

Eco-friendly Nigerian artist turns plastic flip-flops into portraits

By [Seun Sanni](#) and [MacDonald Dzirutwe](#)

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Eugene Komboye, a Nigerian artist, is turning discarded plastic flip-flop sandals into colourful portraits in an effort to help clean up the environment in a country where plastic pollution is prevalent.



Image: Nigerian artist Eugene Komboye creates artworks using discarded plastic flip-flop sandals in his studio in Abeokuta, Ogun state, Nigeria, 21 January 2023. Reuters/Seun Sanni

What started as an assignment in college in 2017, has become a full time job for Komboye, whose studio in the city of Abeokuta in the southwest state of Ogun now trains aspiring artists who want to follow in his footsteps and create flip-flop portraits.

Nigeria produces at least 2.5 million tonnes of plastic waste annually, according to government figures, with some of it finding its way into the ocean and rivers.



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Flip-flops are the footwear of choice for many Nigerians and Komboye, 30, sources his material mostly from dump sites, landfills and river banks. Back in his studio he disinfects and washes his findings before cutting them up and pasting them on a board to create a face on each one. Some customers come to his studio with photographs which he will use to create a personalised portrait.

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