

lauren kinhan music



Dear Director,

Thank you for choosing ***Beat that Drum*** for your ensemble. This is a feel good piece that suits all levels. The inspiration of the song stems from the chorus hook, "You'll know me then." Its about how our young people, students, and children will someday understand their elders better when they've walked a little bit in their own shoes, had some success', made some mistakes and generally experienced life. ***Beat that Drum*** is what we do everyday trying to figure it out, practice our passions and test our wings.

The original concept of writing and arranging this was to have it taught orally by the director. It's a great exercise for your students to hear and echo back the parts. The pros of this kind of teaching is that you can get to the inflection, phrasing, dynamics and memorization all in one fell swoop. There's a certain kind of freedom afforded the singers to be able to just open their ears and get it into their minds and bodies. You have removed looking at the notes on the page, so you've bypassed the math and gone right to the organic. Teaching it in this way can be stretched out over time, adding on to it while you are learning other pieces. You could use it as a welcoming to the room, playing and singing as they enter, achieving a gentle warm up both mentally and vocally and reinforcing what they have learned in past sessions. Use it as a "readying of the mind" for the class in general and building the classroom community.

I wrote this chart for the annual New York Voices Vocal Jazz Camp and taught the piece start to finish in 4 one-hour sessions that met over 4 consecutive days. The video that is attached is their first performance of the song and as you can see and hear, they did a great job and even maybe more importantly, you can see how much fun they are having!!! With even more time, it could only get better.

That said, you can certainly teach this by handing the chart out to the members of your group. It isn't difficult, because it was meant to be intuitive, but there is still much to discover when you dig in.

Having a strong drum and percussion section will help, too. We went for a Middle Eastern feel in the verses, changing to a Gospel vibe in the chorus and then back to a Middle Eastern feel in "Doa Doa Dee Dee" section. You could explore with some members of your group playing shaker. The cajon adds a wonderful texture to the percussion section.

You'll notice that we did not perform bars 69-71 as written.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns. And definitely share with me your group's performance of ***Beat that Drum***. I'd love to hear it.

Yours Kindly, Lauren