

Noria al-Bisriyya

for chamber ensemble

(Flute, Bb Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Tenor Saxophone, Bb Trumpet [harmon mute], Trombone [bucket mute], Bass Trombone [bucket mute], Percussion [marimba (low F), glockenspiel, vibraphone], Piano)

8 minutes

Brooke Joyce (2016, rev. 2019)

Commissioned by Durward Ensemble, 2016

Final version premiered by Durward Ensemble, May 2019

Program Note:

The famous Norias of Hama are a set of 17 wooden water wheels positioned along the Orontes River in the city of Hama, Syria. These magnificent structures, which can be almost 70 feet in diameter, were originally built to carry river water to residents of the city. The oldest date from the 14th century, though all have been more recently restored. In addition to their physical beauty, they also make an unearthly sound, as the wood is continually subjected to varying degrees of stress, expansion and contraction. This musical ode to one of the smaller norias, al-Bisriyya, tries to capture the sense of cyclicity, majesty, and transcendence that these wheels possess. This work is an expansion of a companion work for organ, *Noria al-Hagibiyya*.