

Menim Balam

Azerbaijan

Menim Balam, which translates as “my baby” is an Azerbaijani women’s dance. The music is a lullaby. It is also a prayer that their newborns survive their first year.

Pronunciation: Me—NYM BA—lum

Music: Camp Hess Kramer 2007 CD

Meter: 4/4

Formation: Circle, facing center, no hand hold; hands and arms held as described in Figure 1 unless otherwise noted

Styling: Soft and understated

Meas Pattern

1-8 **Introduction:** No Action

Figure 1 “Step together step, point”

- 1 With arms at side, held slightly away from body, palms down, middle finger pointing down and in, other fingers extended down and slightly out to side, step side with R (1); step L next to R (2) step R to side (3); bring L next to R, no wt (4)
- 2 Touch left toe (point) in front of R (1, 2); and hold (3, 4)
- 3-4 Repeat meas 1 and 2, opp ftwk and dir
- 5-8 Repeat meas 1-4

Figure 2 “in and out”

- 1 Moving towards center on balls of feet, step R L R (1,2,3); close R beside L lowering both heels (4); arms “trail”slightly, catching up as knees bend in meas 2
- 2 Bend knees slightly (1,2); straighten knees (3,4)
- 3 Repeat meas 1 except backing away from center
- 4 Bend knees slightly drawing them into a CW circular movement (1,2,3,4)
- 5-8 Repeat meas 1-4

Figure 3 “turn to side with raised arm”

- 1 With left arm extended down and slightly out, palm facing in with fingers as in Figure 1 and bringing right arm up, upper arm extended out horizontally from shoulder, elbow bent and forearm extended up, palm in, middle finger in, other fingers up, make a complete turn traveling LOD as follows: step R sideways (1); spinning half way around step L next to R (2); completing turn to end facing center, step sideways R (3,4)
- 2 Extend and touch left toe to side maintaining hand and arm position (1,2); hold (3,4)
- 3-4 Repeat meas 1-2, opp ftwk and dir
- 5-8 Repeat meas 1-4

Figure 4 “Sway”

- 1 With feet apart, and with a slight dip, step/sway to right onto R, feet remain apart (1,2); hold (3,4)
- 2 Repeat meas 1 with opp ftwk, dir
- 3-4 Repeat meas 1 and 2

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Interlude

1-12 Repeat Figure 4 three times; on meas 1-4 arms gradually move from sides to down and in front of body, ending with right hand over left; then moving back on meas 5-8.

Ending

1-2 Sway right onto R and/or left onto L wobbling subtly side to side at will bringing hands fwd and down as in interlude

Sequence: **Introduction;** do **Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4**, three times; **Interlude, Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4** a fourth time; **Ending**

Dance notes: Gary Diggs 10-13-07