

LILI KRAUS RETURNS

UNHERALDED, Lili Kraus popped into Auckland recently. The well-known concert pianist had returned to this country to visit friends, give a few concerts perhaps, but chiefly to fulfil her obligations as a New Zealand citizen. For Lili Kraus, who was born in Hungary, became a naturalised New Zealander following her release from a Japanese internment camp in Java after the war. Although no concert tour was pre-arranged and most theatres were already booked, the New Zealand Federation of Chamber Music Societies quickly organised concerts for Madame Kraus in Hamilton, Auckland, Tauranga, Rotorua, Wellington and in the South Island centres. In addition to the two broadcasts scheduled for the present week (July 1 and July 6) she will give three more studio recitals this month.

When *The Listener* called on Madame Kraus at 1YA she was practising on the grand piano in the vast Studio 1. And she continued to play as the photographer arranged his equipment alongside her. She wore a black jumper and black skirt, and her long dark braided hair fell across her shoulders almost to the keyboard. Behind her a kerosene pressure heater hissed and a solitary light bulb lit the space. Suddenly the piano stopped.

"A funny little piece, this," she said as she turned from the keyboard. The sheet music gave the composer's name as Lorenzo Fernandez, and the title was *Pirilampus*.

"I have been invited by the Government of Brazil to adjudicate on the jury of the first international piano competition at Rio de Janeiro, and to

give lectures on interpretation and on Mozart at the Academy there. And at my concerts the Government wants me to play some pieces of the local composers. So . . ."

It is nine years since Lili Kraus was last in New Zealand. In that time she has virtually toured the world. For two years she played in the principal cities of Europe and America, then she accepted a professorship—head of the department of piano—at the University of Capetown, where she stayed for a further two years. While in South Africa Madame Kraus raised many hundreds of pounds for a Johannesburg organisation which seeks to improve race relations.

A further tour of Europe and America included a long period of work in Paris and Vienna, recording the entire piano works of Mozart. Although the Mozart bicentenary was celebrated last year, it was in 1954 that Madame Kraus was first approached by Discophiles Français and asked to accept this task. And she accepted willingly, she told us, because she had made a special study of Mozart for 22 years. Now, after three years, Madame Kraus has recorded about three-quarters of his piano and chamber music, and last year the Mozart trios in which she collaborated won the Grand Prix de Disc.

On her last visit to New Zealand Lili Kraus was accompanied by her husband, Dr Otto Mandl, and their two children, Michael and Ruth. On this visit, however, she is alone. Her husband died last year and her children have made their home in London, where Michael is studying atomic physics at the Imperial College.



The Brandenburg Concertos

AMONG the most famous concerti grossi ever written are the six Brandenburg Concertos of J. S. Bach, each written for a different combination of instruments. Though they are popular at recitals, it is not too often that concertgoers have the opportunity to hear all six, as well as other Bach

works, in the space of two nights. Such an opportunity, however, will come next week in the two concerts to be played in the Wellington Town Hall by the National Orchestra, with guest artist Valda Aveling (left). Each of these concertos, which Albert Schweitzer has called "the purest products of Bach's polyphonic style," gives scope and emphasis to different instruments or combinations of instruments, in alternation with the strings or with the orchestra as a whole. Thus the First has an extremely difficult passage for the two horns among its solo instruments; the Second an exacting part for solo trumpets. Sir Henry Wood's favourite was the Third Brandenburg, with its animation and sweeping power; and the Fourth gives two usually almost submerged instruments—the flutes—the solo parts. The Fifth has an extended harpsichord cadenza in the first movement; while the Sixth has its own particular character due to the absence of violins.

Besides playing the continuo parts on the Goff harpsichord, and appearing as soloist in the Fifth Brandenburg, the guest artist Valda Aveling will also

play other Bach works in the two concerts—the Italian Concerto on Friday, July 12, and the Suite for Harpsichord the following evening, July 13. The other soloists taking part in these two concerts are Vincent Aspey (violin), James Hopkinson (first flute), Cyril Ainsworth (second flute), Eric Lawson (violin), Francis Rosner (violin), Alex Lindsay (violin), Norman Booth (oboe), and Ken Smith (trumpet).

As a pianist, Miss Aveling has performed often with the Halle Orchestra under Sir John Barbirolli, and she was, incidentally, the first soloist to play a concerto on British Commercial TV.

In addition to this side of her work, she has also become a recognised authority on both the clavichord and the harpsichord. Her clavichord recitals in London and throughout Britain, and her frequent broadcasts in the BBC Third and TV programmes, have created a revival of interest in early keyboard music. Two years ago she was appointed Professor of Piano and Harpsichord at Trinity College of Music, London.

All YCs, 8.0 p.m., Friday, July 12; 9.0 p.m., Saturday, July 13 (second half of concert); 7.45 p.m., Sunday, July 14 (first half of Saturday concert).

MUSIC AND THE FAUST LEGEND

OF the shadowy figure of the historical Faust little is known. Perhaps he only sought wisdom in an age where wisdom was suspect, but from the thin and conflicting legends about his powers and his pact with the devil some of the most dramatic literature and music in the world has sprung. Starting on Sunday, July 14, at 10.11 p.m., 3YC will be broadcasting a series of five programmes of music based on the Faust legend. The works to be played in this series are by Wagner, Schubert, Liszt, Gounod, Berlioz, Boito, Mendelssohn, and Mahler. The other four programmes will be heard on July 21; and August 4, 11, and 18.

