



Communal polish

Art grant | Liam Ryan

CREATIVE fires will burn a bit brighter in Malvern East, thanks to a handy financial boost.

The Stables Art Studio Program received \$25,000 from Australian Unity recently.

The Burke Rd studio, part of the Prahran Mission, was set up to give artists with mental illness a chance to develop art skills at low cost.

The grant will help eight artists take part in The Stables program for a year.

Resident artist Guler Altunbas said The Stables was an "empowering" place to be.

"Here you are an artist first, and I never considered myself an artist until I was part of this place," she said.

Altunbas is preparing varied works for her first solo show at the studio's gallery from October 7.

"I think that is fantastic, that there is that opportunity (to exhibit)," she said.

"What I enjoy about The Stables is that I get a studio space, which

can be so expensive.

"I really like the aspect that it's communal. You get to talk with other artists about how their art is progressing."

More than 45 artists of all skill levels are presently part of the program. The Studio provides materials, equipment and advice from art staff.

Artist Sophie Williams's exhibition of drawings, *Sophie's Reality*, is on show at The Stables Art Gallery, 54 Burke Rd, Malvern East, until July 31. Gallery hours: Monday-Thursday, 10am-5pm.



Artist Guler Altunbas (left and above) at the Stables Art Studio.

Pictures: PAUL LOUGHNAN N03MP801