SIX PIANISTS

Mr. Artur Rubinstein's piano recital on Friday evening should have filled the Albert Hall, but his choice of a good rather than a popular programme, including unfamiliar works by Milhaud and Szymanowski, resulted in many empty seats.

This was unfortunate, for not only is Mr. Rubinstein's virtuosity unique in itself to-day but by means of his exuberance and spontaneity he invests the most familiar of works, such as "Carnaval," with new life and meaning. Kabalevsky's third piano sonata, also unfamiliar to English audiences, was included in Mr. Moiseiwitsch's recital at Central Hall on Saturday afternoon, proving admirably pianistic even if typical of much recent Soviet music in its lapses into the banal and commonplace. Mr. Moiseiwitsch's playing seemed a little tired, but his liquid quiet tone has lost none of its beauty.

Mr. Adolph Hallis, who used to give concerts of modern music before the war, returned from his native South Africa and gave a piano recital on Thursday at Wigmore Hall. A firm skeletal rhythm and a highly responsive control of tone enabled him to give an intellectual performance of Beethoven's late sonata in E with sufficient rhetoric; the same qualities applied to the pictorial, the sensuous, and even the digital music of the modern French school found equally happy employment. Great rhythmic virility, clarity of detail, and variety of tone lent distinction to Mr. Karl Ulrich Schnabel's performances of pieces by Liszt at His Majesty's Theatre at the beginning of the week, but these attributes did not help him to reach Schubert's heart in the "Wanderer" Fantasy.

Miss Sheila Randell's disciplined finger work and clear and even tone in Bach's Italian Concerto at Wigmore Hall on Tuesday marked her as a young pianist of exceptional promise. Her interpretations of romantic pieces needed to be less impulsive and more expansive, but in these, too, she showed an understanding of her instrument which many an adult player might covet. Miss Maud Randle had a heavier left hand than right, which upset the balance of her otherwise pleasant tone in a piano recital in the same hall early in the week.

In a recital of German Lieder at Central Hall on Tuesday Mme. Elisabeth Schumann showed that her voice has lost none of its delightful purity nor her perception its acuteness; with the expert assistance of Mr. Gerald Moore, playing at his best, the mood of each song was vividly and completely realized, with a perfect sense of proportion.

Not many cellists include Bax's Legend-Sonata in their recital programmes. Miss Eileen Croxford was brave enough to do so at Wigmore Hall on Friday, and her refined and sensitive playing drew from it many moments of beauty, though she could not disguise its discursiveness.