

Yolo Colorhouse

If you've spent any time exploring the East Bank Design District, you've probably glimpsed that wall of luscious colors through the windows next door to clarklewis in the Eastbank Commerce Center. But the colors are only the beginning of the story at Yolo

Colorhouse, where Virginia Young and Janie Lowe have designed a new line of interior paints that will warm your living spaces – and are easy on the environment.

Young and Lowe, both trained as artists, specialized in custom wall finishes for close to a decade. From the beginning, they experimented with historic and modern

paint formulas, trying to find the ideal combination of rich color and durability, while avoiding unhealthy effects on themselves and the environment.

"It became clear to us that the world needed a line of paints with a designer palette and no VOCs, the volatile

organic compounds that pollute the environment," says Young. After perfecting their formulas, Yolo looked to a partnership with Portland-based Rodda Paint for manufacturing and distribution expertise. "We knew Rodda would understand our concept, because they



Virginia Young and Janie Lowe of Yolo Colorhouse take five in their Portland studio with poster-sized paint color swatches.

already produced Horizon, an excellent, earth-friendly line of paints," she adds.

The 40 Yolo Colorhouse paints are divided into seven color families: Air, Grain, Leaf, Water, Stone, Clay and Petal. Each individual color has a number rather than a name, to make choices easier and avoid limiting people's imaginations. "Most of the colors are very versatile, designed to flow through in your home or office and create a backdrop for living," says Lowe. "The Petal colors need to be used with care, as vibrant accents and color spots."

The truly revolutionary aspect of Yolo Colorhouse may be its sample system: Say good-bye to a garage full of rejected quarts of paint, or nasty swatches that need to be painted over on your walls. Instead, you can buy any Yolo color on a generous 23-by-27-inch sheet of heavy paper covered with real paint, with repositionable stickum on the back so it can be moved from wall to wall (\$4.99 each). A design kit is also available, containing an 8.5-by-11-inch sample of each color – also in real paint, not printer's ink – along with suggestions on where to use it and which colors to use nearby (\$50). "Every aspect of our paint is earth-friendly, color-friendly and user-friendly," says Young. "And beautiful."