

Latin Cabaret (Showgirls) Programme Notes by Gary Ryan

The initial ideas for *Latin Cabaret* sprang from technical and musical ideas I had used in two movements from earlier solo guitar suites; *Sugarloaf Mountain* from *Scenes from Brazil* and *Rockweed* from *Scenes from The Wild West*.

Much of the harmonic material for this piece was conceived on the piano and there is a strong Latin jazz feel reminiscent of the guitarist Pat Metheny. Many of my ideas come from improvisation at the guitar or piano, with each idea growing almost genetically from the previous one. I then sketch what has stayed most strongly in my mind and work at linking and layering the musical strands together.

Latin Cabaret is strongly influenced by the unremitting energy and rhythmic drive of a Brazilian street carnival and also by the spectacle and glamour of a nightclub cabaret, hence *Showgirls*. The pentatonic scale features prominently in much of the melodic material but recurs in subtly different harmonic settings (as if seeing the same object in changing light or from different angles). There are also percussive and improvisational ideas woven into the musical texture and occasional elements of minimalism, where the same group of notes is repeated in different permutations.