



Stepping Stones

By Albert Wendt (a Samoan poet)

Our islands are Tagaloaalagi's stepping stones
across Le Vasa Loloa

small and frail but courageous enough to bear his
weight and mana

high enough to keep us above the drowning and
learning

how to navigate by the stars currents and the
ferocity of storms

Point and sail in any direction as long as you know

how to return home

You have to navigate the space between the
borders

of your skin and the intelligence of the tongueless
horizon



and learn the language of touch of signs and pain
of what isn't and what may be in the circle of the tides
that will stretch until you understand the permanent
silence
at the end of your voyage
and our islands are your anchor and launching site
for the universes that repeat and repeat
like the long waves of our ocean like Tagaloaalagi's
compulsive scrutiny of what is to come and fear

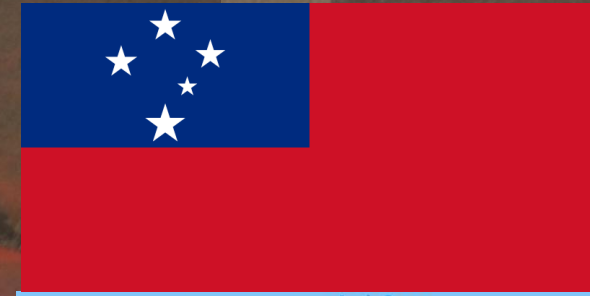
tures
ELA

ERT
NDT

Albert Wendt

About the poet

- Born in Apia, Samoa in 1939
- Wendt is a poet, writer and academic. He has taught at universities in Samoa, Fiji, Hawaii and New Zealand.
- Wendt has received many awards for his writing, including two wins of the Commonwealth Writers Prize
- His book *Sons for the return home* has been adapted into a feature film



About the poem

- How do you feel after reading it?
- Which lines or words resonated with you and why?
- What would you say the main theme of this poem is?