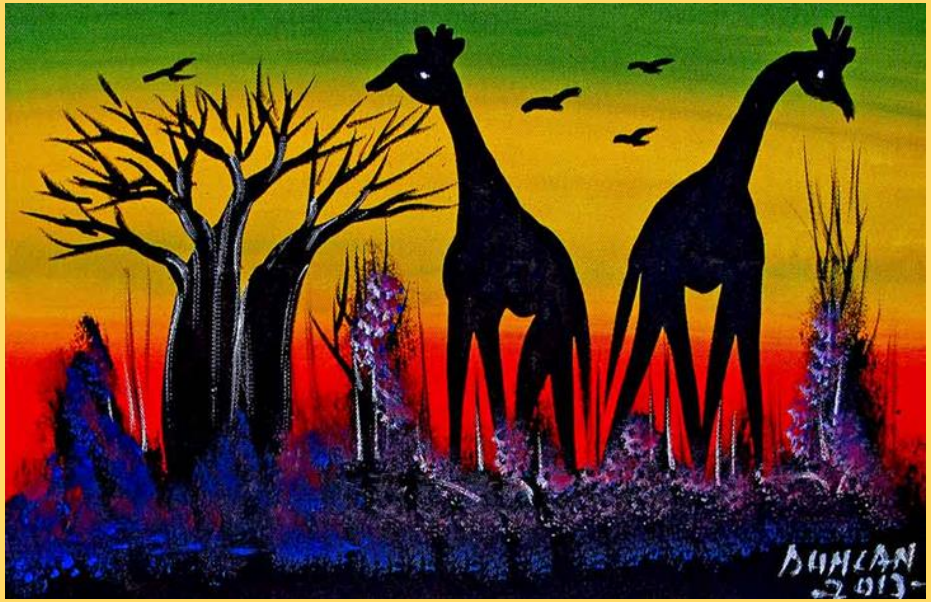




African art is a huge subject as it is a large continent with a long and rich history.
This unit looks at a snap shot of African art focusing on Western Africa – art from what we now know as the modern countries of Mali and Nigeria.







Mali is a country in West Africa.



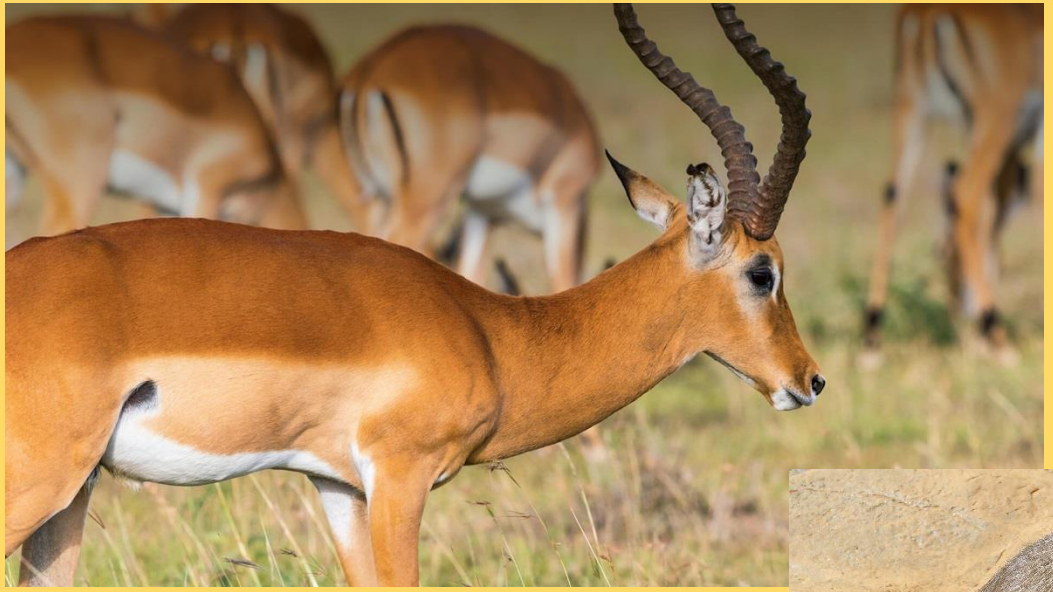
It is known for carved, wooden antelope headdresses made by the Bamana peoples.

The headdresses are used in a ceremony to honour the spirit, Chiwara.

Key Vocabulary

- Mali, Bamana, ceremony, headdress, antelope, Chiwara

- Mali – A country in West Africa
- Bamana peoples - A group of peoples living mainly in Mali, Western Africa.
- Ceremony - A social or religious occasion often celebrating a particular event.
- Headdress - A covering for the head, especially worn in ceremonies.







- Does anyone know what the creatures are called or anything about them?

How do the shapes in the headdress relate to the animals?

Do the shapes look exactly like the animals?
NO– the shapes are simplified in the headdresses so they become,
for example simple curves or triangles.





Task



What can you see?

What do you know?

What can you guess?

Bamana peoples believe Chiwara is a spirit (taking the form of a creature who is half man, half like an antelope), who taught their people the art of farming. They honour Chiwara through music and dance.

According to legend, Chiwara used his antlers and a pointed stick to dig into the earth, showing humans how to cultivate the land. Chiwara used his hoofs to cover the seeds, and humans, observing closely, became experts at planting seeds. The Bambana farms became so bountiful that they had too much corn for their own use. But then, they wasted it, thinking that it was easy to cultivate. Chiwara grew disappointed and buried himself in the earth. This disturbed the elders of the Bambana, who regretted that they had lost him. They then ordered that a mask should be made in memory of Chiwara, to honour him for teaching them how to farm the land. Many elaborate headdresses have been carved in wood in his honour. The Chiwara masks are reserved for the people in the community who are the best and fastest workers of the land.

It is a high honour to be able to wear the mask and dance the ceremonial Chiwara dance. There are always 2 headdresses worn by two men in the ceremony representing a male and female antelope. The headdresses would originally have been attached to a wicker cap. The dancers leap and turn, moving their heads and feet like the antelope.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bt3Mkzv2Ot0

Art challenge!



Sketch at least 2 headdresses that are similar to the one being shown in this picture.

Next to your sketches you should separately draw different shapes where you can see in the masks, for example, triangles, zigzags, curves

Plenary

Tell someone…

Where is Mali?

Who are the Banama peoples?

What do you know about Malian antelope headdresses?