

Why **RecycloZoids**®? A message from artist Tom DeSanto

In the early 2020s, I became concerned about the **dangers of plastic waste in the environment.**

Far less than ten percent of plastic was recycled. And plastic was showing up almost everywhere: on streets and beaches, in oceans and forests, and within living creatures.

Soon I came to notice the abundance of plastic items littering my Pasadena neighborhood. The problem hit home, so I began to investigate.

I learned there are different kinds of plastic and that most cannot be recycled. Even among the recyclable kinds, most are not recycled properly.

What could I do to help keep plastic out of the environment and landfills? I avoided single-use plastics and recycled properly when possible.

Then **I decided to make plastic waste into art that could attract attention and inspire people to recycle plastic regularly.**

To get started, I gathered plastic waste from local streets and parks and from our trash at home. Collecting and cleaning became commonplace. But what could I make from it?

I fitted random pieces of plastic together to see what it might turn out to be. I trimmed it by hand and fastened it together with hardware without any preconceived notions or plans (or glue).

Each time, the plastic became a one-of-kind creature with its own unique personality. The creative process was wonderfully challenging, so I kept making more.

I call them “RecycloZoids.” I give each a name and a mission. Then I created a storybook about a kid who discovers “plastic-eating robots” in a local park and solves the mystery behind them.

As a substitute elementary school teacher, I created a curriculum around RecycloZoids and brought them into several schools. They were a bit hit at an Earth Day event this year.

To date, I have handcrafted 160 one-of-a-kind RecycloZoids. Many more are to come, acting as ambassadors for plastic recycling.

I hope that RecycloZoids will inspire you to discover and do whatever you can to help get plastic pollution under control.

To see more RecycloZoids and perhaps join the RecycloZoid Revolution by acquiring one of my creatures, please visit www.recyclozoids.com.

Thank you for reading my story.

Tom DeSanto

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