

OLYMPIC ARTS DIARY

Trouble right here in disco city

Room 100, George Lucas Cinema Center, University of Southern California. "Are you guys making a movie here?" asks a passing student.

The place looks like a collision of carousels. Lying all around a newly finished sound stage are squiggly, pointy and jagged shapes in fuchsia, lime, tangerine, navy and lemon. No doubt about it. Peter Shire has been here.

One of L.A.'s pre-eminent ceramist/sculptors, he is best known for his non-functional teapots. He was hired by the design team of Sussman/Prezja & Co. Inc. to create Olympic discos, open only to the athletes, at the USC and UCLA Olympic villages.

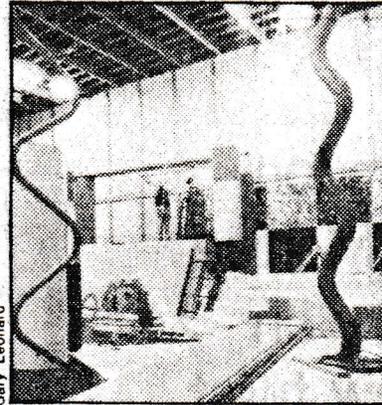
The USC disco is nearing completion and Shire gives a visitor a tour. The raised areas, painted pink, blue or yellow, will hold tables where the athletes can drink Coke, the official soft drink of the Olympics. (No alcohol is sold within the village.) Around the edge of the dance floor and on the platforms stand 10-foot-tall tubes painted in

bright stripes and checks.

Shire is admiring his handiwork when a crew member warns him that "a new guy" — Stephen Powers — has come by. He was hired out of New York by the LAOOC to book the bands and disc jockeys. In his most polite, ingratiating, one might say cajoling tone, he tries to convince the artist to alter the size of the stage. "The Uptones won't be able to fit all their equipment. The Busboys, too. A performer can have the most charming stage presence in the world, but if he's irritated, forget it."

Shire doesn't even shrug. He turns to an official and reminds her that he expanded what they had originally requested as a stage dimension, and that all had been approved by "the other guy." No one can remember his name.

Powers moans that those decisions were made before he was hired, by someone who didn't know much about nightclubs. Powers has a nightclub in Rockland, Ill., and works as a concert producer and



Gary Leonard

Discos will be open to athletes at USC and UCLA Olympic villages.

president of an independent record label. For the Olympic discos, he's booked Dwight Twilley, Ecstasy, Papa Do Run Run, Billy and the Beaters, Harold Batiste and the New Orleans All Stars, Flashback, Splitters, Snopek and UXB — a band he represents — and Martha Reeves (without the Vandellas).

After the games, the LAOOC is planning to auction the leftovers, so we may hear an auctioneer cry, "What am I bid for this 10-foot orange and purple checked Sonotube?"

— Hunter Drohojowska