Mackey Finds Baroque In Beatles

By VIRGINIA FLYNN

Dr. Louis Mackey says that today's rock n' roll is evolving from a baroque to a classical, romantic style. Speaking before an overflow audience in Jones South Tuesday evening, Dr. Mackey ranged from the baroque to the Beatles, in comparing five sets of musical compositions.

The audience was an integral part of what Dr. Mackey termed a combination "experiment-parlor game." He asked them to fill in an experiment sheet detailing their first impressions. Only afterwards did he identify the recordings that he had played.

Pattern Noted

Dr. Mackey noted that he asked the audience to listen for similarities in patterns in the pieces, thus requiring them to think through their ears. He showed that certain musical patterns persist despite variations of style, in such diverse pieces as the Beach Boys' 'Barbara Ann' and a twelfth century Gregorian chant.

Dr. Mackey emphasized that music is the rational organization of sound, and that the mind really "hears" music via the ear. The best music, according to Dr. Mackey, is that which combines the best intellectual construction with emotion.

Sweeping Ripple

Although one piece was by a "serious" composer and the other was by a rock 'n roll group, the first pair has several features in common. The first composition was 'The Adagio for Strings' by Samuel Barber, while the second was "Hang on Sloopy" by the McCoys.

"turned them on." Most selected "As Tears Go By" by the Rolling Stones.

The ripple of amusement that swept the audience when 'Sloopy' blared forth put the audience in a completely receptive mood. They were ready for anything. Dr. Mackey said that both pieces are in stanza form, followed by a cadenza (elaborate flourish), and then a coda (ending).

The cadenza in 'Sloopy' is only a scream. In both of the compositions, there is increasing musical tension that builds to a release and then a more peaceful conclusion.

Compare 'Ebb Tide'

Dr. Mackey then asked the listener to compare two different versions of 'Ebb Tide', one by Percy Faith and one by the Righteous Brothers. He declined to argue preferences, but noted that he prefers the Righteous Brothers version for its distinctive character.

He played recordings of a twelfth century chant and then 'Barbara Ann' by the Beach Boys. Then Dr. Mackey showed that both compositions feature a chant sung very slowly, while an upper voice sings variations.

Melodies Featured

The fourth pair was two baroque melodies, one from the eighteenth century, and one from the twentieth. The audience burst out laughing as they recognized their favorite Beatle songs done in baroque style.

Finally, just for the fun of it, Dr. Mackey asked the audience to tell which of two melodies