

Three Yiddish Folksongs arranged by Ian Assersohn

Pronunciation notes

Yiddish is derived from German but fused with elements taken from Hebrew and Aramaic, as well as from Slavic languages and traces of Romance languages. It is written using the Hebrew alphabet, and the transliteration used in the score should be mostly self-explanatory. However, the following notes might be useful:

“ch” or “kh” (as in ‘bocher’) are soft sounds similar to the Scottish ‘loch’.

Tumbalalaika

Verse 1

‘Shteyt’ - to rhyme with the English word Fate

‘Vemen’, ‘nemen’ and ‘shemen’ - to rhyme with Laymen

Refrain

‘Tum’ - to rhyme with the last syllable of Handsome

‘Freylach’ - to rhyme with Day + Bach

‘Zayn’ - Somewhere between Maine and Mine

Verse 2

‘Meydl’ - to rhyme with Ladle

‘Fregen’, ‘Regn’ - to rhyme with Fagin

‘Vaksn - as in vaccinate

‘Oyfhern’ - to rhyme with Boy + Bairn

Papir iz dokh vays

Verse 1

‘Papir’ - to rhyme with Map + here

‘Vays’ - to rhyme with Mice

‘Mayn’, ‘Dayn, - like Mine

‘Dray’ - to rhyme with Why

Verse 2

‘Sheyne’ - to rhyme with Stainer

‘Meydlekh’ - like May + Der + Lekh

‘Dayne’ - like Dine + Er

Verse 3

‘Liber’ - like Lee + ber

‘Grinem’, ‘Drinen’ - first syllable to rhyme with Been

Sha, shtil

‘Keyn’ - to rhyme with Vine

‘Vider’ - to rhyme with Weeder