

KLAYBT ZIKH TSUNOYF (Gather Together)

Words and music by Michael Alpert, written in 1983. Presented at Shtetl Neukölln 2018

6/8 D G / D (E) / A / D / (x4)
 (Ya-day-da-day...)
 D D7/G / A7 /D / (x2)

Klaybt zikh tsunoyf, mayne shvester un briderlekh,
 Un lomir zikh freyen, vos mir zaynen yidelekh.
 Genug shoyn tsu veynen mit hertser farvundete,
 Vayl mir zaynen ale vi kroyvim farbundete.

Gather together, sisters and brothers,
 And let's be rejoice that we're Jews.
 Enough crying with wounded hearts:
 We're bound together like family!

Khotsh ikh bin gekumen tsu aykh fun der vayter velt,
 Ir zayt mir ale, oy, tayerer nokh fun gelt.
 To lomir zikh freyen biz in vaysn tog arayn,
 Mit hartsike lider un mit fule flashkes vayn.

Though I've come from across the world,
 You are dearer to me than anything else,
 So let's live it up 'til the break of day
 With heartfelt songs & full bottles of wine.

Ya-day-da-day

A l'khayim tsu makhn mit fraynt, oy, s'iz tayer-zis
 Az lider zey zingen zikh, tupn zikh mit di fis
 A koyse tsu makhn bay fremde iz oykhet gut
 Ober bay fraynt iz es zis vi bay eygenem blut

To make a toast with friends, oh, it's sweet.
 When songs are sung, the feet tap along.
 A drink with strangers is also good,
 But with friends, it's sweet, like with family

A shnepsl tsu makhn ken zayn mamesh a genis
 Ober a lidl tsu zingen iz take zis
 To zingt-zhe shoyn mit, oy, khaverimlekh tayere
 Un fargest shoyn di zorgn un di tsores ayere

A shot of booze can be a real treat.
 But to sing a song is truly sweet.
 So sing along, dear comrades
 And forget your worries and troubles.

Ya-day-da-day

In aza velt fun aveyres un blutikayt,
 S'iz gring zikh tsu valgern fun emese tsiln vayt.
 In aza velt a sakh mentshn farblondzhn zikh:
 Amol ver ikh oykh azoy, biz vanet khap ikh zikh.

In this world of wrongdoing and bloodshed,
 It's easy to stray from our true goals.
 In such a world, many become lost:
 I do too, sometimes, until I remember.

Az tsu zayn gliklekh, oy, iz nor in zikh gevent,
 Un yedns mazl, oy, ligt in di eygene hent.
 To zingt nor dos lidl tsu, frayndelekh tay'rinke,
 Un vert shoyn bamutikt in di hertser ay'rinke.

That happiness depends on oneself,
 And our fortunes lie in our own hands
 So join in this song, dearest friends,
 And let your hearts take courage from it.

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Created one winter night in 1983, this new Yiddish song addresses the importance of friendship and community in negotiating the challenges of this tumultuous world. Its call and response form is based on the singing and poetry of the late Chaim Mendel Mermolstein a"h, a Ruthenian-born badkhn (traditional wedding entertainer) in New York, who enlivened many a celebration. The Romanian character of the melody honors my family ties to that great branch of the Ashkenazi nation which has given the world so much heartfelt music and delectable cuisine.

"Klaybt Zikh Tsunoyf" can be heard on Brave Old World's CD *Klezmer Music* (Flying Fish Records FF 70560), and on Frank London's Klezmer Brass Allstars "Carnival Conspiracy" as "Midnight Banda Judia"