

roger woodward

~ piano ~

SYDNEY MUSIC

ROGER WOODWARD

Sydney Opera House.

Laurie Strachan

ROGER Woodward is a pianist who is always worth hearing but when he gives a recital of Chopin attendance is almost mandatory. It is in this music that his personality as a pianist seems to find its broadest and most sympathetic expression.

Tuesday night's recital was devoted to a selection of Chopin's shorter pieces, covering nocturnes, waltzes, polonaises, mazurkas and études. Of course, with Chopin, shorter does not mean minor, and there was plenty here for pianist and listeners to get their teeth into. The opening batch of nocturnes set the pattern, with Woodward displaying the particularly refined touch that was to be the hallmark of his playing all night.

Some of the fire and brimstone may have gone out of his interpretations but, if it so (and this may be an illusion), it has been replaced with a polish and poise that bespeak a mature musician in complete command of his work. In any case, the wonderful closing pages of the B major Nocturne, Op 9 have seldom sounded more magical.

The program after the interval was devoted to six mazurkas and 12 études and here, despite Woodward's best efforts, it became a little more difficult to enjoy as the audience took a hand, or rather several hands, in the proceedings. Each time Woodward prepared to launch himself from one mazurka or étude to the next, he had to wait until the clapping had died down. The sense of continuity that careful programming of even such short and disparate works can achieve was ruined. Something must be done to educate new listeners in concert hall etiquette.

— THE AUSTRALIAN Friday March 14 1997 —

ARTWORKS

concerts

P.O. Box 115 Chester Hill N.S.W. 2162 AUSTRALIA
Tel: 61 2 9645 2685 Fax: 61 2 9645 5552

Armchair Productions A.C.N. 076 340 120