

Michael Kaulkin

TUMBALALAYKA

for mixed chorus *a cappella*

2015

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Tumbalalayka is one of the most performed and beloved Yiddish folksongs. It is, quite simply, a riddle:

*Shteyt a bokher. Shteyt un trakht.
Trakht un trakht a gantse nakht.
Vemen zu nemen un nit farshtemen.*

A young lad stands there thinking all night long:
Whom shall I choose, without causing her shame?

*Tumbalalayka, shpil balalayka
Tumbalalayka, freylekh zol zayn*

Tumbalalaika, play the balalaika.
Tumbalalaika, be joyful.

*Meydl, meyd, 'khvil bay dir freygn,
Vos ken vaksn, vaksn on regn?
Vos ken brennen, un nit oyfthern?
Vos ken benken, veynen on trenn?*

Young girl, I've got a question:
What can grow without rain?
What can burn forever?
What can weep without tears?

*Narisher bokher, vos darfstu freygn?
Shteynen ken vaksn, vaksn on regn!
Libe ken brennen, un nit oyfthern,
A harts ken benken, veynen on trenn!*

Silly lad! What are these questions?
Stones can grow without rain!
Love can burn forever!
The heart can weep without tears!

This choral setting employs the use of instrument-like sounds imitating the strumming of the *balalayka*, a Russian folk instrument similar to a guitar, and contrasts the upbeat “*Tumbalalayka*” refrain with dark harmonic colors and occasional smooth polyphonic textures.

Are you performing this piece? Let us know the details!
info@swirlymusic.org

About the Composer

Oakland, California composer Michael Kaulkin has written several works for orchestra, chorus and the musical stage. He holds a Master of Music from the San Francisco Conservatory, and previously studied at the Franz Liszt Academy in Budapest, Hungary. Visit www.MichaelKaulkin.com for more information.

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Tumbalalayka

for mixed chorus *a cappella*

Traditional Yiddish Folksong

Michael Kaulkin

♩=144

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

pp ————— *p* ————— *pp* ————— *p* —————

tum - - ba - la tum - - ba - la

p

* ba-dl-la-dl-lay ba dl-la-dl-lay ba-dl-la-dl-lay ba-dl-la-dl-lay

p

tum - ba tum - ba tum - ba tum - ba

* - "badladlay" is an attempt to imitate the strumming of the balalayka, a Russian folk instrument similar to a guitar. The "lay" syllable should sound like the word "lie".

5

S.

A.

T.

B.

pp ————— *p* ————— *pp* ————— *p* —————

tum - - ba - la tum - - ba - la

ba-dl-la-dl-lay ba-dl-la-dl-lay ba-dl-la-dl-lay ba-dl-la-dl-lay

tum - ba tum - ba tum - ba tum - ba

9

S.

A.

T.

B.

mp (melody)

Shteyt a bo - - kher shteyt un trakht.

pp ————— *p* ————— *pp* ————— *mp*

tum - - ba - la tum - - ba - la

ba-dl-la-dl-lay ba-dl-la-dl-lay ba-dl-la-dl-lay *mp* tum - ba

tum - ba tum - ba tum - ba tum - ba - la

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13

S. Trakht un trakht a gan - tse nakht. Ve - men tzu

A. *mp* Trakht un trakht a gan - tse nakht. *P dolce* Vem -

T. *P* tum ba-dl-la-dl-lay ba-dl-la-dl-lay tum - ba - la - lay - ka Vem - *dolce*

B. *P* tum - ba - la tum - ba - la tum - ba - la - lay - ka tum

18

S. nem - en un nit far - shem - en Vem - en tzu nem - en

A. - en tum tum un nit far - shem - en

T. - - - en tsu nem - en nit far - shem - en

B. tum tum tum tum tum tum -

23

S. *P* un nit far - shem - en tum - ba - la, tum - ba - la tum - ba - la -

A. *P* tum tum tum tum - ba - la, tum - ba - la tum - ba - la -

T. *mf* tum tum tum ba - la - lay - ka *P* ba-dl-la-dl-lay ba-dl-la-dl-lay

B. ba - la - lay - ka tum - ba tum - ba tum - ba - la -

28

S. lay - ka tum - ba - la, tum - ba - la tum - ba - la - lay - ka

A. lay - ka tum - ba - la, tum - ba - la tum - ba - la - lay - ka

T. ba-dl-la-dl-lay ba-dl-la-dl-lay ba-dl-la-dl-lay tum - ba - la - lay - ka

B. lay - ka tum - ba tum - ba tum - ba - la - lay - ka

33 *mp* *p*

S. tum - ba - la - lay - ka Shpil ba - la - lay - ka tum - ba - la - lay - ka, frey-lekh zol

A. tum - ba - la - lay - ka Shpil ba - la - lay - ka tum - ba - la - lay - ka, frey-lekh zol

T. tum - ba - la - lay - ka Shpil ba - la - lay - ka Shpil ba - la - lay -

B. tum - ba - la tum - ba - la tum - ba - la - lay - ka tum - ba - la - lay - ka frey-lekh zol

40 *mf* *p* *mf* *mf*

S. zayn. tum tum tum tum ba-dl-la-dl-lay ba-dl-la-dl-lay

A. zayn. ba-dl-la-dl-lay tum tum - ba tum - ba

T. ka ba-dl-la-dl-lay tum tum

B. zayn. tum - ba - la tum - ba - la tum

45

S. *ba-dl-la-dl-lay ba-dl-la-dl-lay ba-dl-la-dl-lay ba-dl-la-dl-lay*

A. *tum - ba tum - ba tum - ba tum - ba*

T. *tum tum tum tum*

B. *Mey - dl, mey - dl,*

mp p

49

S. *ba-dl-la-dl-lay ba-dl-la-dl-lay ba-dl-la-dl-lay ba-dl-la-dl-lay*

A. *tum - ba tum ba-dl-la-dl-lay ba-dl-la-dl-lay*

T. *tum tum - ba - la tum tum*

B. *'khvil bay dir frey - gn vos ken vak - - sn*

mp p

53

S. *ba-dl-la-dl-lay tum ba-dl-la-dl-lay tum tum tum*

A. *ba-dl-la-dl-lay tum ba-dl-la-dl-lay tum tum*

T. *tum tum tum tum tum tum tum*

B. *vaks - sn on re - - gn? Vos ken bren - en*

57

S. tum tum tum veyn - nen on

A. — tum tum tum tum tum veyn - - nen

T. tum tum tum Vos ken benk - - en veyn - en on

B. un nit oyf - hern? Vos ken benk - en veyn - en on trern?

63 *mf* *mp*

S. trern tum - ba - la tum - ba - la lay - - ka

A. *mf (melody)*
tum - ba - la tum - ba - la tum - ba - la lay - - ka

T. *mf* *mp*
trern? tum - ba - dl - la - dl - lay tum - ba - dl - la - dl - lay tum - ba - dl - la - dl - lay

B. *mp*
tum - ba tum - ba tum - ba tum - ba

67

S. tum - ba - la tum - ba - la tum - ba - la lay - ka

A. tum - ba - la tum - ba - la tum - ba - la lay - ka

T. tum - ba - dl - la - dl - lay tum - ba - dl - la - dl - lay tum - ba - la lay - ka

B. tum - ba tum - ba tum - ba - la lay - ka

71

S. *p*
tum - ba - la shpil ba - la - lay - ka frey -

A. *mp* *p*
tum - ba - la - lay - ka shpil ba - la - lay - ka tum - ba - la

T. *p*
tum - ba - la - lay - ka

B. *p*
tum - ba - la - lay - ka shpil ba - la - lay - ka tum - ba - la - lay - ka

*poco rit.***Meno Mosso** (♩=c.132)

77

S. *mp* *mp* (*melody*)
- lekh zol zayn. Na - rish - er bo - kher vos darfs - tu

A. *mp* *pp* *p*
tum - ba - la - lay - ka tum(mm) - ba - la tum - ba - la

T. *mp* *pp* *p*
tum - ba - la - lay - ka tum tum tum(mm) - ba - la tum - ba - la

B. *pp* *p*
frey - lekh zol zayn. tum(mm) - ba - la tum

83

S. frey - gn? Shteyn-en ken vak - sn vak - sn on re - gn Li - be ken bren - en

A. *pp* *p* *pp*
tum(mm) tum tum tum(mm) tum tum tum

T. *pp* *p* *pp*
tum(mm) tum tum tum(mm) tum tum tum tum

B. *pp* *p* *pp*
tum(mm) tum tum tum(mm) tum tum tum tum

90 poco rit. A tempo

S. un nit oyf - hern, a harts_ ken benk - en, veyn - en on treyn.

A. tum tum tum tum tum ba-dl-ai-ka

T. tum tum tum tum tum ba-dl-ai-ka tum

B. tum tum tum tum tum tum tum tum

96 pp (melody)

S. tum - ba - la tum - ba - la tum - ba - - la -

A. tum ba-dl-ai-ka tum ba-dl-ai-ka tum ba-dl-ai-ka

T. ba-dl-ai-ka tum ba-dl-ai-ka tum ba-dl-ai-ka tum

B. tum-ba-la tum-ba-la tum-ba-la

accel.

99

S. lay - ka tum - ba - la tum - ba - la

A. tum ba-dl-ai-ka tum tum ba-dl-ai-ka tum ba-dl-ai-ka

T. ba-dl-ai-ka tum ba-dl-ai-ka tum ba-dl-ai-ka tum

B. tum-ba-la tum-ba-la tum-ba-la

102

S. *mf*
tum - ba - la - lay - ka tum - ba - la - lay - ka Shpil ba - la -

A. *mf*
tum - ba - la - lay - ka tum - ba - la - lay - ka Shpil ba - la -

T. *mf*
tum - ba - la - lay - ka tum - ba - la - lay - ka Shpil ba - la -

B. *mf*
tum - ba - la - lay - ka tum - ba - la - lay - ka Shpil ba - la -

107

S. *f*
lay - ka tum - ba - la - lay - ka, frey - lekh zol zayn.

A. *f*
lay - ka tum - ba - la - lay - ka, frey - lekh zol zayn ba - dl - la - dl - lay

T. *f*
lay - ka tum - ba - la - lay - ka, frey - lekh zol zayn ba - dl - la - dl - lay

B. *f*
lay - ka tum - ba - la - lay - ka, frey - lekh zol zayn ba - dl - la - dl - lay

112

S. *ff*
tum - ba - dl - la - dl - lay tum - ba - dl - la - dl - la - dl - la - dl - lay - ka

A. *ff*
tum - ba - dl - la - dl - lay tum - ba - dl - la - dl - la - dl - la - dl - lay - ka

T. *ff*
tum - ba - dl - la - dl - lay tum - ba - dl - la - dl - la - dl - la - dl - lay - ka

B. *ff*
tum - ba - dl - la - dl - lay tum - ba - dl - la - dl - la - dl - la - dl - lay - ka 2'24.0"

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