

Art of the rock stars to benefit AIDS group

Works to be sold in silent auction

BY FRED SHUSTER
Los Angeles Daily News

LOS ANGELES — To many musicians, art is either a guy's name or a deli in Studio City.

For the Grateful Dead's Jerry Garcia, Ron Wood of the Rolling Stones and a host of other rockers who regularly pick up a paintbrush and confront an empty canvas, it's a secondary career.

About 200 pieces of art by well-known rock musicians, actors and others, including David Bowie, John Lennon, John Mellencamp, Tom Petty and Charles Bronson, are on display from tomorrow through Thursday in the lobby of the Directors Guild of America in Hollywood. The artwork, which encompasses a variety of styles, will be sold by way of silent auction to benefit the American Foundation for AIDS Research (AmFAR).

Among the donated pieces are self-portraits by Alice Cooper, **Joni Mitchell**, Wood and radio personality Howard Stern. Guitarist Joe Walsh sent a humorous wooden sculpture. Yoko Ono offered *Box of Smiles*, a limited-edition small bronze cube that has sold for more than \$10,000 in galleries. Garcia shipped 22 abstract watercolors. Mixed-media artist Roger Dean sent five pieces, including his original fantasy cover art for the Yes album *Relayer*.

"Most of the things I get involved with have to do with the environment," Dean said from his home in Brighton, England. "This seemed like a worthwhile cause and one that's becoming more urgent."

Guitarist Rick Vito, who spent several years with Fleetwood Mac and now leads his own blues band, offered three mixed-media pieces, including two abstract portraits of Delta blues great Robert Johnson.

"At this point, if anyone asks me to do something for charity, I'm only too happy to do it," Vito said. "You have to give something back. That's what it's all about."

Funds collected by AmFAR are distributed to AIDS research and educational groups. The Los Angeles-based organization has contributed about \$44-million to more than 710 research organiza-

tions since 1983, said Sparky Hilker, AmFAR's West Coast assistant manager for special events. The organization was one of the beneficiaries of the recent Freddie Mercury tribute concert in London.

"More and more, the rock 'n' roll community is getting involved," Hilker said, adding that Madonna and Ozzy Osbourne have made major contributions.

Minimum bids range from \$20 for a limited-edition poster by Garcia to \$500,000 for Dean's *Relayer* art. The auction process is subtle; bidders can sign their name to a list of figures under each work.

The most difficult rocker to track down was Mick Jagger, said Scott Segelbaum, promotions director of KLSX-FM, a classic-rock station which organized the art exhibit and auction.

"I felt it was important that Jagger be involved," Segelbaum said. "After sending out 10 proposals to his people and getting a 'no' every time, I wrote it off. But Little Feat told me they were rehearsing in a studio next to him a few weeks ago, and I ran over there with drawing paper and a gold-paint pen. He was as nice as can be."

Jagger's contribution was his signature below the words: "Can't get no satisfaction?"

Certain people, such as session drummer Jeff Porcaro, helped lead Segelbaum to other musicians.

Jeff Phillips, who curates contemporary art for venues in Los Angeles, said the rock art display "captures a period of history. A lot of this reflects sixties music, but it's being put toward a nineties cause. These people are millionaires who have the time to make art. It's not their first outlet for expression."

But for some British musicians, such as Wood and Bowie, art was their first form of expression. They joined their first bands while in art school.

Richard Aaron, a Los Angeles rock photographer whose work has appeared on more than 250 albums, donated 25 framed prints, including the much-used shot of Bruce Springsteen looking up at a spotlight on stage at Madison Square Garden in 1977.