

Sonata for Guitar (2006)

The *Sonata for Guitar* explores resonance; not only the historical resonance of the various sonatas connected with the piece, but also the characteristic acoustic resonance of the guitar itself. Textures are built across several strings, allowing sonorities to ring on and overlap; this simulates the blurring effect created by use of the sostenuto pedal of the piano.

Pastorale makes use of the structural proportions and the harmonic and tonal relationships of the first movement of Debussy's sonata for flute, viola and harp; these are overwritten with new thematic and textural material. The initial impetus for the middle movement was Scarlatti's keyboard sonata K141, a toccata-like piece which features very fast repeated notes. Eventually, however, the Scarlatti became one of many virtuosic moto perpetuo pieces that fed into the final version. The structure of the finale, *Adagio sostenuto*, is based on a number of models from the music of Beethoven. I took two small extracts from the late piano sonatas (the theme from the finale of Op 109 and the second variation from the finale of Op 111) and used them as a foundation for my own double set of variations.

The sonata was commissioned by Michael Partington for his tours of the United States and Europe in 2006 and 2007. The first performance was given for the Denver Classical Guitar Society, Colorado, USA on 30th September 2006.

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