

# Non-toxic Paints at Ballajura Community College

An innovative Western Australian business is breaking into the important school art supplies market with a special kind of fine art paint.

**B**allajura Community College in Perth has recently discovered the benefits that Genesis Paints can bring to students of art.

Artist Robyn Cooper and her husband Rex have been pitching their main product to painters at every level since last year, as the sole Australian distributor for Genesis Heat-Set Oils.

Oil paints are the ultimate artists' medium around the world, but because they can contain harmful toxins like lead, cadmium and turpenoid, they have always raised concerns regarding health issues due to their fumes – particularly in school classroom situations.

Now however, Ballajura Community College has become one of the first Perth schools to order Genesis Heat-Set Oils which (unlike conventional oil paints) are non-toxic and will only dry when heat is applied via a heat gun or oven.

At the beginning of 2006, art teachers at Ballajura Community College (located in the north-eastern suburbs of Perth) introduced Year 11 and 12 students to the Genesis medium. Their aim was to alleviate health and allergy issues, and to create a safe and clean classroom working environment for oil paints. This particular type of oil paint is non-toxic, odourless and allergy free.

In using the heat-set oils, the teachers have found that students are much more productive – spending



more time actually learning and painting in each art class. An added bonus is that students can take their palettes home (with all their specially mixed colours) and complete their work. They also have the option to keep their palettes 'active' from one week's class to the next, without losing or wasting their oil paints.

Beyond the product's suitability for artist canvas and paper, it is also super efficient and effective for monoprinting, linoprinting and fabric painting.

One of the major characteristics of Genesis Heat-Set Oils is that the medium will never ever dry until heat is applied to it. This makes for exceptional ease of blending from its strong vibrant colour range. Students and teachers are amazed at how every drop of paint can be used, with little or no wastage at all, which in turn has made it very cost effective for school applications.

The Coopers have used the Genesis medium's non-toxicity and flexibility as selling points to school art teachers and parents. Interest has come from schools within Western Australia and interstate.

Robyn Cooper is proud to relate that the medium has been warmly welcomed into school learning environments.

"Ballajura art teacher Louise Moore has found that her students are working and learning much faster," Robyn explains. "Parents, too, feel comfortable with their kids using a safe product which is not going to affect their health."

Rex and Robyn Cooper are clearly aiming at the next generation of artists and art hobbyists with their latest push to promote Genesis Heat-Set Oils. Their excellent product is finding its niche in an eager marketplace.

For more product information, phone Robyn Cooper at Genesis Art Supplies on 08 9206 1233. ■