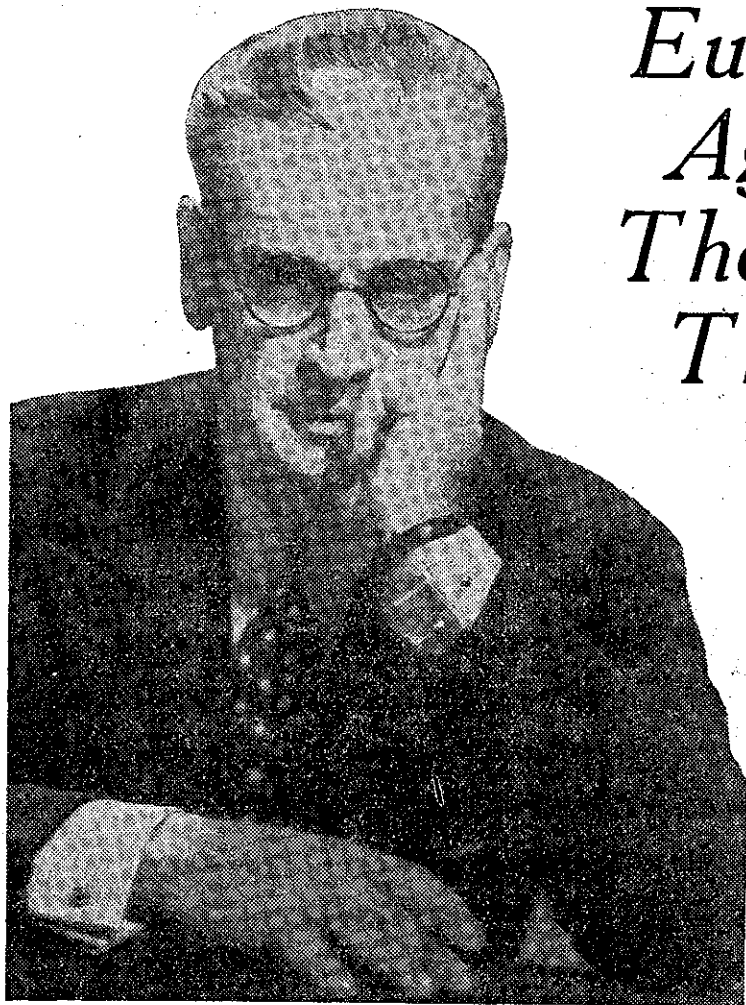


Europe's Golden Age Of Art—In The Days Before The Great War

Guido Carreras, the Man who Discovered Heifetz, Visits N.Z.



An interesting Spencer Digby study of Signor Guido Carreras, specially posed for the "Radio Record." Signor Carreras discusses on this page the brilliance of the arts in Europe in the days before the war.

THE dressing-room, with its glaring, garish lights, was the only warm place in the Opera House. The morning was bitter—Wellington's coldest day—and we were glad of the radiator. As

we talked—or rather, as HE talked—the dressing room with its grimy picture of the 1924 All Blacks, its drip-drip-dripping tap and its after-the-show litter, faded, and we were in the Musical Academy in Berlin in the days before the war. On the stage was a little boy with the face of a Botticelli angel, golden curls, a brown velvet suit and a lace collar—he was playing a violin, a three-quarter instrument. As the last notes of the Mozart composition faded away a man in the front row of the stalls jumped up. "This boy I will accompany myself," he cried in loud tones. It was Fritz Kreisler. The audience rose to its feet and cheered. . . .

Signor Guido Carreras is like that. In his charming English, with its soft foreign flavour, he has the power to banish the unpleasantness of the surroundings, to create new worlds for a person who knows them but remotely, to span the years and bring Europe's artistic giants of pre-war days into this year of grace, 1936. Signor Carreras is the husband of La Meri, the dancer whose season in Wellington set the whole town talking; he is, too, a widely-travelled man whose association with such people as Kreisler, Pavlova and Diaghileff was both intimate and sincere.

The little boy with the golden curls was Jascha Heifetz. I heard the whole story of the prodigy's discovery. "Heifetz came to Berlin as a child of ten with his father," he said. "They had a letter to a big agent from young Jascha's teacher, the famous Dr. Leopold

Auer. But the agent, influenced, perhaps, by the appearance of the father who was certainly no Adonis, and quite indifferent to the enthusiasm of Auer's letter—and it was enthusiastic, for I saw it—took no steps to arrange for the child to play. I took the father and the son to a little place nearby and heard the boy play.

"Excuse me if I seem to boast, but I knew at once that the child was a genius. His playing was super-human—it was divine. And so I arranged a concert, a free concert, at the Musical Academy, and I invited all the great musicians who were in Berlin at the moment. I wish now that I had a photograph of the first two rows of that hall—they were packed with celebrities. The child's first choice was Mozart and as he finished there was a silence followed by such applause and cheering as I may never hear again. And in the midst of it all Kreisler jumped up and insisted on accompanying the boy on the piano—for Kreisler, you know, is almost as great a genius of the piano as he is of the violin.

"Everyone was moved almost to tears and, so quickly did the young Heifetz's fame spread that, at the second concert the police had to assist in controlling the crowds."

Europe's Golden Age.

SIGNOR CARRERAS went on to talk about Europe's Golden Age—the years before the war when the Russian ballet with Stravinsky, Diaghileff, Rimsky-Korsakov, Bakst, Benois, Fokine, Pavlova and