

Artist-Recital Season of Music Club Launched; Soprano Is Star

Gala Audience Greet Metro-politan Opera Singer

By Caroline Kohlsaat

Another season of fine music was launched Saturday evening at New Trier auditorium. It was the opening of the Artist-Recital series sponsored by the Winnetka Music club.

A gala audience greeted the occasion. Gratitude for the continuance of the recitals which, it was feared last year, might be dropped from our calendar of enjoyments—gratitude and a friendly, eager anticipation were the components of the atmosphere which greeted the new-to-us Cigna Cigna, soprano of the Metropolitan opera of New York.

A young companion of the evening remarked, "There are reporters, reviewers, and critics. Which are you?"

Acknowledging the distinction, it is not easy to decide which role to adopt—whether to deal with generalities only (which is safe); whether to attempt to voice what might be called a consensus of opinion (a matter of hearsay and judgment by audience reaction); or whether sincerely to render individual opinion (an assumption of the position of authority)—these are considerations to be weighed.

Distinct Success

To get at the matter and without too much reflection or indirection, it may be well to attempt an approach from each of these angles in turn. Generally speaking, then, the recital was a distinct success—a large and well-disposed audience, a diva of renown, a program of unhackneyed numbers, a painstaking (is this "damning with faint praise?") accompanist.

As to consensus and audience reaction: The sigh of utter satisfaction and the spontaneous applause—the reaction of taut nerves to an exciting performance were lacking. To sum up the comments heard it might be said the expected thrill did not materialize. There was always the hope that in the next group or in the next number or in the next phrase that electric super-gift of the singer might come to stir us. But it didn't.

Attempting to analyze this felt lack it may be said that the singer came nearest to swaying her listeners (as only a singer can move an audience) in the famous and familiar "Pace, pace" aria which she substituted for "In Quelle trine morbide" of Puccini. Here she was the opera singer in dramatic situation, with the feeling of costume, scenery, and all that goes to make up the glamor of the opera. So it would seem that Mademoiselle (or Signorina) Cigna is primarily a dramatic soprano of the operatic stage. The gifts of the recital singer are, shall we say, more versatile and more subtle—at least different.

Powerful Voice

Her voice is powerful in its upper register and of brilliant timbre there. But there is not the evenness of production so prized by singers, and known to violinists as "the one tone scale."

An exception to this criticism might be noted in the wordless number of Ravel, the Vocalise Etude, in which a smooth light head tone of lovely quality was achieved. There was often in the lower range an utter failure to focus words and tone as, for instance, in her first utterance, "Vittoria, Vittoria" (Carissimi) where all the point was lost in the diffused tone.

It is interesting to recall that Mlle. Cigna is largely self taught. Perhaps if she were entirely so it would be better. Perhaps, for instance, there might be a more relaxed and spontaneous speech—a winging of the words as it were. Perhaps after all with such a voice one should be permitted to sing as she pleases.

So much by way of technical criticism. This does not mean that there was not much to be admired in this pleasant, gracious personality, the possessor of a great voice. We are grateful, too, that Mlle. Cigna did not descend to any



Ray Lee Jackson Photo
Gina Cigna

imbecile encores. She was the sincere artist in choosing songs suited to her gifts.

Honesty of Choice

Even though from the point of view of program interest there was a lack of diversity, yet we must admire her honesty of choice. (A tragic example of the opposite—a great singer answering to popular demand and singing an unsuited-to-her song—was the great Flagstad's recent radio singing of "Old Folks at Home.")

Congratulations, Winnetka Music club, and your local backer's committee upon a sold-out season and thanks for this first evening of enjoyment. We are already anticipating the next program—the piano recital of Mr. Serkin.

Steffens-Thilmany Wedding November 3

Wednesday, November 3, is to be the wedding day of Miss Gladys Steffens, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John J. Steffens, 1609 Wilmette avenue, and John Thilmany, son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Peter Thilmany of Evanston. The Rev. J. A. Neumann will officiate at the ceremony at 10 o'clock in St. Joseph's church.

Miss Steffens will have two attendants, Miss Lena Bonadio of Evanston will be her maid of honor, and Miss Grace Bennett of Wilmette, cousin of the bride, will be bridesmaid.

Harry Thilmany of Evanston will serve his brother as best man, and ushering will be Harold Reinwald of Wilmette.

Mrs. Louis Popple and Mrs. Jack Dix of Wilmette gave a shower for their niece Thursday of last week at the home of the bride's grandmother Mrs. Mary Steffens, 1603 Wilmette avenue.

Heisers to Have Guests From the Pacific Coast

Mrs. Rudolph Heiser, 525 Ridge road, Kenilworth, had as her guest last week-end Mrs. William S. Mitchell of the Maryland hotel in Chicago, while Mr. Mitchell accompanied Mr. Heiser on a business trip to Cleveland. This coming week-end the Heisers will entertain Mr. Heiser's cousin and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Heiser of Spokane, Wash. The Rudolph Heisers have recently moved from 1936 Thornwood avenue into their new home on Ridge road.

Herman C. Brichacek, 1010 Central avenue, has recently returned from a ten-day visit with relatives in Omaha, Neb.

BETTER FILMS

Key: A—Adults, Y—Youth, 13 to 18 years of age; C—Children, 8 to 12 years of age; F—Entire Family.

Winnetka Community House

October 15 and 16—"The Singing Marine," for F.

Teatro del Lago

October 15 and 16—"Make a Wish," for F (Excellent).

October 17, 18 and 19—"Love Under Fire," for A and Young A.

October 20 and 21—"Its All Yours," for A and Young A.

Wilmette Theatre

October 15 and 16—"The Road Back," for A.

October 17, 18 and 19—"You Can't Have Everything," for F.

October 20 and 21—"Naughty Marietta," for F.

END TRAVEL ABROAD

Mr. and Mrs. George A. Rosberg and their son, John, 2408 Elmwood avenue, have returned after a three months' tour abroad. With Gordon Rosberg of Park Ridge, John's cousin, they traveled through Sweden, Denmark, Norway, England, France, Germany, Austria and Switzerland. The boys took many pictures and movies while enroute. In Germany, the Rosbergs met Dr. and Mrs. Percy B. D. Idler of 932 Ashland avenue, who were also spending the summer in Europe.

Nash Representative Tells of Feature in Winter Driving Aids

The world's first automobiles utilizing a conditioned air system for winter driving were previewed in Chicago, October 7, by M. P. Sorensen, of the Winnetka Nash Lafayette company, 666 Green Bay road, Winnetka, in Nash automobiles. The preview, staged especially for dealers and salesmen of this area, was held in connection with a nationwide series of pre-announcement meetings that are being conducted throughout October by officials of the Nash Motors division of Nash-Kelvinator Corporation. Mr. Sorensen expects to have cars on display locally within a week.

In addition to viewing the new Nash cars for 1938, Mr. Sorensen heard in detail Nash Motors' merchandising plans for the coming model year.

"The company," he said, "will shortly launch the largest advertising campaign in its history. Having established outstanding sales gains in 1937, it will seek to better these records in 1938. Local newspaper campaigns, 'tailored' to fit the needs of individual dealers in their own communities, will constitute the backbone of the campaign."

"Nash Motors has set its sails for what it believes to be the biggest automobile year in history," he continued. "Recently, the company completed a \$2,000,000 program of expansion in its factories at Kenosha, Racine, and Milwaukee, Wis., which virtually doubled production capacity and which was designed to keep step with the company's rapidly-mounting sales curve."

STUDENT COUNCIL OFFICERS



Carl Hotze Photo
Officers and committee chairmen of the student council, four-year old self-government of New Trier Township High school, are shown in the picture above.

In the front row, left to right, are Ed Greenhalgh, chairman of the student relations committee; Margaret Thompson, secretary; Jayn Kassner and Ruth Clarke, co-chairmen of the committee on clubs; Peter Bachrach, president; and Charles Sheridan, chairman of the publications committee.

Standing in the rear row are Russell Monroe, co-chairman of buildings and grounds; William McNitt, assembly chairman; Robert Landon, co-chairman of building and grounds; Jack Jennings, treasurer; and Paul Lang, vice-president.

Not shown in the photograph are Ann Burnham and James Olin, co-chairmen of student relations. Miss Burnham is also treasurer of the state association of student councils. Arthur W. Van Deursen, 1714 Washington avenue, Wilmette, is faculty sponsor.

Tom Keith Elected to Sports Club Job

By John Ball

In a recent election of the New Trier sports club, Tom Keith was voted into the position of vice president, filling the place left vacant by Paul Eiden, who has withdrawn from school.

Junior and senior intramural managers were also chosen, Jim Robertson and Tom Keith, respectively, are to undertake these duties.

GO TO OMAHA

Mr. and Mrs. Warren Hillis, 512 Central avenue, are leaving today (Thursday) to make a short visit with Mr. Hillis' mother and sister in Omaha.