

# Polio Wonder Welders

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Are you in the mood to purchase a new sculpture to display in your home or office? How about a new pair of earrings, a wooden toy or perhaps some handcrafted paper products or candleholders? If so, you might want to view the merchandise offered by the Wonder Workshop.



Founded in 2004 in Tanzania, the Wonder Workshop is a welding workshop established to teach local polio survivors to create welded art using recycled scrap metal. Soon, individuals who originally had no other means of support other than begging in the streets were crafting beautiful welded art sculptures that were sold locally enabling them to support themselves and their families.

The metal art sculptures are amazing and intricately detailed. There is a wide variety of subjects and if you don't find something that piques your interest amid the animals, insects, boats, birds, bicycles or masks currently available. The artists will be happy to commission an original piece in any image that you desire.

After the initial establishment of the organization, Heather Cummings, an artist from Scotland whose creations are known worldwide, offered a two-month training session to help the local artists perfect their craft.

Today, with a full-time staff of more than 40, the NGO (non-governmental organization) also offers handmade recycled paper cards, bookmarks, photo albums and picture frames. There is a wide assortment of wooden toy cars, trucks and animals made of the finest Tanzanian hardwoods and polished with coconut oil, and a wide variety of lovely recycled glass jewelry made from broken bottles and window panes.

The NGO, originally started by Paul Hicks of Blue Mango Photography with the help of a small grant from the Dar es Salaam Charity Goat Races and donations of scrap from large companies across Dar, hopes to continue to expand and employ more polio survivors while continuing to produce world-class art.

To view all of the items produced by these talented artists and learn more about this artistic organization go to [www.wonderwelders.org](http://www.wonderwelders.org). ▲

