

The prize: \$3,000 and a place in LACMA's permanent collection

By Hunter Drohojowska

Along with the Dodgers and fireworks at the Hollywood Bowl, summer means the announcement of the Young Talent Awards by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Announced Sunday afternoon at the Chaya Brasserie restaurant, the 23rd annual awards went to sculptors Peter Shelton and John Frame.

Sponsored by the museum's Modern and Contemporary Art Council, the award promises each artist a solo exhibition at the museum and a check for \$3,000. In return, each artist will give a work to the museum's permanent collection. In that regard, with the inflationary fees paid for contemporary art, the prize money has become a little problematic. In both cases, the award is less than the market value of the artist's work.

For the record, neither artist objected. Frame, 34, said, "If I give a larger piece to them, my presumption is that a donor or the museum will make up the (financial) difference. But it's not really important to me. I'm really pleased. It's the only institutional honor given to young or emerging artists in L.A. and it's important in that context. The money is being used to pay some bills but it just fills in the gaps and gives me a couple of months to work."

Said Shelton, 34, "I think it's great, particularly great at a time when they're making a big umph in their (contemporary art) program with the new building and everything. Most of the installation work I do is not even valued, so I'm happy particularly to be showing at the museum. And \$3,000 is \$3,000. It will allow me to step away from teaching a bit, and put my energy back into projects that are costly, not salable and big."

Frame creates tableaux of carved and painted wood reminiscent of medieval religious pagentry. Shelton casts forms of body parts or architectural elements in bronze and displays them as provocative installations. As disparate as this work would seem, LACMA's curator of 20th century art, Maurice Tuchman, announced to the gathered crowd that both artists share "deep affinities with regard to their interest and passion for art of previous periods... art of medieval Europe, art of the Far East, as well



Young Talent Award winners for 1985, John Frame, left, and Peter Shelton were honored Sunday at a party at Chaya Brasserie given by LACMA's Modern and Contemporary Art Council.

Paul Chinn/Herald photographer

as American folk art."

Former winners of the Young Talent Award on hand for the white wine and hors d'oeuvres of pasta and oysters included Roger Herman with wife Tamra, Don Sorenson, Rick Oginz, Michael McMillen, Mary Corse and Jim Morphesis. Also attending were LACMA's new curator of contemporary art Howard Fox with Doug Messerli, who is moving his Sun and Moon Press here from Washington, D.C. Among the art dealers were Peter Goulds of the L.A. Louver Gallery, which represents Shelton, and Dan Saxon of the Janus Gallery, representing Frame, as well as Betty Asher and Joan Simon Menkes. But most of the people were members of the Modern and Contemporary Art Council, including this year's selection committee chairwoman Bonnie Wilke with husband Jack, who was taking photos; chairman Michael Smooke with wife Terri and art collector parents Nathan and Miriam Smooke; LACMA trustee Richard Sherwood with wife Dee and daughter Elizabeth; Stanley Grinstein with architect wife Elyse who designed the restaurant; collectors Mickey and Ruth Gribben; Bob Halff; Ann Harmsen; Marvin and Judy Zeidler; Marcia Weisman; and William and Merry Norris.

Hunter Drohojowska writes regularly about art for the Herald.