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■ Showing off work ahead of the Response to Afghanistan exhibition at The Hostry are artists, left to right, Doug Farthing, Jules George and Harry Parker. Right and below, some of the artwork on display

Pictures: ANTONY KELLY

# Art provides an insight into war in Afghanistan

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An art exhibition opens at Norwich Cathedral today creating a unique insight into the conflict in Afghanistan and those caught in the turmoil.

"Response to Afghanistan" has been put together by East Anglian artists, including Sgt Major Doug Farthing, who was born in Lowestoft and now lives in Walberswick.

He was deployed to Afghanistan in the Christmas period of 2002. Having served for 30 years in the army, he was then awarded a scholarship on the highly competitive Drawing Year at the Royal Drawing School.

There, he met ex-soldier Captain Harry Parker, who had also been awarded this prestigious scholarship. Capt Parker had served in both Iraq in 2007 and Afghanistan in 2009.

They were contacted a year later by artist Jules George, who was sponsored in February 2012 by the Ministry of Defence to travel to Afghanistan, capturing the reality of life in the war zone.

The final person involved in the story is Jevan Watkins Jones from Ipswich, an artist whose work is a response to interacting with wounded soldiers returning home from war.

The four together tell a story of the different aspects of life in Afghanistan from the devastation, to the people they met there, to life returning home.

The art similarly takes a varying range of forms, from paintings to film, and original drawings penned in the area of conflict.

Although Afghanistan was the



initial link between the artists, their real tie is art itself.

"This is a response to life, and Afghanistan is part of my life," said Sgt Major Farthing. "I've learned how important art is over the subject."

Capt Parker added: "Art isn't a therapy, it's a challenge."

Following the end of the show on November 23 they will go their sepa-

rate ways, pursuing art in every subject and not just their experience of war.

But until that time, the culmination of the artists' work has created a true insight into a world very few have experienced.

The show is open daily from 9.30am-4.30pm in the Hostry Exhibition Space. Admission is free.

