The art of empowerment

A unique exhibition at Belfast’s Catalyst Arts has provided a creative outlet for trauma survivors.

Luke Ryan met the exhibition curator to find out more.

RAUMA is a notion often said to be un-representable, but an exhibition now showing at Belfast’s Catalyst Arts looks at ways in which artists can use visual and acoustic elements to give shape to the ‘Felt Experience’.

The project features international artists who, rather than simply reporting events, use video works to generate a space for dialogue and reflection and create a means to express people’s experience of trauma.

As part of the show, artist Yoshiko Shimada from Japan and exhibition curator Angie Halliday from Belfast have produced documentary video works featuring footage of their time spent working with children survivors of trauma in the Philippines last summer.

Nurtured by the non-governmental organisation Responsible Infants By Sharing in the Philippines, the children are regarded as victims. But again, like so many of them, the music got in the way.

I imagined the late sixties the guitar greats Jimi Hendrix and Ronnie Wood crossed paths in a very significant way. Not only sharing the stage and their music, but even a flat. This relationship of reverence, I long read in one’s recent work, best reflected in the eyes of his surroundings. Nothing better than a lifetime’s admiration from the stacks as the master plays on.

The Tom Caldwell Gallery will present new work from Ronnie Wood, reflecting on his historic friendship with Hendrix, with the digital screenshots Jimi and Me at the Scene Club NY.

For further information contact the gallery at 429 Lisburn Road.

Disney artist goes on display

By Jenny Lee

ACCOMPLISHED animator Graham Toms is hosting a mini retrospective of his work at the Millennium Court Arts Centre in Portadown.

A former instructor at the Disney Institute in Orlando, Florida, Toms is an inspiring and highly skilled artist. The exhibition will be divided into four sections consisting of drawings, paintings, animation and clay models.

The animation process is a painstaking and slow process that requires skill, precision and patience. Not many people realise what goes into the creation of our favourite animated characters and stories.

This exhibition reveals to the viewer the entire world of Graham Toms with all of its surrealism, technical expertise and application of colour. Toms was a member of the Character Building: A Mini Retrospective by Graham Toms at MCAC until January 20.

Hendrix prints go on display

RONNIE Wood, guitar player with the Rolling Stones, like many of the musicians of his era, started life as a painter and is said to have been influenced by so many of them, the music got in the way.

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Contemporary twist on traditional ceramics

By AP Maginness

ALTHOUGH Asian expertise in ceramics is recognised throughout the world it is rare that you get an opportunity to find a ceramic artist in a gallery in Northern Ireland. It is therefore that you get the chance to view a large exhibition of Korean ceramics.

However, The Ormeau Baths Gallery is hosting a huge exhibition of Korean ceramics entitled Tradition Transformed: Contemporary Korean Ceramics, which will open next week with 87 works from 29 Korean artists. The exhibition is part of a push by Korean governmental organisation, The Korea Foundation, to show Korean work throughout Europe.

The idea originated from an exhibition that toured the US; 1998 to 2000 years ago. Marlene Rothacker of the Washington DC based group International Arts for Artists, who are putting together this exhibition, explained how Tradition Transformed came to fruition.

“Our organisation, International Arts for Artists, started an exhibition in 2004 called From the Fire: Contemporary Korean Ceramics, that is still on the road now and will travel until 2008,” said Rothacker.

“One of the underwriters for that show was The Korea Foundation, which is part of the Korean Government’s Cultural Department, they contacted us after the show and said they would be interested in funding a show that would be taken to Europe.

“So what we did was take 29 of the artists that were involved in that original show and we asked them to make several original pieces for a new show that would be taken to Europe. Some of the works that we will have in Belfast were created especially for the show and some were just part of the exhibition," said Rothacker.

Rothacker also explained that the exhibition would be travelling around Europe for the next two years at least, although details had yet to be confirmed.

“This is the opening venue for the exhibition but it will eventually be travelling throughout Europe, we are hopeful that it will be travelling to Germany, France and Spain as well as bringing in other works from across the world into the show,” said Rothacker.

Rothacker believes that this show is a significant exchange for both the artists and for the audience.

It is important to share that 5000 year-old tradition but there is also an interest that everyone knows about Japanese ceramics but the Korean tradition is often overlooked. What is most interesting is that a lot of the Korean artists came to Europe and the United States to study their art and so it is now coming full circle that they are showing their work here.

Tradition Transformed: Contemporary Korean Ceramics runs at the Ormeau Baths Gallery from January 13 until February 24.