



Dave O'Hora, Southern Advertising, sponsors, presents the Person-of-the-Month award to artist John Shinnors, watched by Fergal Deegan, advertising manager, Limerick Leader, sponsors, and Sean Lally, managing partner, Clarion Hotel, sponsors (LL)

John honoured for broadening the arts canvas

By COLM WARD

THE latest Limerick Person-of-the-Month is renowned artist John Shinnors.

John received the award—sponsored by the Limerick Leader, Southern Advertising and the Clarion Hotel—for his enormous contribution to the arts in Limerick and throughout the country.

A graduate of Limerick School of Art and Design, he has exhibited throughout the country but remains firmly rooted in Limerick city, where he lives. In 2002 / 03, a major exhibition of his paintings and drawings was staged in Limerick City Gallery of Art, but he has also had exhibitions in Mayo, Dublin, Cork, Belfast, Galway and Australia since the 1970s.

He is currently working on a new collection—his first in four years—



**LIMERICK
PERSON
OF THE MONTH**

which will be displayed in the Taylor Galleries, Dublin, in November.

In recent years, the Shinnors Scholarship MA in Curatorial Practice has been set up with John's support. The initiative, spearheaded by Mike Fitzpatrick, director of Limerick City Gallery of Art (LCGA) and part funded by the proceed from John's exhibition in

2002, gives the selected candidate the opportunity to study curatorial practice to MA level. LCGA provides work placement under the guidance of Mike Fitzpatrick and Dr Suzanne O'Shea, of Limerick School of Art and Design. It is a project with which he is very proud to be involved.

John describes the art scene in Limerick at the moment as "extremely vibrant". One factor in this is the contribution of LCGA which has brought "thousands of students to study art here".

While his own work has evolved continuously over the years, he remains drawn to images like lighthouses and scarecrows and other isolated figures, often standing out against a stark landscape. The landscape of the Mid-West, and particularly Loop Head and the Shannon Estuary, has also provided John with

inspiration over the years.

The foot-and-mouth epidemic of recent years made a strong impression on him and he is working on a series of large paintings based around this.

"The way I look upon it is that I interpret these images, rather than copy them," he said.

In recent years, he has achieved significant national recognition and has featured in an RTE documentary as well as numerous radio, magazine and newspaper interviews. He is now one of the best known living Irish artists and his work is in constant demand. This has helped bring a degree of stability to his life.

"An artist's life has never been one of steadiness. It is a precarious existence at the best of times. It you achieve a sort of national recognition, things settle a bit," he said.