

STRING ALTERNATIVES SERIES

You Didn't Ask Me

By Renata Bratt (ASCAP)

INSTRUMENTATION

Conductor Score	1
Violin I	8
Violin II	8
Viola	5
Cello	5
String Bass	5

This blast to the past will motivate, captivate, and elevate your students with old school '60s soul sound, an infectious, danceable rhythm, and a triumphant finish. Written in 12/8, the tune begins with a ballad-like introduction for solo cello and then moves around the sections. Each instrument has a chance to improvise or solo in the written-out solo section. Authentic sounding riffs, complete with grace notes and a shout chorus, add to the fun of compound meter rock. A sure audience pleaser, and a terrific end to a concert or first half!



Notes to the Conductor

The introduction, m. 1–8, is for solo cello, bass, and violin, with second violins and violas adding “string pads.” It can be conducted with quite a bit of rubato—in a dreamy ballad-like rhythm. Feel free to augment the soloists with the entire section if you choose. The grace notes in the first violin section (m. 10 and on), second violins (m. 18 and on), and cellos (solo at the beginning; m. 67 and on) are played on the beat with a bit of an accent—quite quickly, and then resolving to the actual note. Soloists in m. 41–48 can add grace notes liberally to any longer notes. This is stylistically correct and sounds great on stringed instruments.

The solo section from m. 41–48 is meant for one instrument at a time to solo (the upper staff) and the other instruments to accompany (the lower staff). You may direct the students to accompany with arco if you have a louder soloist. When sight-reading this tune, make sure to ask for volunteers (or assign students) to play the written-out solos. You may perform the solos in any order, all of them, or just one or two of them. Let the students know how many times to repeat the section and the order of the soloists. There is a downloadable back-up rhythm track available at www.renatabratt.com for students who would like to practice improvising (or composing) their own melodies to this section. The chords in the solo parts all go with the D Major scale, which is used in improvising for this section. Notice that the written-out solos all play quite a bit with rhythm. It is rhythmic interest—where you put the rests—that makes a great solo.

M. 50–58 is a “shout chorus,” which is characteristically used in Big Band jazz charts, and is the riff-filled, joyous-sounding last “shout” of the piece. The contrapuntal style of the shout chorus is similar to that in the Baroque and the Vivaldi-like section in m. 54–58.

The tune’s title is the answer to my (then) boyfriend’s question, “Why aren’t we married?,” and the composition is a wedding anniversary gift to my husband (the boyfriend).

If students are interested in this type of music, direct them to music sung by soul artists such as The Platters, Smokey Robinson, and Aretha Franklin.

Renata Bratt

You Didn't Ask Me

CONDUCTOR SCORE
Duration - 4:20

Renata Bratt (ASCAP)

Rubato (♩ = 72)

Violins
I
II

Viola

Cello

String Bass

mf
Solo
pizz.

p

mf

1 2 3

Vlns.
I
II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

A tempo
Solo

mp

V

4 5 6

8 Moderato (♩ = 92) All

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

7 *mf* 8 *f* 9 *mp*

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

10 11

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

12 13

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

14 15 16

17

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

f

mp

f

17 18 19

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

mf

20 21 22

25

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

mp

mf

mf

mf

f

arco

23 24 25

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

mp

mf

mp

mf

4

26 27 28

I Vlns. *mf*

II Vlns. *mp* *mf*

Vla. *f*

Cello *f*

Str. Bass

29 30 31

I Vlns. *mp* *f*

II Vlns. *mp* *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Cello *mf*

Str. Bass *pizz.*

32 33 34

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

35 36 37

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

38 39 40

Solo D

Solos

Solo Section (can repeat if needed)

41

I Solo Vlns. *mf* D B min G

II Solo Vlns. *f* D B min G

Solo Vla. *f* D B min G

Solo Cello *f* D B min G

Solo Str. Bass *f* D arco B min G

Accompaniment

41

I Vlns. *p* pizz.

II Vlns. *p* pizz.

Vla. *p* pizz.

Cello *p* Tutti pizz.

Str. Bass *p* D B min G

41 42 43

Solo Vlns.
I
II

Solo Vla.

Solo Cello

Solo Str. Bass

A B min D

Vlns.
I
II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

A B min D

44 45 46

1. *Repeat if needed* Last Time

Solo Vlns. I

Solo Vlns. II

Solo Vla.

Solo Cello

Solo Str. Bass

1. *Repeat if needed* Last Time

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

50

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

f

f

f

f

pizz.

pizz.

50 51 52

53

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

mp

mp

mp

mp

arco

mf

53 54

Vlns. I
Vlns. II
Vla.
Cello
Str. Bass

55 56 57

Detailed description: This block contains the musical score for measures 55, 56, and 57. It features five staves: Violins I and II, Viola, Cello, and String Bass. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). Measure 55 starts with a dynamic of *mf* and includes a triplet of eighth notes in the Violin I part. Measure 56 features a dynamic of *f*. Measure 57 includes dynamics of *ff* and *f*, with a fermata over the final notes. A large red watermark is overlaid across the score.

Vlns. I
Vlns. II
Vla.
Cello
Str. Bass

58 59 60

Detailed description: This block contains the musical score for measures 58, 59, and 60. It features five staves: Violins I and II, Viola, Cello, and String Bass. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). Measure 58 starts with a dynamic of *f* and includes a box around the measure number 58. Measure 59 features a dynamic of *mf*. Measure 60 includes dynamics of *f* and *ff*, with a fermata over the final notes. A large red watermark is overlaid across the score.

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

61 62 63

mf *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

64 65

mf *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *mf*

66

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

f

66 67

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

68 69

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

arco

f

70 71 72

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

(V)

73 74 75