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POLYGRAM CLASSICS & JAZZ
SYDNEY MORNING HERALD
CLASSICAL CD OF THE WEEK 18/08/97

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Diversity for all seasons

**CLASSICAL CD
 OF THE WEEK**

**XENAKIS, DALLAPICCOLA, HENZE, PEREZ-
 ZANI: Orchestral pieces. Woodward/Gustav
 Mahler Youth Orchestra/Abbado.
 DG 447 115-2.
 TouchTunes 4301.**

ROGER Woodward's 1997 Sydney Spring Festival is about to get under way in its usual enjoyably provoking manner at the end of this month - for the first time, I think, coinciding properly with the season after which it is named. Here is a taste of the quality of its founder-director in a piece for piano and orchestra, *Keqrops*, specially written for him by the Paris-based composer Iannis Xenakis.

Anyone who heard Woodward make his way through the fantastic sound-world of this work in a Sydney Symphony Orchestra 20th century concert in the Town Hall will probably want to take the opportunity to hear it at leisure. This recording of his 1992 performance of it in Vienna with the Gustav Mahler Youth Orchestra directed by

Claudio Abbado, newly issued by DG in its Modern Vienna series, is an astonishing act of collaboration between a pianist of unique capacities and one of the most eminent and enlightened conductors of our time.

Xenakis himself suggests two possible derivations of his title *Keqrops*, either from a word for weaving or from the name of a mythical Greek hero. It is the longest and most vociferous piece on the disc, sometimes seeming to pay, in passing, a late-20th-century tribute to Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* while retaining its composer's complete individuality in the massing of sonorities. Abbado's regulation of the orchestra sounds knife-edged in its precision; Woodward revels in playing the "impossible" complexities of the keyboard part, sometimes with immense force and sometimes with a glittering delicacy.

The other pieces on this record include Dallapiccola's beautiful, concisely evocative *Piccola musica notturna* of 1954 and some sensuously appealing, occasionally rhetorical and powerful orchestral excerpts from two operas by Hans Werner Henze: four symphonic interludes from *Boulevard*



Solitude (a modern variant of the story of Macon) and the rousing, if slightly dated passage from *The Bassarids* describing the hunt of the Maenads (the wild women of Dionysian worship).

The remaining item is Paolo Pizzani's *Primavera dell'anima* (Springtime of the Soul), the winning entry in the 1992 Vienna international competition for new music: elaborate shivers and stresses leading in and out of a passage of simpler rhythmic insistence.

This is a remarkable and very diverse collection of post-1950 music.

R.C. ★★★★★

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WIEN MODERN III - Roger Woodward plays 20th century music	CD	447 115-2	0028944711523	B98	\$21.32	

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PS: A PIZZANI CD was in 'order'! *Pop Pop*