

DECEMBER 5-6, 2009

CLASSICAL



CLAUDE
DEBUSSY
PRELUDES

Books 1 and 2

Roger Woodward

(Celestial Harmonies)

How often we forget, in this age of daredevil keyboard virtuosity, that playing the piano is an act of the imagination. This is Woodward at his best and Australian pianism at its best. The recorded piano sound is rich and glows

with wonderful depth and variety, providing an ideal platform for Woodward's subtlety, spontaneity and sophisticated whimsy.

Debussy's preludes are ultra-refined sketches in texture, colour and evocative expression. His practice of placing the song title at the end of a score sheet (not at the beginning, as was the convention) suggests his music was a point of departure for the listener, rather than a

subject description. *The Hills of Anacapri*, in the first book, scintillates with imaginative joyous flashes of movement; in the most famous of the whole set, *The Girl with the Flaxen Hair*, Woodward displays his gifts as a melodist of utmost gentleness. *La Terrasse des Audience du Clair de Lune*, from the second book, is unique as an exercise in piquant sensuality while the final piece, *Fireworks*, crackles and flares fiercely before burning out with impish self-deprecation.
Peter McCallum