

REVIEWS FROM THE NATAL MERCURY

The beat of Latin Heat

FOR his final show, Mervyn Goodman — popular manager of the Cellar since opening night in 1985 — has got together with Dan Chiorboli to stage *Latin Heat*, a pulsating trip South of the Border.

But the Mexican beat is only one of many to fill the air in the hour or so. The sounds of Brazil and Puerto Rico, along with Afro-Cuban strains, all feature in the musical mélange they've assembled.

Those who enjoyed the revue, *Sounds of Brazil*, a year or so ago will have an idea of what to expect. Here it's on a grander scale, the stage opened out to accommodate a mini-extravaganza of singers and dancers.

Handling the vocals are bouncy Shelley Hind and Carlos Paşos. She has the vocal range if not quite the Latin looks or style, he the swarthy appearance and approach to lend meaning to the words he intones.

Also put over in fine form are those numbers contributed by Demi Fernandes, never more so than to his own acoustic guitar accompaniment.

Overall, the songs range from the indigenous *La Cucaracha* and *Il Companero* to borrowings from hit parades through the years, such as the familiar *Girl from Ipanema* and *Copacabana*.

Copacabana proves one of the top spots of the evening, with dancer Verna Lewiss taking time out from demonstrating the *lambada* and *salsa* to lend a comic touch to this account of the

STAGE: Latin Heat — The Cellar

ageing showgirl, Lola.

She's partnered with élan by Mark Wilson in the other dance numbers, especially in the *Concerto de Aranjuez* and *Gypsy Folk Dance* sequences, in which they are joined by vivacious Coreen Traut.

Her fluid solo dances, particularly *Flamenco*, would gain from more colourful costumes. Those worn — white against a neutral background — somehow don't seem to go with the often fiery music.

For the finale — *Viva Espana*, *Rio Samba* and *Brazil* — the costumes are again white, but with feathers and silvery sparkle to lend an appropriate festive air of Rio at carnival time.

On stage throughout are musical director Joe Delew on keyboards, Dan Chiorboli with an array of odd percussion instruments, drummer George Ellis, guitarist Fernandes and Dave Tarr on violin, sax, piano accordion and flute.

So insidious was their music-making that there could have been few at the crowded first night not aching to join in the dancing. For that's what the Latin beat is all about.

Latin Heat has been booked in for a six-week season.

David Coleman

And Latin spice

THE winners of our *Latin Heat* recipe competition, who will each enjoy an evening for two in The Cellar for dinner and the show, courtesy of Napac, are Margaret Hurter, P O Box 118, Ladysmith; Marina Papadaniel, 14 Carlton Towers, Somtseu Road, Durban; and Maria Boshuizen, P O Box 1662, Durban.

Their recipes — for 'Marvellous City Lamb', chicken with olives and Peruvian stuffed corn leaves — will appear in *Woman's Weekly* next Thursday.