HALL, TEACHER-COMPOSER,
GIVES VIEWS ON MUSIC

By CLAIRE PLUNGUAN

Dr. Arthur Hall, the first, last, and only professor of the Shepherd School of Music at Rice, has a wide musical background and some interesting opinions on current popular music.

A Yale Man

A Yale man, he has also attended Julliard School of Music, Colorado, and Baylor, majoring in composition. He first came to Rice in the fall of 1952, when the Shepherd School of Music was founded.

In his two formal courses and in encouraging a variety of extracurricular activity in music, Mr. Hall stresses the humanitarian aspects of music. He feels that no one can be well-rounded unless he knows about things outside his field. As an example of this, a lot of the people who regularly come to him to sign up for instruments to practice on are science majors.

Jazz Leads To Something

His opinions about modern jazz are mixed. He does feel that jazz can and does have an important influence on serious classical composers, but does not feel that jazz is modern America's equivalent to "classical" music of other ages. Jazz is important because it is leading to something great, not necessarily great in itself. When asked if this era was barren in good classical composers, he replied that genius is usually not recognized, and that most composers well-known today had a pretty hard time convincing their contemporaries of their own worth.

Likes Old Tunes

As for the current "popular" music, he finds a singular lack of originality. He cited the example of music from the 20's, which he feels is definitely more interesting than the current hits.

MR. HALL

The Shepherd School of Music

he did not appreciate when it first came out. Now, he added, he is forced to listen to the same old tunes being revived again and again, and finds them worse the second or third time around.

He Composes, Too

Besides his two classes, Mr. Hall is in charge of the Rice Chorus, a chamber orchestra, arranging concerts sponsored by the Shepherd School of Music, and all music programs in the Rice Memorial Chapel. With all these activities, he still finds time to compose. His "Impressions of a Calder Exhibition" will be performed this Friday at the Contemporary Music Concert in Hamman Hall.

He started his career by composing music at a very early age, as well as playing piano. He gave concerts as a boy soprano, and recorded for the Pathé record company.