

MISSION MATTERS

PORTRAIT OF AN ARTIST, GULER ALTUNBAS

Local artist Guler Altunbas compares her work to that of Joy Hester who – as a contemporary of Nolan, Boyd and Blackman – was central to the modernist movement bedded down within the Heidi Circle.

Like Joy, Guler is guided by a stream of consciousness, using quick spontaneous lines. With most of her work conducted in oils, Guler began painting in earnest five years ago when she enrolled in a Diploma of Visual Art. And more recently, Guler joined the group of artists-in-residence at Prahran Mission's Stables Art Studio. With a background in community radio and youth affairs – winning Young Citizen of the Year Award some years ago – Guler has found a useful and purposeful place at The Stables.

'The Stables provides an ingredient to the weekly routine so needed to maintain a sense of self whilst managing mental health,' said Guler. 'It also acts as a safe and welcoming place to share ideas and help each other not only in art but in other happenings in our lives.'

With a name which means laughter, happiness and roses, Guler has an inert ability to connect with the audience who views her work, giving permission

to stop and smell the roses, and appreciate with humour all that surrounds us.

One of her works, 'The Homeless Man,' is the result of an image Guler saw one day in the park. 'I saw the image in the park, it was a happy scene – I didn't see a homeless man in despair, I saw a man feeding the birds, relaxed and at peace.'

This ability to etch images in her mind, allows Guler to work according to the internal picture. 'Once I am in the art-mode, I don't stop. I need to get the images onto canvas as I see them in real life,' said Guler. Of the ability to paint and spend time at The Stables, thanks to the support of Prahran Mission, Guler says, 'Art is like mediation for me, it brings peace to a hectic world.'

Guler will be exhibiting her works at The Stables Art Studio from 14 October – 5 November 2010. Please contact David Davies on 03 9692 9500 or by email david@prahranmission.org.au for further details.

