Cultural Decorate

By ROYAL ROUSSEL

In the past, Fine Arts editors have taken this opportunity to advise readers of the policy which will guide their comment throughout the year. Policy, unfortunately, is a word foreign to our nature, and in all fairness we should warn all that we approach things in a rather haphazard manner. Critics who take themselves more seriously than the works they review have always annoyed us beyond endurance, and this is one fault which we are honestly hoping to avoid.

Another note which will not be sounded here is the long, plaintive and for the most part hollow wail at Houston's lack of cultural trappings. On the contrary, Houston has more cultural trappings than any other city in the Southwest, and in addition it has quite a few serious ventures which are, for the most part, very satisfying.

You will have to go a long way to find a local theatre with as consistently high standards of production as The Alley. In fact you will probably have to go all the way to New York. Houston, of course, is not New York. It doesn't have the public to support a large theatre, or rather I should say the public here will not support a large theatre. Last year the Alley produced Julius Caesar replete with New York cast and director, and no one went. This is not to mention one other legitimate theatre, the Avalon, which returned to films over the summer.

On the other hand, Houston does see fit to support a very good symphony, which has Leopold Stokowski as resident conductor, it has its own Chorale and Opera as well as a new and, from the outside, imposing addition to its Fine Arts Museum. The people who run all this, moreover, have shown a great deal of interest in Rice. Most of them have some sort of policy on reduced prices for students. We think they deserve some appreciation. It's an uphill fight.

Closer to home, the Lyric Art Quartet, who are, very, very good, annually present a series of chamber music concerts in the lecture lounge, and the campus dramatic group, The Rice Players, is in production at least three times a year. All in all there seems to be as much room to rejoice as to lament (you could, for instance, be in Bryan), and if those of us who are interested were a little less close about it, opportunities would be even greater. So drink up, your cup runneth over.