

caring colours

No day is the same for those at this social and creative enterprise.



Above: Indigo Greenlaw and Wills Rowe of The Paper Rain Project in their Wellington store, with some of the art boards for sale.

Top right: One of Indigo's kākāpō artwork boards, part of a series to raise awareness and money for a threatened species.

Creativity and a social conscience collide every day at The Paper Rain Project, resulting in a range of stunning artworks and products, many finished in Resene paints.

Founders Indigo Greenlaw and Wills Rowe both had a passion for recycling, conservation and sustainability before they met in 2013. As an art student Indigo had painted surfing longboards for friends, so she and Wills began making artwork boards from recycled wine barrels and locally grown macrocarpa.

"Recycling, conservation and sustainability were ideas I was brought up with. I grew up in a boat-access-only, off-grid community in Scotland with parents who planted native trees for a living. Wills shares these values. Being fair trade and supporting those in our supply chain is really important to us, so working with companies that support women out of sex slavery and poverty in India was the perfect fit for Paper Rain.

"The idea is to create a range of high quality, fair trade (or locally sourced/in-house made) art goods which help people to learn more about the supply chain, including the charities we donate a portion of profits to per artwork."

The small, bespoke nature of The Paper Rain Project means both Indigo and Wills wear many hats when it comes to managing the business. As well as working as



a guest artist for the board, t-shirt and tote bag artworks, "which I love", Indigo is also responsible for branding, marketing, creative direction and staff management. "No day is the same," she says.

Indigo's relationship with Resene paints goes back a long way, to her days as an art student. "I always loved the colours available and as a student, found the testpots an affordable way to get a good quality paint in a wide range of shades."

When it came to creating some of the original, ethical designs for The Paper Rain Project, Resene was a natural fit. "I love that Resene has Environmental Choice paints and that I can return my used paint cans and any unused paint to be recycled," she says.

Colour is a crucially important element in creating the art boards and other Paper Rain designs, making sure they stand out from others on the market. Indigo uses a unique mixture of laser etching, modelling compound, gold leaf and Resene paint.

"Most recently, I have been using Resene to paint a series of kākāpō board artworks, each named after a real kākāpō. We have one of the fastest declining rates of native species in the world and our birds can do with all the help they can get," says Indigo. "I hand paint each board, limiting each bird series to their living numbers. We donate a portion of profits from each board sale towards their recovery programmes.

"We have sold 22 kākāpō so far, so it's about time to release the next bird in the series. I'm thinking the huia – which will be a special edition seeing as they're already gone! A wading heron will be next."

There's no such threat of extinction for The Paper Rain Project with the year shaping up as their busiest yet, including new stores in Auckland, Wellington and Queenstown. **H**

For more about The Paper Rain Project, see www.thepaperrainproject.co.nz.