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The former soldier whose Army encounters are helping him take the creative world by storm

Report: Joe Clapson
Pictures: Graeme Main

FROM serving in Iraq to venting his feelings on canvas, Adjani Okpu-Egbe may have left the Service less than six months ago but already his life has taken a refreshing new direction.

The former member of the Adjutant General's Corps (Staff and Personnel Support) departed in September due to health problems caused by an eye condition but despite the medical setback he is determined to become a professional artist – and one with an alternative outlook.

Soldier found the ex-private inside a small convenience store on a vibrant street in Brixton, London, where in cramped conditions he was delicately adding the finishing touches to his latest work on canvas.

"A big studio is nice if you can afford it but all I need is space to create my art," the talented Okpu-Egbe explained.

The 33-year-old was injured in 2007 while serving on Op Brookdale in Iraq and from that moment on he struggled with his vision, which led to declining fitness levels.

"Because of my eyes I became depressed," the veteran conceded.

"I thought I could manage but it got worse and if it hadn't been for my art and my baby daughter I wouldn't be here today."

While attached to 4 Logistic



Support Regiment, the wounded soldier found that he enjoyed painting and sketching and that he had an untapped gift.

"One day I was lying on my bed at 0200 and realised I had produced a sketch but couldn't remember doing it," he recalled. "But I was feeling so fresh and much better about myself. >>>

