

We landed in the evening,
circling slowly down
over small, gleaming jewels
nestled in the shadowy patch
of black velvet flung carelessly
on the iridescent, undulating sea...

A long-standing wish to write something for alto flute was realized thanks to this commission from the international music fraternity Sigma Alpha Iota. Fresh from a trip to Cyprus, I decided to make use of some of the ideas and materials that I had collected while there. One can hear part of the muezzin's call from a minaret in the Turkish quarter of Nicosia, the cry of a fruit vendor in the old city, and fragments of the traditional Greek Cypriot wedding song. The dance section is in the Greek style, including the accompaniment figure of dotted eighth, sixteenth, and two eighths. The mood of the beginning and end is contemplative, reflecting on the seemingly intractable problem of a politically divided country.

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