

1. Sekoto, black pioneer of art in the modern idiom, was born in 1913 in the Middelburg district where he received his schooling. He then trained as a teacher at Grace Dieu, the Anglican college near Pietersburg. He taught briefly but he wanted to be an artist. He was encouraged by the Rev. Roger Castle of St. Peter's School, Rosettenville, who held part-time classes at the school.

Cartoon: Roger Castle (he was probably a monk) with 3 or 4 black students, perhaps analysing a well-known picture.

2. In 1939 Sekoto was invited by Brother Roger of the Community of the Resurrection to join his students in an exhibition at the Johannesburg Gainsborough Galleries. His work aroused interest and he was persuaded to submit an entry to the South African Academy. A one-man exhibition in Pretoria followed. He then took a momentous decision in 1947 - to go to Paris. Life was not ~~so~~ easy. To support himself he played the piano and guitar in night spots. His struggles affected his health.

Cartoon: Sekoto playing piano and guitar in a Paris night spot

3. Sekoto became a familiar figure of the Bohemian quarter, with bokbaard and corduroy jacket. He was our first black artist to merit critical attention in Europe. He was still fascinated by the urban African scene. But his work has acquired a certain idealised quality, influenced inevitably by so long an exile.

Cartoon: Sekoto painting in Paris, wearing corduroy jacket and bokbaard (two of his paintings can be found in Contemporary African Art)