

A CATALOG OF MÉLODIES COMPOSED BY PAULINE VIARDOT

by

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Preface

As the performers of today desire to sing more repertoire by female composers, the abundant compositions of Pauline Viardot should not be overlooked. In this document, her available French *mélodies* have been organized by publication date. Other pieces of information about each song consist of: publisher, poet, key, vocal range, tessitura, tempo, level (beginner, intermediate, advanced – as given by myself), voice type, and where one can find the song sources. A short description is included with each song to discuss the text, compositional style, and technical difficulties in the voice and piano parts.

This is meant to be a guide for voice teachers and singers to use when selecting repertoire outside of the more prevalent options. I also hope this guide will entice readers to explore Viardot's other songs and duets in German, Russian, Italian, and Spanish as well. As a highly accomplished singer herself, she knew how to write for voices of all levels; and as a skilled pianist, her accompaniments always add meaningful characterization to each song. Viardot composed in many different styles, depending on which language she was using or which language the French translation originated from. Her variety of styles is one of the things that makes her songs so enjoyable to sing

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Chapter 1: BIOGRAPHY

The García Family

Pauline Viardot-García (1821-1910), born Michelle Ferdinande Pauline García, was an internationally renowned singer, actress, teacher, and composer of her time and was brought up in a very musical family. Her father, Manuel García (1775-1832), was a famous tenor and vocal instructor; her mother, Maria-Joaquína García-Sitchès (1780-1854), was a singer and actress; her older brother, Manuel García Jr. (1805-1906), was a singer and the inventor of the first laryngoscope; and her older sister, Maria Malibran (1808-1836), was one of the most famous opera singers of the nineteenth century.

Early Years and Education

Pauline Viardot was born into a highly sought after, musical family; she was submersed into music and theatre culture from the start. In 1825, after her older sister, Maria, made her successful debut as Rosina in Rossini's *Il Barbiere* at His Majesty's Theatre in London, the whole family traveled to New York to introduce Italian Opera to the Americas. At the young age of four, Pauline's musical education began on that voyage to America with her father as her teacher. In New York, the family performed Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*: Manuel García played the role of Almaviva (Rossini had written the role for him), Manuel, his son, made his debut as Figaro and Maria played the role of Rosina as she had in London. The performance was a great success, resulting in more performances of five other Rossini operas, two operas by Manuel García, and Mozart's *Don Giovanni*.¹

While in New York, Maria met and married Francois Eugene Malibran. She stayed with him while the rest of her family traveled to Mexico in hopes to create another new market for opera. In Mexico, Pauline began formal piano lessons with Marcos Vega, an organist at the

¹ April Fitzlyon, *The Price of Genius* (New York: Appleton-Century, 1965), 23.

Cathedral of Vera Cruz in Mexico City.² Pauline had decided from an early age that she wanted to become a concert pianist. And she was talented enough to do so. In 1827, after less than a year in Mexico, the family decided to return to Europe since there wasn't a demand for opera in Mexico at that time.

When they moved back to Paris, her father sent her to the Paris Conservatory to study with Anton Reicha, a composer and musical theorist. She also continued to study piano with Franz Liszt and became proficient enough by the age of eight to accompany her father's vocal studio lessons.³ Through accompanying these lessons, she learned much about the workings and techniques of the voice and the *bel canto* style. It was not long before her parents decided Pauline should focus on building a singing career rather than that of a concert pianist. Her father taught her to sing until he passed away when she was eleven; then her mother (along with Manuel, her brother, and Charles de Bériot, Maria's second husband) continued her vocal training. To the objection of Pauline Viardot, her mother encouraged her to give up her piano education and focus solely on her singing career. It broke Pauline's heart to give up piano, but it did not stop her from becoming a very accomplished pianist.

Singing Career

In 1837, Viardot made her singing debut at a charity concert with her brother-in-law, Charles de Bériot, in Brussels in front of the King and Queen of Belgium along with many other aristocrats. They travelled throughout Germany, performing in Berlin, Dresden, Leipzig, and Frankfurt.⁴ While in Germany, Pauline met with many musicians with whom she would form close relationships for the rest of her life: Felix Mendelssohn, Julius Rietz, Fanny Hensel, Robert Schumann, Clara Wieck, and Giacomo Meyerbeer.⁵ When her mother and Bériot decided she

² April Fitzlyon, *The Price of Genius*, (New York: Appleton-Century, 1965), 26.

³ Barbara Kendall-Davies, *Life and Work of Pauline Viardot Garcia: The Years of Fame*, (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012), 15.

⁴ Fitzlyon, *The Price of Genius*, 43.

⁵ Fitzlyon, *The Price of Genius*, 28-30, 38.

was ready to perform in Paris, they left Germany and began the journey back to the French capital.

When she started performing in Paris, Pauline made more notable friends in the world of music and poetry. Most notably, friendships formed with Alfred de Musset, George Sand and Frédéric Chopin. In December of 1838 (at the age of seventeen), Pauline made her vocal performance debut in Paris at the Théâtre de la Renaissance.

Her first operatic role was as Desdemona in Rossini's *Otello*, at the age of seventeen, in London at Her Majesty's Theatre on May 9, 1839.⁶ After that, she became a star on the operatic stage and enjoyed a fruitful singing career until she retired in 1863. Pauline married Louis Viardot in 1840, gave birth to their daughters, Louise Pauline Marie in 1841 and Claudie in 1852. During her performing career, she sang 33 different operatic roles and acquired many more acquaintances with notable composers. Many of those composers dedicated operas to her and wrote specific roles for her to perform. She performed the title role in Gounod's *Sapho*, Fidès in Meyerbeer's *Le Prophète*, and Dalila in Camille Saint-Saëns' *Samson et Dalila*.

Salons, Composing, Teaching, and Retirement

How did she obtain all these famous composers as friends and colleagues? No matter where she lived throughout her life, she held a Music Salon every Thursday evening in her home. Many composers would attend and use the soirée as an opportunity to perform their new and noteworthy works. Pauline would also have her students attend these salons. Many of these composers (Massenet, Gounod, Saint-Saëns, Fauré, and others) credit her with supporting their works and launching their careers.⁷

Pauline composed for voice, choir, piano, chamber ensembles, and operas throughout her life. She also arranged piano accompaniments for her father's songs and her brother-in-law's

⁶ Kendall-Davies, *Life and Work of Pauline Viardot Garcia: The Years of Fame*, 87.

⁷ Jules Massenet, *My Recollections (1848-1912)*, (Boston: Small, Maynard & Company, 1971), 81.

violin studies. Since she had lived all over the world, her compositions did not center around one specific style. She wrote songs (and was fluent) in French, German, Italian, Russian, and English. Pauline drew inspiration from her composer friends and used many texts from her literary friends. To Pauline's disagreement, George Sand had always believed her compositions to be more important than her singing.⁸ As much as she enjoyed composing, she did not enjoy teaching until later in her life.⁹ She stuck to her family's method of singing that had served all of them so well over the years. Pauline taught lessons throughout her life, even after retirement to continue supporting her family in Baden-Baden.

⁸ Fitzlyon, *The Price of Genius*, 130.

⁹ Kendall-Davies, *Life and Work of Pauline Viardot Garcia: The Years of Grace*, 4.

Chapter 2: CATALOG

L'Enfant de la montagne

Publication Date: 1838

Publisher: Paris: Chez Pacini/Paris: *La France musicale* (1840)

Poet: Johann Ludwig Uhland (French translation by Émilien Pacini)

Key: D major

Range: A3–A5

Tessitura: A4–E5

Tempo: *Allegro* (♩ = 126)

Level: Intermediate – Advanced

Voice Type: Mezzo Soprano

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: Album de Mme. Viardot-Garcia)

One of her first published songs, Viardot dedicated *L'Enfant de la montagne* to one of her closest friends, George Sand, a French novelist. In the poem, translated by Pacini, the proclaimed “child of the mountain” stakes his claim on the land, rebukes the forces of nature around him, and calls the soldiers to arms. Viardot set this poetry with a very militaristic melody at the beginning. The brisk tempo, octaves in the piano, and arpeggiated melody reinforce the text. The five verses of the song are through composed, but select motifs are repeated throughout. With the quick tempo, and the two-octave range, this is a challenging song suiting the mezzo soprano voice. The accompaniment is deceptively difficult if one were to glance at the beginning of the song. She used arpeggios, chromatic scales, and shifting registers throughout the song. In a recital, this song would make for a perfect end to a set or an end to the entire recital with its flashy characteristics.

L'Hirondelle et le Prisonnier

Publication Date: 1841

Publisher: Paris: *La France musicale*

Poet: Hector-Grégoire de Saint-Maur

Key: C major

Range: C4–G5

Tessitura: E4–D5

Tempo: Andantino

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Tenor or Soprano

Source(s): haithitrust.org (*La France musicale*, January 1841) (Haithi Trust Digital Library)

A prisoner sees a bird fly into the dungeon and begs it to tell him about the home and love he has lost. He becomes more depressed throughout the song as he realizes the bird is free to go back to its loved ones, but he will be alone forever. This song would be most suitable for the tenor or soprano voice as it tends to sit in the upper passaggio at times. It begins simply in the key of C major, but quickly shifts to new keys, major and minor, throughout. As the song moves forward and the prisoner becomes more anguished, the piano accompaniment gets more tumultuous with descending chromatic scales in the left hand and tremolos in the right. The difficulties in the vocal melody fall with the upper passaggio tessitura, the shifting in and out of keys, and the long breath lines.

La chapelle

Publication Date: 1838

Publisher: Paris: Eugène Troupenas & Cie.

Poet: Johann Ludwig Uhland (author of the French translation is unknown)

Key: A \flat major

Range: Ab3–G5

Tessitura: C4–Eb5

Tempo: Andantino (♩ = 92)

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Mezzo Soprano

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: Album de Mme. Viardot-Garcia)

La chapelle is another poetic translation after a poem by Johann Ludwig Uhland (*Die Kapelle*). A young boy is singing a playing in the meadow near a chapel when a funeral convoy passes by. They are mournfully singing as they go to a grave and tell the boy they will also sing for him one day. The *mélodie* begins in a sweet manner and Viardot ended the first verse of the poem with playful “*la, la, las*” that almost seem like a technical vocal exercise, moving in and out of different keys and arpeggios. There are some melodic and rhythmic similarities between the first two verses as the text takes a dreary turn, but fewer similarities in the third verse. This *mélodie* has much to offer as a teaching song for a mezzo soprano. It does not stay in the upper or lower *passaggi* for long periods; there are melismatic passages containing triplets, arpeggios, and key changes; it uses a range of a little more than an octave and a half. The piano accompaniment is simplistic and goes between block chords and a pastoral motif of triplets.

L’Abricotier

Publication Date: 1843

Publisher: Eugène Troupenas & Cie.

Poet: Unknown

Key: A major

Range: C#4–A5

Tessitura: E4–E5

Tempo: Allegretto ($\text{♩} = 120$)

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or Mezzo Soprano

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: Album de Mme. Viardot-Garcia)

A young woman, Angèle, sits by a stream underneath an apricot tree. An old knight comes along and asks for some water, some fruit, and a kiss; she refuses him. In the second verse a young knight comes along with the same requests and she grants them. The text in the two verses are almost identical except for the answers to the two knights. While this is a strophic song, Viardot slightly changed the melody of the young knight to differ from the old knight. There are four characters in this song: the narrator, Angèle, the old knight, and the young knight. You can hear the bubbling of the stream in the accompaniment when the narrator and Angèle are singing. The accompaniment completely changes to a stately, rhythmic manner when the knights are singing. The tessitura also changes between characters, the knights' being lower and Angèle's higher. For the singer, the challenge is to be able to differentiate between the characters throughout the song.

Adieu les beaux jours

Publication Date: 1843

Publisher: Eugène Troupenas & Cie.

Poet: Ambroise Bétourné

Key: C major

Range: D4–G5

Tessitura: G4–E5

Tempo: Andantino (♩ = 120)

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: Album de Mme. Viardot-Garcia)

In this poem by Ambroise Bétourné, the season is changing from autumn to winter. Lamenting the coming cold, we say goodbye to the good days of games and love. Viardot set this poetry in C major, but constantly changed the key with seventh chords and descending chromaticism. She set each of the three verses with a different melodic line and accompaniment. The first verse sets the scene as the cold north wind blows through the flowers and the top of the mountain is already white with snow. The accompaniment is mostly made of block chords while the melody in the vocal line makes use of syncopation. Each line has a sense of falling as the chords chromatically descend. In the second verse, the accompaniment consists of mostly broken chords and the vocal line is more lyrical as the singer remembers the little village girl who used to play in the meadow by the stream. The vocal line in the third verse has a greater sense of melancholy with the chromatic descent and added tritones over a now moving accompaniment of a sixteenth note arpeggiated pattern. The sun, though pale, gives off a last ray of seeming hope before it fades away. Viardot connected each verse with the same ending line, "*Avec les jeux et les amours, Adieu donc les beaux jours!*" The music for this line is the same all three times with a slight variation in the final occurrence.

L'Exilé polonais

Publication Date: 1843

Publisher: Eugène Troupenas & Cie.

Poet: Unknown

Key: Eb major

Range: Bb3–Eb5

Tessitura: Eb4– Eb5

Tempo: Allegro moderato (♩ = 104)

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Mezzo soprano or Baritone

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: Album de Mme. Viardot-Garcia)

The author of the text to this song is unknown, but the message is clear with the opening line, “*Wanting leaders instead of masters...*” (Wanting leaders instead of masters...), that this is a call to arms. Viardot set the three verses to the same accompaniment and mostly the same vocal line with a few changes in the melody to accommodate the text. The syncopation in the voice and piano gives the song a very militaristic disposition and drives the text forward. This declamatory song would be an excellent choice for a mezzo soprano or baritone with a large voice. It focuses on the middle range and dips below the lower passaggio a few times throughout.

L’Enfant et la mère

Publication Date: 1843

Publisher: Eugène Troupenas & Cie.

Poet: Unknown

Key: E major

Range: B3–F#5

Tessitura: F#4–C#5

Tempo: Andantino (♩ = 92)

Level: Beginner-Intermediate

Voice Type: Mezzo soprano or baritone

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: Album de Mme. Viardot-Garcia)

The text of this song was written by an unknown author. It is a dialogue between a young boy and his mother about things the boy is hearing, seeing, and feeling as he dies. Viardot chose to set this text over a lullaby-like accompaniment, almost deceiving the listener into thinking this is a simple conversation between mother and son. The boy's words consist of very short phrases interrupted by rests as if he is too breathless to speak. Most of his lines end with the final word sustained with a chromatic descension. The mother's phrases are longer, more melodic, and in a lower tessitura. Her anguish is shown by her phrases beginning in a minor mode, telling the boy to sleep, and shifting back to the major key to put his mind at ease. As the song goes on, the accompaniment becomes more agitated (especially while the mother sings) as death draws closer. The boy's final line ends with an outcry as all his strength leaves him. Viardot added a pause afterward to signify the life leaving the boy before the final line of the song (sung by neither the boy or the mother) "*Et retombant dans son berceau, L'enfant avait cessé de vivre*" (And falling into his crib, the child ceased to live). This short song is full of drama and has much to offer to a singer of any level.

L'Ombre et le jour

Publication Date: 1843

Publisher: Eugène Troupenas & Cie.

Poet: Edouard Tourquety

Key: B♭ major

Range: F4–F5

Tessitura: F4–B♭4

Tempo: Andantino (♩ = 46)

Level: Beginner

Voice Type: Any

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: Album de Mme. Viardot-Garcia)

This text by Edouard Tourquety is about opposites. It compares the two people in a relationship to light and darkness or happiness and sadness. Viardot turned this simple concept into a simple song of three short verses. The first and second verses point out the differences between night and day and happiness and sadness; they have the same melody and accompaniment. The third verse, comparing these things to love and relationship, is altered to show the moral of the text. In the accompaniment, Viardot inserts a simple motif of descending triads at the beginning of the song and between the verses. This would be a great song for a young singer new to the French language as it contains short phrases, simple French words, and only has an octave vocal range. Because of the small vocal range, it could be sung by any voice type.

Le chêne et le roseau

Publication Date: 1843

Publisher: Eugène Troupenas & Cie.

Poet: Jean de la Fontaine

Key: D major

Range: A3–F#5

Tessitura: F#4–D5

Tempo: Allegro moderato (♩ = 100)

Level: Intermediate-Advanced

Voice Type: Mezzo soprano or baritone

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: Album de Mme. Viardot-Garcia)

The text for this song is the last poem in Jean de la Fontaine's first book of Fables (1668) about a mighty oak and a little reed. In the fable, the oak tree boasts that he can withstand much more wind than the reed, who bows down in the wind. But the reed replies that even though he bends in the wind, he will not break. To prove it, a mighty storm comes and the oak breaks while the reed stays standing. Mirroring Fontaine's poem, this is the final song in Viardot's first published album of songs. She used text painting to depict the mighty oak as one of high nobility with fanfare motifs and syncopation, while the reed is simple and gentle with a more lyric melodic line. The wind is a third character in this song, played by the piano. There are many fast, sweeping, chromatic scales throughout the accompaniment that get longer as the song progresses to depict the severity of the storm. This is a lengthy song that should be performed by an experienced singer with a larger voice. It would serve well as a final song in a set or as a stand-alone song on a recital.

Une Fleur

Publication Date: 1843

Publisher: *L'Illustration*

Poet: Édouard Turquety

Key: G major

Range: E4–G5

Tessitura: G4–D5

Tempo: Andantino

Level: Beginner

Voice Type: Any

Source(s): *L'Illustration*, 4 March 1843, p. 8 (Viardot-Garcia, *Une fleur*, 1843)

A dried flower is all he has left of his love and he mourns his loss to the crumbling petals in Édouard Turquety's text. Viardot used 4 stanzas of Turquety's 6 stanza poem, dividing them into two strophic verses. With a small vocal range, this song could be sung by almost any voice type, assuming the high G at the very end is not an issue. The simple melody makes this an accessible French song for younger singers.

Solitude

Publication Date: 1845

Publisher: *L'Illustration*

Poet: Edouard Turquety

Key: G minor

Range: D4–F#5

Tessitura: A4–D5

Tempo: Andantino

Level: Beginner-Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: 10 mélodies)

In *Solitude*, dreams and grief of a lost love are amplified by the familiar surrounding city and nature. The melancholic nature of the text by Turquety is captured by Viardot's simplistic writing. The accompaniment is comprised of the same rhythm in every measure as the vocal line consists of a descending, plaintive motif repeated with each verse. The melody sits in the upper passaggio and slowly descends into the middle voice throughout each verse making this song most suitable for the soprano or tenor voice. Each of the three verses have very similar rhythmic and melodic qualities, but Viardot incorporated different tonalities to each verse. The first verse is

the most straightforward and simplistic and provides the basic shape of the subsequent verses.

The second verse was written in the major mode as it is about remembering the beloved, but, with the use of some chromatic figures, starts to become troubled halfway through as the image slips away. The final verse returns to the minor mode and the ends of phrases are elongated. The song finishes with a major chord, signifying that that he will return and dream of his beloved again.

La petite chevrère

Publication Date: 1850

Publisher: Paris: Brandus & Cie.

Poet: Ivan Turgenev (possibly)

Key: B \flat major

Range: D4–F5

Tessitura: G4–F5

Tempo: Allegretto Moderato

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or tenor

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: 10 mélodies)

This text is believed to have been written or translated by Ivan Turgenev since Viardot included “de I.T.” after the title of this song on her manuscript (now at Harvard). A shepherd boy tends the goats on the mountainside. He loves being away from the house and alone with the goats and his dog, Finaut. Viardot wrote a charming song with this text. The vocal line sits in the upper tessitura and is very child-like and playful with bird-like grace notes. It is sung over a high, fluttering accompaniment. At the end of both verses, a section of melismatic “*la la las*” break the high tessitura of the piano as it moves to a lower register with a sort of “jerky,” syncopated

rhythm. This would be a great opening song in a French set on a recital and would be best suited to a light soprano or tenor voice.

L'absence (Caña Española)

Publication Date: 1850

Publisher: Paris: Brandus & Cie.

Poet: Anonymous

Key: D minor

Range: C4–F5

Tessitura: D4–D5

Tempo: Andantino

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Any

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: 10 mélodies)

In this text, a woman scorned is suffering from her sadness and believes the only cure is death. Viardot originally published this song in Spanish (*Caña Española*) based on text by Juan Antonio de Zamácola. She incorporated a bolero-like rhythm in the accompaniment that continues throughout the song, as a triplet motif in the first verse and as a more marked, duple motif in the second verse. The first verse lies in the lower and middle tessitura of the voice and has a languid feeling, while the second verse has a much higher tessitura and is an outcry of anguish with several marcato notes. Each verse ends with a repetition of the first line of text, “*Aux longs tourments de l'absence, Le seul remède est mourir,*” and a very sustained cry, “*Ah!*” over a descending octave.

This song may look short and simple, but there are many difficulties navigating the lower and upper passaggi throughout. Viardot included short melismas in the low, middle, and high parts of the vocal range.

Un jour de printemps

Publication Date: 1850

Publisher: Paris: Brandus & Cie.

Poet: Edouard Turquety

Key: G major

Range: D4–E5

Tessitura: D4–D5

Tempo: Allegretto

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Any

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: 10 mélodies)

Nature is on display in all its splendor as a fowler lies in wait for a lark. Even though the fowler is only mentioned once in the beginning of this poem, you can hear him throughout the entire song within the piano accompaniment. Viardot wrote a constant rhythmic motif in the accompaniment that could easily represent the sneaky fowler and is interrupted by sudden high, descending flourishes depicting nature around him. Having only the range of just over an octave in the middle of the voice, this could be sung by any voice type. The difficulty lies within the text and harmonic changes. This text is through composed but has two main themes in the vocal line. Those themes are not used in the same way within the short verses of the poem. Lining up the text with similar melodic passages that begin the shift from major to minor and back again can prove difficult.

Villanelle

Publication Date: 1850

Publisher: Paris: Brandus & Cie.

Poet: Edouard Turquety

Key: C minor

Range: C4–F5

Tessitura: G4–E5

Tempo: Allegretto

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: 10 mélodies)

The evening can be sweet and beautiful as the world shifts from day to night, but one can soon be sad and lonely waiting for a love that will never come. The three verses of this text are set to a beautiful strophic melody. The only difference in the melodic line of each verse comes at the very end of the third verse. As the singer realizes they will not be seeing their beloved anymore, there are added sighing gestures in the vocal line as the evening suddenly becomes sad and lonely. This song tends to sit in the upper passaggio of the voice, making it more accessible to higher voices like soprano and tenor.

En mer

Publication Date: 1850

Publisher: Paris: Brandus & Cie.

Poet: Gustave de Larenaudière

Key: A \flat major

Range: Eb4–Eb5

Tessitura: Eb4–C5

Tempo: Andante

Level: Beginner

Voice Type: Any

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: 10 mélodies)

This text by Larenaudière depicts a sense of tranquility amidst turmoil and Viardot truly captured that sense of calm with her setting. Text painting is evident in this song as the rocking motion of the waves of the sea can be heard in the piano accompaniment. The almost stagnant melody in the voice draws the listener in closely to the text. A sailor, alone on the water, reflects on the sea (away from the battle) and the history of the waters and the world around him. Only when the text is describing powerful empires and roaring waves does the music grow more dramatic. This would be a wonderful addition to a set of songs about battles with its stunning contrast of calmness.

La chanson de Loïc

Publication Date: 1850

Publisher: Paris: Brandus & Cie.

Poet: Auguste Plage Brizeux

Key: D minor

Range: A3–A5

Tessitura: D4–C5

Tempo: Allegretto

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Mezzo soprano or Baritone

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: 10 mélodies)

Little Loïc loves little Anna. They sing to one another across the valley (Loïc on the mountain and Anna in the forest, tending her goats). Viardot set this text to a very playful melody with small a cappella sections with some echoed patterns in the accompaniment. Since the character is a little boy, a mezzo soprano would suit this song well, but a baritone voice would be perfectly acceptable. In a recital, this would make a great ending song in a set.

Marie et Julie

Publication Date: 1850

Publisher: Paris: Brandus & Cie.

Poet: Gustave de Larenaudière

Key: F major

Range: B3–A4

Tessitura: C4–A4

Tempo: Andantino mosso

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Tenor

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: 10 mélodies)

How can someone choose between a lily and a rose, blue eyes and ebony eyes, Marie and Julie? This song for the tenor voice quietly sits at the top of the vocal range giving it a day-dream quality. Viardot specified that the high A4 on the name Julie should always be sung in the falsetto voice, which portrays such tenderness. This would be a great addition to a recital set, leaving the audience to imagine who he will choose.

La Luciole

Publication Date: 1850

Publisher: Paris: Brandus & Cie.

Poet: Gustave de Larenaudière

Key: C major

Range: D4–A5

Tessitura: D4–D5

Tempo: Allegretto vivace

Level: Advanced

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: 10 mélodies)

A sweet song about a firefly signifying the mysteries of love and beauty in the summer night. This song presents challenges in both the voice and piano parts. The constant, quick sixteenth note passages in the piano must portray the lightness of the firefly while the melodic vocal line interjects thoughts on what the firefly truly represents. As with many of Viardot's songs, this is truly a duet between the singer and pianist.

Tarentelle

Publication Date: 1850

Publisher: Paris: Brandus & Cie.

Poet: Anonymous

Key: C minor

Range: C4–C6

Tessitura: G4–F5

Tempo: Allegro vivace

Level: Advanced

Voice Type: Soprano, Mezzo soprano

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: 10 mélodies)

The title is a definite giveaway to what this song might sound like. Truly, it is a very fast-paced, difficult piece of music. It begins with the tarantella melody being played in the piano for almost two pages before the singer joins. The voice takes over the melody, “dancing” over two entire octaves. There are some difficulties to take into consideration when learning this song: the fast tempo with an abundant French text, the ability to maneuver throughout a large range quickly, and only having a few measures of rest between sections of lengthy singing. This would be a perfect finale in a set of French songs or as an encore for a recital.

Seize ans!

Publication Date: 1864

Publisher: Paris: E. Gérard & Cie

Poet: Louis Pomey

Key: A \flat major

Range: C4–C6

Tessitura: G4–D5

Tempo: Allegretto

Level: Advanced

Voice Type: Soprano or Mezzo soprano

Source(s): Classical Vocal Reprints: 12 Mazurkas for Voice and Piano; Classical Vocal Reprints:

13 Songs

A girl of sixteen finds her new sense of freedom exhilarating. In this suggestive poem, the young girl is intoxicated by dancing and potential love interests, but in the end the waltz wins her heart. This first mazurka is based on Chopin's Op. 50, No. 2. The vocal line is taken almost directly from the piano melody in the original composition (as you will see in the other mazurkas) with only a few minor rhythmic changes, some additional notes in the melody to accommodate text, and some added phrases for the "la, la, la..." sections. Chopin's waltz melody pairs wonderfully with this text as it depicts the young girl dancing from party to party without a care. As with most of Chopin's works, Viardot has not excluded the occasional flourish of melismas in her renditions of these mazurkas.

Aime-moi

Publication Date: 1864

Publisher: Paris: E. Gérard & Cie

Poet: Louis Pomey

Key: A major

Range: B3–C6

Tessitura: E4–D5

Tempo: Allegro vivace

Level: Advanced

Voice Type: Soprano or Mezzo soprano

Source(s): Classical Vocal Reprints: 12 Mazurkas for Voice and Piano; 13 Songs

Based on Chopin's Op. 33, No. 2, Viardot extracted the repeated sequential material at the end of Chopin's mazurka and positions it as the introduction of her arrangement. Since much of the original composition consists of many repeated phrases, Viardot added embellishments in

the vocal line and placed the melody back and forth between the voice and piano. The text suggests a sort of “cat and mouse” game of emotions and goes hand in hand with Chopin’s use of dynamic contrast of repeated material. The difficulty in this song lies in the abundant, fast-paced French text and the large vocal range (over two octaves). This would be a great final song in a recital set as it has many different moments to show off various virtuosic skills.

Plainte d’amour

Publication Date: 1864

Publisher: Paris: E. Gérard & Cie

Poet: Louis Pomey

Key: A \flat major

Range: B \flat 3–A \flat 5

Tessitura: F4–C5

Tempo: Tempo di mazurka

Level: Advanced

Voice Type: Mezzo soprano

Source(s): Classical Vocal Reprints: 12 Mazurkas for Voice and Piano; Classical Vocal Reprints:

13 Songs

The sense of rubato is important in this arrangement of Chopin’s Op. 6, No. 1 with the continuous movement of the melody, resulting in breathing complications. Depicting longing and sadness, the text is full of the torment of wanting love and happiness but the inability to find it. The vocal line strays from the melody at times with outbursts of agony. Viardot composed a cadenza incorporating descending chromaticism into the final verse.

Coquette

Publication Date: 1864

Publisher: Paris: E. Gérard & Cie

Poet: Louis Pomey

Key: F major

Range: B3–C6

Tessitura: C4–D5

Tempo: Allegro brillante

Level: Advanced

Voice Type: Mezzo soprano

Source(s): Classical Vocal Reprints: 12 Mazurkas for Voice and Piano

Chopin's Op. 7, No. 1 was perfectly combined with this particularly flirtatious text. Someone has fallen in love with one rather flirtatious young woman and loves only her. It seems the young woman might have eyes for others but continues to tease. In her rendition, Viardot changed the rhythms (or rather delayed them) in one section to accentuate the flirty nature of the song. She also added a few melismatic cadenzas, depicting exasperated sighs. The difficulties in this song lie in the rhythmic and intervallic jerkiness of the melody. At first glance, you would not think this mazurka would make sense as a song but, along with the poetry, it would be a charming addition to a recital.

L'Oiselet

Publication Date: 1864

Publisher: Paris: E. Gérard & Cie

Poet: Louis Pomey

Key: A minor

Range: E4–B5

Tessitura: E4–E5

Tempo: Lento

Level: Advanced

Voice Type: Soprano or Mezzo soprano

Source(s): Classical Vocal Reprints: 12 Mazurkas for Voice and Piano

A little bird, alone, mourns for her captive mate. She cannot find joy in the arrival of spring and the loveliness around her. In Chopin's Op. 68, No. 2, the heartbreaking melody is ripe with trills amongst a double harmonic minor scale (which includes a raised 4th). Viardot held true to Chopin's original melody but added a long cadenza resembling a bird call before the final reiteration of the melody.

La Fête

Publication Date: 1865

Publisher: Paris: E. Gérard & Cie

Poet: Louis Pomey

Key: E minor

Range: D#4–B5

Tessitura: E4–E5

Tempo: Allegretto

Level: Advanced

Voice Type: Soprano or Mezzo soprano

Source(s): Classical Vocal Reprints: 12 Mazurkas for Voice and Piano

As the town is preparing for a festival, a woman adds the finishing touches to her outfit to catch the eye of the one she adores. They dance into the night, full of joy and pleasure. As the dance comes to a close, he escorts her home. Viardot based this arrangement on more than one of Chopin's mazurkas: Op. 6, No. 4 and Op. 7, No 5. As the end of the song draws near, she added outbursts of ecstasy in the forms of a cadenza, a sustained *messa di voce*, and a sustained trill. This song is full of technical opportunities for more advanced singers to show their expertise.

Faible cœur!

Publication Date: 1865

Publisher: Paris: E. Gérard & Cie

Poet: Louis Pomey

Key: F minor

Range: C4–B♭ 5

Tessitura: F4–F5

Tempo: Allegretto

Level: Advanced

Voice Type: Soprano or Mezzo soprano

Source(s): Classical Vocal Reprints: 12 Mazurkas for Voice and Piano

In this tragic poem, a suffering heart and agony leads to hopelessness and death. This song was arranged from Chopin's Op. 7, No. 3. Viardot divided the melody between the voice and the piano and added her signature trills, cadenzas, and many moments of *messa di voce*. She also elongated Chopin's original composition with some repeated melodic material to accommodate for the large amount of poetry.

La jeune fille

Publication Date: 1865

Publisher: Paris: E. Gérard & Cie

Poet: Louis Pomey

Key: C major

Range: C4–A5

Tessitura: A4–D5

Tempo: Allegro

Level: Advanced

Voice Type: Soprano or Mezzo soprano

Source(s): Classical Vocal Reprints: 12 Mazurkas for Voice and Piano

In this song, a young girl muses on the ideas of being young and pretty compared to being only a “simple girl.” Chopin’s Op. 24, No. 2 is a perfect source for this text. It is as if the melody is just spouting off ideas as they come. Interestingly, Viardot did something different with this mazurka. Instead of putting Chopin’s right-hand melody in the voice, she kept the piano composition as the accompaniment, placed some of the original material in the voice but mainly wrote a new melody. The difficulties of this song lie in the fast-paced French text alongside the large intervallic leaps. It would serve as an interesting addition to any French set on a recital.

Berceuse

Publication Date: 1865

Publisher: Paris: E. Gérard & Cie

Poet: Louis Pomey

Key: C major

Range: D4–G5

Tessitura: F4–D5

Tempo: Andantino

Level: Advanced

Voice Type: Soprano or Mezzo soprano

Source(s): Classical Vocal Reprints: 12 Mazurkas for Voice and Piano

This lullaby, sung by a mother to her child, touches upon the pains of her husband being away at war. The delicate nature of Chopin's Op. 33, No. 3, with its rocking melody, weaves perfectly into this heartbreaking poetry. Viardot did not transpose the original material, keeping the quiet melody in the vulnerable upper passaggio of the voice, accentuating the poignant text. To sing this as a quiet lullaby, as it is written, requires a singer with a well-practiced, delicate head voice.

La Danse

Publication Date: 1865

Publisher: Paris: E. Gérard & Cie

Poet: Louis Pomey

Key: G major

Range: C4–A5

Tessitura: E4–E5

Tempo: Allegro vivace

Level: Advanced

Voice Type: Soprano or Mezzo soprano

Source(s): Classical Vocal Reprints: 12 Mazurkas for Voice and Piano

For a young person, a ball is one of the biggest joys in life; dancing until dawn without care of the ensuing headache that will come the following day. This text highlights the playfulness of Chopin's Op. 50, No. 1 with its sweeping syncopated melody. Viardot kept the original melodic material in the vocal line throughout most of the song but also treated the voice as an obbligato when the melody moves to the accompaniment. She also incorporated many descending melismas throughout, usually covering an octave or more. This would be a charming final song in a set on a recital with its flourishing ending.

Fleur desséchée

Publication Date: 1866

Publisher: Paris: E. Gérard & Cie

Poet: Translated into French by Louis Pomey

Key: C major

Range: B3–D5

Tessitura: C4–D5

Tempo: Andante mosso

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Mezzo soprano or Baritone

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: 12 Mélodies sur des Poésies Russes)

In Pomey's brilliant translation of the text by Pushkin, Viardot sets these beautiful words to an equally marvelous melody. An old, dried flower in a book brings curiosity and wonder to the finder. *Where did it come from? When? Who plucked this flower?* The melody sweeps, lusciously, throughout the text as if the dried flower is still so richly fragrant. This song truly lends itself to legato, passionate singing and would be a wonderful addition to a set of French songs on a recital. The text (and range) also lends itself to any voice type.

La mésange

Publication Date: 1866

Publisher: Paris: E. Gérard & Cie

Poet: Translated into French by Louis Pomey

Key: G major

Range: D4–G5

Tessitura: D4–D5

Tempo: Allegretto

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Any

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: 12 Mélodies sur des Poésies Russes)

A bird, chirping its song, brings news of the coming autumn. Viardot placed the role of the bird in the piano with quick, high, syncopated rhythms, while the vocal line sings a gentle, legato melody with a noticeable descending motif. This charming song would aid in teaching a singer to keep a consistent sound from the head voice and upper passaggio down to the middle voice. It would work well in a set of songs with a bird theme or seasonal theme.

Les ombre de minuit

Publication Date: 1866

Publisher: Paris: E. Gérard & Cie

Poet: Afanasy Feth (translated to French by Louis Pomey)

Key: E major

Range: C4–E5

Tessitura: C#4–C#5

Tempo: Andante mosso

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Mezzo soprano or Baritone

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: 12 Mélodies sur des Poésies Russes)

Nightmares, visions, and sounds in the middle of the night make for an eerie song.

Viardot placed Feth's poetry into a state of anxiety with the piano accompaniment in a constant whirl of 16th notes in the treble and brooding long tones in the bass. The vocal line is full of rises and falls in the melody and dynamic, providing unrest to the dreamer. There is difficulty in the octave (or more) leaps in the vocal line while maintaining continuity between different registers. This song would make a great addition to a recital with its spooky depictions.

Berceuse cosaque

Publication Date: 1866

Publisher: Paris: E. Gérard & Cie

Poet: Translated into French by Louis Pomey

Key: A minor

Range: A3–F#5

Tessitura: D4–E5

Tempo: Moderato

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Mezzo soprano

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: 12 Mélodies sur des Poésies Russes); Classical Vocal Reprints:

13 Songs

Berceuse cosaque (Cossack lullaby) is a lullaby a mother sings to calm her baby during frightening times, knowing her child will grow up into a violent future. This dark text is well-matched by Viardot's haunting melody, which flows in a rocking motion above a foreboding, plodding accompaniment. Throughout this song, the singer expresses many emotions (serenity, fear, sadness, comfort) dictated by changes in articulation, tempo, and rhythm. This would be a wonderful addition to a singer's repertoire list to showcase a large range of acting skills.

Évocation

Publication Date: 1866

Publisher: Paris: E. Gérard & Cie

Poet: Alexander Pushkin (translated to French by Louis Pomey)

Key: F minor

Range: B3–G5

Tessitura: C4–F5

Tempo: Allegro agitato

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Mezzo soprano

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: 12 Mélodies sur des Poésies Russes)

Pushkin's text of conjuration and summoning of the dead, translated to French by Louis Pomey, was set to agitated music in Viardot's *Évocation*. The vocal line begins each phrase of incantations as if breath is already gone and the use of syncopation results in an unsettling mood as the dead is trying to be raised. This song is full of drama, passion, and chaotic eeriness and would work well in a set about love and death on a recital.

Chant du soir

Publication Date: 1866

Publisher: Paris: E. Gérard & Cie

Poet: Afanasy Feth (translated to French by Louis Pomey)

Key: B♭ major

Range: B♭3–G5

Tessitura: F4–F5

Tempo: Andante

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or mezzo soprano

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: 12 Mélodies sur des Poésies Russes)

In this lullaby, a mother plays her lyre while singing this sweet text to her child at the end of the day. Unlike Viardot's other lullabies with dark texts, this was set to Afanasy Feth's quaint words describing the countryside, the birds, and the child's guardian angel. Viardot captured this text in a short, simple melody over a piano accompaniment that mimics the sound of a lyre. The difficulty in this melody lies in the large intervallic leaps and the quiet volume as the singer sails over the upper *passaggio*.

Les deux roses

Publication Date: 1866

Publisher: Paris: E. Gérard & Cie

Poet: Afanasy Feth (translated into French by Louis Pomey)

Key: G major

Range: F4–G5

Tessitura: G4–G5

Tempo: Allegretto

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: 12 Mélodies sur des Poésies Russes)

Two roses, picked in the morning dew, seem to look lovelier after the storm. This would be a wonderful song choice for a young soprano or tenor to aid in solidifying the head voice and the shift into the middle register from the head voice. Albeit a short song, its difficulties also lie in the gentle, quiet volume while floating in the upper register.

Aurore

Publication Date: 1866

Publisher: Paris: E. Gérard & Cie

Poet: Translated into French by Louis Pomey

Key: B major

Range: B3–F#5

Tessitura: D#4–D#5

Tempo: Andante mosso

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Mezzo soprano or Baritone

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: 12 Mélodies sur des Poésies Russes)

This is one of the more obscure texts Viardot set to music, as Feth's poetry is comprised of short observations instead of complete thoughts. Viardot also set the melody in short phrases,

but the tempo is slow and gives the singer a chance to achieve a wonderful legato line. It would be a perfect song to add to a recital with the themes of night, love, and tranquility.

Géorgienne

Publication Date: 1866

Publisher: Paris: E. Gérard & Cie

Poet: Alexander Pushkin (translated into French by Louis Pomey)

Key: G minor

Range: C4–E5

Tessitura: D4–Eb5

Tempo: Allegro

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Any

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: 12 Mélodies sur des Poésies Russes)

In this text, originally by Alexander Pushkin, someone is being reminded of their former life in the country of Georgia and is saddened by the happy memories. Viardot's musical transcription of this text is very clever with the incorporation of the lover singing the happy "old refrains of Georgia" in the accompaniment. When the vocal line enters, the melody is set in a more rubato and legato manner. These two differing melodic lines take their turns throughout the entirety of the song.

Le Rameau de Palestine

Publication Date: 1866

Publisher: Paris: E. Gérard & Cie

Poet: Mikhail Lermontov (translated into French by Louis Pomey)

Key: C major

Range: C4–F5

Tessitura: E4–C5

Tempo: Andante

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Any

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: 12 Mélodies sur des Poésies Russes)

This is one of the few instances in which Viardot used a text with religious references. Describing a palm branch on a withered tree near the banks of the Jordan river, the singer muses about what has taken place in the tree's long life. Viardot made use of rising chromaticism throughout this song to depict a sense of praise and glory. It would make a suitable song to work on solidifying the middle register in any voice type.

Chanson de la faucille

Publication Date: 1866

Publisher: Paris: E. Gérard & Cie

Poet: Aleksey Vasilievich Koltsov (translated into French by Louis Pomey)

Key: G minor

Range: D4–G5

Tessitura: D4–D5

Tempo: Allegretto

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Any

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: 12 Mélodies sur des Poésies Russes)

With images of lost love, mourning, and death, this sad text was set to a somewhat hurried melody. The singer plays the role of the narrator describing the situation of a young girl about to be married; the groom does not come. The melody incorporates sweeping, ascending patterns that result in a sense of breathlessness and worry. Viardot added a descending melisma toward the end to signify a death-cry. This would be an interesting addition to a song recital with themes of love, loss, and death.

L'orage

Publication Date: 1866

Publisher: Paris: E. Gérard & Cie

Poet: Alexander Pushkin (translated into French by Louis Pomey)

Key: C minor

Range: G2–F4

Tessitura: C3–D4

Tempo: Allegro moderato

Level: Advanced

Voice Type: Baritone

Source(s): imslp.org (Collections: 12 Mélodies sur des Poésies Russes)

Sheltering from the storm, they decide to drink their woes away. In the piano, Viardot placed a constant tremolo pattern to signify the brutal weather, giving the singer's melody a very ominous background. When the drinking begins, the mood lightens with a flourishing introduction in the piano which settles into a joyful lilt along with the melody. Viardot wrote the melody in the bass clef, leaving us to believe this song is to be sung by a male voice (most likely a baritone). A mezzo-soprano could sing this without difficulty in the octave above.

Sérénade florentine

Publication Date: 1878

Publisher: St Petersburg: A.F. Iogansen (Johansen). 1878

Poet: Giuseppe Tigri (translated into French by Louis Pomey)

Key: A minor

Range: E4–F#5

Tessitura: A4–E5

Tempo: Andantino

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): imslp.org (5 Canti popolari toscani); haithitrust.org (Poésies toscanes); Classical Vocal

Reprints: 13 songs

Wandering the street under a love interest's window as they sleep, the lovesick character professes their desire to see their beloved at the window. The text portrays a somewhat uncouth character with seedy intentions as the text makes it unclear if the feelings are mutual. The cautious melody paired with the quiet tip-toe nature of the accompaniment give this song a definite air of suspicion. There are a few moments of boisterous professions of love throughout the song. This would suit the tenor or soprano voice as the tessitura lies in the upper passaggio.

Canzonetta de concert

Publication Date: 1880

Publisher: Paris: Heugel & fils.

Poet: Louis Pomey

Key: F major; Eb major

Range: C4–A5; B♭3–G5

Tessitura: F4–G5; E♭4–F5

Tempo: Andante cantabile

Level: Advanced

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor; Mezzo soprano or Baritone

Source(s): imslp.org (Canzonetta de Concert) haithitrust.org (Canzonetta de concert)

This is Viardot's arrangement of the second movement of Haydn's *String Quartet in F Major* (Hob.III:17; Op.3 No.5). Like her other transcriptions from instrumental works to vocal works (as in Chopin's mazurkas), she placed most of the main melody in the vocal line and composed melismatic embellishments when the piano takes over the melody. This back-and-forth movement of the melody results in a beautiful duet between the voice and piano. Even though this is not a coloratura aria, the singer must be well-versed in coloratura singing to achieve the quick, delicate melismas throughout the song. Paired with Louis Pomey's passionate text of love and desire, this would be an audience favorite in a recital performance.

La main

Publication Date: 1880

Publisher: Paris: Heugel & fils

Poet: Henri Charles Read

Key: D major

Range: F♯4–G5

Tessitura: F♯4–E5

Tempo: Moderato

Level: Beginner

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): imslp.org (6 Mélodies et une havanaise); haithitrust.org (Le main)

This short text about the loveliness and elegance of the hand is met with Viardot's simplistic composition. She incorporated many ascending scales within the melody, often requiring the singer to work from the middle register to the upper passaggio. It would be suitable for a younger singer as it has a simple melody paired with a simple text.

Dernier aveu

Publication Date: 1880

Publisher: Paris: Heugel & fils

Poet: Theophile Gautier

Key: B \flat major

Range: D4–G5

Tessitura: F4–F5

Tempo: Andante

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): imslp.org (6 Mélodies et une havanaise); haithitrust.org (Dernier aveu)

Gautier's poetry of a final confession before death takes over is set to a gorgeous collaboration between the piano and voice in Viardot's song. Even though the text is about death, it is set in a major key, but Viardot brilliantly added minor seconds and dissonances throughout to signify that death is not far away. The reminiscence of love and desire is set in a dream-like manner with pauses in the vocal melody that sometimes sweep up and never seem to finish. This

would be a beautiful and well-loved addition to a song recital about love and death, but it would be necessary for the singer to have a solid background in legato singing.

J'en mourrai! (Morirò – Italian text)

Publication Date: 1880

Publisher: Paris: Heugel & fils

Poet: Victor Wilder

Key: E minor

Range: D#4–G5

Tessitura: E4– F#5

Tempo: Agitato

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): imslp.org (6 Mélodies et une havanaise); haithitrust.org (J'en mourrai!: toscane)

Viardot's interpretation fits the dramatic text of Victor Wilder, resulting in a song of revenge, rage, and despair. The text "*J'en mourrai...*" (I will die...) is repeated at the start of each verse, giving the character a sense of complete madness. The melody will aid in solidifying register changes between the upper and lower passaggi as Viardot incorporated descending scales and octaves. This would bring some fiery rage and passion to a song recital.

Haï luli!

Publication Date: 1880

Publisher: Paris: Heugel & fils

Poet: Xavier de Maistre

Key: G minor

Range: F4–G5

Tessitura: G4– E5

Tempo: Andante

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Mezzo-soprano or Soprano

Source(s): imslp.org (6 Mélodies et une havanaise); haithitrust.org (Haï luli!); Songs and Duets of Garcia, Malibran and Viardot

This would likely be the most well-known song of Pauline Viardot, and perhaps the most beautiful and heartbreaking. A girl sits at her spinning wheel awaiting her beloved, while imagining what she would do if she were ever betrayed by him. Within the three verses, the mood becomes more intense and distraught. Viardot did not make these three verses completely strophic. She changed the accompaniment (quite drastically) for each verse and the melodic climax ends up higher each time. It is always a beautiful addition to a recital and is a great crowd pleaser.

Gentilles hirondelles

Publication Date: 1880

Publisher: Paris: Heugel & fils

Poet: Victor Wilder

Key: A minor

Range: E4–A5

Tessitura: E4–E5

Tempo: Allegretto

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): imslp.org (6 Mélodies et une havanaise); haithitrust.org (Gentilles hirondelles)

This charming text of searching for a lost loved-one was beautifully set by Viardot in minor and major modes. Each of the two strophic verses begin in a minor key as the songbirds are being told to search for the missing lover. The singer moves dreamily into a major key as hopes (somewhat delusional) of reuniting fill their head. The very end of the song concludes in that minor mode, giving the listener a sense of foreboding and hopelessness. This would be most suitable for a tenor or soprano voice as the melody sits in the upper passaggio and head voice. Even in the lower key, a mezzo-soprano or baritone would need to have a well-established, soaring head voice.

Chanson mélancolique

Publication Date: 1880

Publisher: Paris: Heugel & fils

Poet: Armand Silvestre

Key: A minor

Range: G#4–G5

Tessitura: A4–E5

Tempo: Andante

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): imslp.org (6 Mélodies et une havanaise); haithitrust.org (Chanson mélancolique)

Aptly titled, this song of melancholy describes two people living near one another but on two separate paths of life, never experiencing their destined love for one another. Viardot set this text to a somewhat simplistic melody and accompaniment with a sense of sadness but

incorporated occasional dissonances that pull out a sense of desire and longing within. This would, undoubtedly, be a favorite on a recital (for the singer and the listener).

Havanaise, thème populaire

Publication Date: 1880

Publisher: Paris: Heugel & fils

Poet: Louis Pomey

Key: D major

Range: E4–B5

Tessitura: F#4–F#5

Tempo: Moderato

Level: Advanced

Voice Type: Soprano

Source(s): imslp.org (6 Mélodies et une havanaise); haithitrust.org (Havanaise: thème populaire)

This theme and variation is a perfect encore for an advanced singer and would send the audience to their feet. The simple text of love was set to a luxurious and passionate melodic theme. Viardot turned the theme into two variations; the first at a faster tempo with sixteenth-note melismas incorporated into the melody; the second at an even faster tempo with constant sixteenth-note triplet melismas encompassing the entire range of the melody, incorporating difficult chromaticism and off-beats. An advanced singer is required to showcase this level of virtuosity in the voice. Viardot truly incorporated her love of coloratura in this brilliant song.

Sylvie

Publication Date: 1884

Publisher: Paris: au Ménéstrel (Henri Heugel).

Poet: Nicolas Boileau

Key: Eb major

Range: Bb3–C5

Tessitura: Eb4–C5

Tempo: Andante

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Mezzo soprano or Baritone

Source(s): imslp.org (6 Mélodies. Deuxième série); haithitrust.org (Sylvie)

In Boileau's text, a scorned lover is flooded with memories of a happier time. Viardot based the juxtaposition of happy memories and disheartening reality in the piano accompaniment. There are dense, rich chords within the accompaniment as the singer reminisces, but when reality comes into view the accompaniment becomes sparse and almost colorless. The two verses are through composed with the only repeated melodic material coinciding with the last two lines of each verse (which consist of the same text). This is a very satisfying song for any singer and would make a fine addition to a recital.

Berceuse

Publication Date: 1884

Publisher: Paris: au Ménéstrel (Henri Heugel).

Poet: Auguste de Châtillon

Key: G major

Range: D4–E5

Tessitura: D4–D5

Tempo: Moderato

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): imslp.org (6 Mélodies. Deuxième série); haithitrust.org (Berceuse)

With a text by Auguste de Châtillon, Viardot gave us another lullaby, but this time sung to a reluctant child. This lullaby is a bit more playful than her previous ones with its slightly detached rhythms and fast-paced text promising gifts and animals if the child will just go to sleep. The difficulties in this song for the singer lie in the quick text and detached manner that seem to go against the legato nature of French *mélodies*. The small range is suitable for any voice type, depending on the chosen key.

Sérénade

Publication Date: 1884

Publisher: Paris: au Ménéstrel (Henri Heugel).

Poet: Théophile Gautier

Key: F minor

Range: C3–F4

Tessitura: F3–C4

Tempo: Moderato

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Baritone or Contralto

Source(s): imslp.org (6 Mélodies. Deuxième série); haithitrust.org (Sérénade)

Viardot's transcriptions of Chopin's mazurkas are not the only piano pieces she set to voice. In contrast, the vocal composition came first in this case with her Sérénade. A year after the vocal version was published, she published a piano arrangement of the same melody and

incorporated an abundance of virtuosic flourishes throughout. In the song, the text by Gautier paints the picture of a man at the foot of a balcony calling up to his lover to throw down her hair so he may climb up; a nod to the story of Rapunzel. She used ascending patterns throughout the vocal melody soaring over an enthusiastic accompaniment. This was written in bass clef for baritone or contralto.

Le miroir

Publication Date: 1884

Publisher: Paris: au Ménéstrel (Henri Heugel).

Poet: Louis Pomey (translated to French from a text by Alexander Pushkin)

Key: D \flat major

Range: C4–G \sharp 5

Tessitura: A \flat 4–E5

Tempo: Andante tranquillo

Level: Advanced

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): imslp.org (6 Mélodies. Deuxième série); haithitrust.org (Le miroir)

In this text, a woman hands over her mirror to Cytherea (Aphrodite) since her vanity spoiled her path to love. Viardot composed a slow, dramatic melody over a sweeping, dense accompaniment. She noted in the publication that this is meant for soprano or tenor voices, but it could easily be managed by a mezzo-soprano in the same key. This would be an interesting addition to a recital about love or lost love even though the singer finds the fault is their own.

Aimez-moi

Publication Date: 1886

Publisher: Paris: Au Ménéstrel. Henri Heugel

Poet: Original texts from *Chansons du XVe siècle*, published by Gaston Paris; French transcriptions by Louis Pomey

Key: C minor

Range: C4–Eb5

Tessitura: C4–C5

Tempo: Andante

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Any

Source(s): imslp.org (6 Chansons du XVe siècle)

In the next three compositions, Viardot used medieval texts with updated translations by Louis Pomey. *Aimez-moi* consists of a passionate love text accompanied by a mesmerizing song. The meter switches between 3/4 and 4/4 throughout the song at a slow tempo while the piano accompaniment plays sustained open chords as somewhat of a drone, only incorporating a small melodic line when the voice is idle.

Vous parlez mal de mon ami

Publication Date: 1886

Publisher: Paris: Au Ménéstrel. Henri Heugel

Poet: Original texts from *Chansons du XVe siècle*, published by Gaston Paris; French transcriptions by Louis Pomey

Key: C minor

Range: D4–E5

Tessitura: Eb4–C5

Tempo: Vivace

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Any

Source(s): imslp.org (6 Chansons du XVe siècle)

This fiery text is a message to “mind your own business” and leave me to love who I choose. Like the first song in the set, the accompaniment is rather simplistic while the melody is being sung, but becomes very engaged when the vocal line stops, echoing the scolding sentiments. This song would suit any voice type and would make a fun addition to a song recital.

Chanson de l'infante

Publication Date: 1886

Publisher: Paris: Au Ménestrel. Henri Heugel

Poet: Original texts from *Chansons du XVe siècle*, published by Gaston Paris; French transcriptions by Louis Pomey

Key: A minor

Range: C4–E5

Tessitura: E4–E5

Tempo: Moderato

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Mezzo Soprano or baritone

Source(s): imslp.org (6 Chansons du XVe siècle); Classical Vocal Reprints: 13 Songs

Unlike the others in this set, the original text is Spanish instead of French. Viardot, having strong Spanish roots, set this song in a more Spanish style. In the text, the queen learns of her son's death, possibly ending their family's reign, and sings of her great misfortune. The three verses are set in a strophic manner, but Viardot incorporated dynamic contrast and slight changes in the piano accompaniment to give new meaning to each verse. This melancholy song is extremely dramatic and very enjoyable to sing. It would be a favorite on a recital program.

Le Roussignolet

Publication Date: 1886

Publisher: Paris: Au Ménéstrel. Henri Heugel

Poet: Original texts from *Chansons du XVe siècle*, published by Gaston Paris; French transcriptions by Louis Pomey

Key: D minor

Range: E4–F#5

Tessitura: F4–E5

Tempo: Andante

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type:

Other Instrument(s): Flute (Advanced)

Source(s): imslp.org (6 Chansons du XVe siècle)

In this song, there are three very distinct characters: the voice, the piano, and the flute (the nightingale). Viardot brilliantly wove the virtuosic flute obbligato within the slow, legato melody of the voice. The piano often echoes the calls of the nightingale. The difficulties in this song, besides finding a wonderful flautist, do not lie in the vocal melody, but rather in putting the

slow melody with the fast-paced calls of the flute. Timing is key throughout. This would be a fantastic song to incorporate into any performance.

Désespoir

Publication Date: 1886

Publisher: Paris: Enoch frères & Costallat

Poet: Louis Pomey

Key: C minor

Range: D4–A♭5

Tessitura: E♭4–E♭5

Tempo: Allegro appassionato

Level: Advanced

Voice Type: Any

Source(s): imslp.org (Désespoir); Haithi Trust (Désespoir)

This text of anger, mocking, and scorn is equally matched by the music Viardot set. It gives the sensationalism of a rage aria in song form. The singer should have a solid level of stamina to keep the fiery momentum throughout the entirety of the song. A soprano or tenor voice would suit this song best, but it is not out of reach for a mezzo-soprano or a baritone with a strong upper register. This would make an excellent addition to a song recital and would leave the audience at the edge of their seats.

Lamento

Publication Date: 1886

Publisher: Paris: Enoch frères & Costallat

Poet: Théophile Gautier

Key: B minor

Range: B3–G5

Tessitura: G4–E5

Tempo: Andante

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Mezzo soprano or Baritone

Source(s): imslp.org (Lamento) haithitrust.org (Lamento)

Gautier's somber poetry is met by a mournful melody consisting of descending lines portraying sighs of hopelessness. The two verses used are in a strophic format, but each verse has its separate characteristics that have been changed with dynamic differences. The accompaniment depicts the flowing of water to reflect upon the last line of each verse (which are the same); wanting to go to the sea to end it all. This is a heartbreakingly beautiful song that would be perfect for medium voices to stretch the ends of the lower and upper registers.

A la fontaine

Publication Date: 1887

Publisher: Paris: au Ménéstrel (Heugel & Cie)

Poet: Eugène Hubert

Key: E major

Range: F#4–G#5

Tessitura: F#4–F#5

Tempo: Allegretto

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): imslp.org (6 Mélodies, VWV 1133-1137/1176); haithitrust.org (À la fontaine)

This charming melody is full of sweeping melismas in the piano accompaniment and quick grace notes in the vocal melody. It pairs nicely with the sweet text about a young girl, gazing into a well, daydreaming of love and the beauty around her. With a range just over an octave, this song would suit a young singer and allow them to exercise agility in a smaller format with grace notes in the melody instead of melismas.

Belle Yoli

Publication Date: 1887

Publisher: Paris: au Ménestrel (Heugel & Cie)

Poet: Roger de Beauvoir

Key: G major

Range: F#4–A5

Tessitura: G4–E5

Tempo: Allegretto

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): imslp.org (6 Mélodies, VWV 1133-1137/1176); haithitrust.org (Belle yoli)

If there was ever a song to portray pure romance, look no further. This text by Roger de Beauvoir is full of images of nature in comparison to love. In nature, things change (like strawberries and roses); but the desire for love to stay the same forever is strong. Viardot mostly used the same melodic material for all three verses, but she incorporated slight changes in key and melody to allow for variation. The piano accompaniment also changes quite a bit verse to

verse. This would be a wonderful, rich addition to a recital and would allow a singer to display their legato phrasing capabilities.

Ici-bas tous les lilas meurent

Publication Date: 1887

Publisher: Paris: au Ménéstrel (Heugel & Cie)

Poet: Sully Prudhomme

Key: F minor

Range: F4–C5

Tessitura: F4–C5

Tempo: Andante

Level: Beginner

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): imslp.org (6 Mélodies, VWV 1133-1137/1176); haithitrust.org (Ici-bas tous les lilas meurent)

Most singers know this title under the name of Gabriel Fauré. Whereas his composition takes on a definite sadness, Viardot utilized major key changes within the minor melody to uplift the somber text. It takes on a somewhat mesmerizing quality with the very small vocal range and the repetitive nature of the notes. This would be a perfect song for a young singer, new to French *mélodie*, to begin their studies.

Sérénade à Rosine

Publication Date: 1887

Publisher: Paris: au Ménéstrel (Heugel & Cie)

Poet: Louis Pomey

Key: A major

Range: F#4–A5

Tessitura: A4–E5

Tempo: Allegretto

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): imslp.org (6 Mélodies, VWV 1133-1137/1176); haithitrust.org (Sérénade à Rosine)

Viardot set Louis Pomey's romantic words to a charmingly graceful melody. One could speculate that this text is a somewhat reimagined scene from Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* of Count Almaviva singing to Rosina with the mention of "Rosine," "Don Bartolo," and "Marceline." It would make sense with Viardot's prolific opera career and her many portrayals of Rosina on the stage. Depending on the chosen key, this would be a wonderful song for a young singer as the range is not too large and the text is not too difficult.

Madrid

Publication Date: 1887

Publisher: Paris: au Ménestrel (Heugel & Cie)

Poet: Alfred de Musset

Key: D minor

Range: D4–F5

Tessitura: D4–D5

Tempo: Tempo di Bolero

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Mezzo soprano or Baritone

Source(s): imslp.org (6 Mélodies, VWV 1133-1137/1176); haithitrust.org (Madrid); Classical

Vocal Reprints: 13 Songs

One of Viardot's more well-known compositions, *Madrid* is a lively song in the bolero style, comparing the city in Spain to a royal princess. The text, by Alfred de Musset, truly paints a colorful and dynamic picture of the city in the eyes of one who loves it. Viardot's sparkling melody is full of articulated lines and descending melismas. This song would be appropriate for a singer who is comfortable with the French language and would be great for practicing agility (without the overwhelming coloratura of an opera aria). *Madrid* would be a wonderful final song on a recital and leave the audience wanting more.

Les filles des Cadix

Publication Date: 1887

Publisher: Paris: au Ménestrel (Heugel & Cie)

Poet: Alfred de Musset

Key: F major

Range: C4–G5

Tessitura: F4–D5

Tempo: Vivace

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano

Source(s): imslp.org (6 Mélodies, VWV 1133-1137/1176); haithitrust.org (Les filles des Cadix);

Songs and Duets of García, Malibran and Viardot

As in the song *Madrid*, this song is also set in Spain, but in the city of Cádiz. The text describes a set of friends with flirtatious tendencies, but only when they choose. Viardot

composed two verses of de Musset's three-verse poem and set them in a strophic manner. The challenges of this song lie in the triplet grace-note features, upper passaggio trills, and quick French text. It would be a fun song for a young singer comfortable with the French language.

Scène d'Hermione

Publication Date: 1887

Publisher: Paris: au Ménéstrel (Heugel)

Poet: Taken from Jean Racine's *Andromaque*

Key: Eb minor

Range: C4–Bb5

Tessitura: Eb4–Eb5

Tempo: Andante; Allegro; Allegro vivace

Level: Advanced

Voice Type: Soprano

Source(s): imslp.org (Scène d'Hermione); haithitrust.org (Scène d'Hermione)

This text, taken from Jean Racine's tragedy, *Andromaque*, is a perfect backdrop for a rage aria. Viardot captured the venomous, irate words of Hermione and turned them into a fully imagined opera scene. With almost a two-octave vocal range, this would be a suitable piece for a singer who has had extensive training in vocal technique and acting; the piano accompaniment would require an equally matched pianist. It would make a perfect addition to a program of opera scenes (as in a college-level opera workshop class). Viardot specifically wrote this for the soprano voice, but it would also be suitable for a mezzo-soprano with a strong upper range.

La Marquise

Publication Date: 1889

Publisher: Paris: Durand et Schœnewerk

Poet: Maurice Vaucaire

Key: A \flat major

Range: Eb 4 –F 5

Tessitura: Ab 4 –F 5

Tempo: Andante

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): haithitrust.org (La marquise)

The daily work of the nobility seems exhausting and trivial in this text. Viardot set the words in a very matter-of-fact manner that gives the character a sense of boredom. With its smaller vocal range, this would be a suitable song for a young soprano, but the difficulty would lie in the French text. There are many words in this song that are not standard in the French vocal repertoire.

Le Rêve de Jésus

Publication Date: 1890

Publisher: Paris: Durand et Schœnewerk

Poet: Stéphane Bordèse

Key: E major

Range: Eb 4 –F 5

Tessitura: F 4 –F 5

Tempo: Andante

Level: Advanced

Voice Type: Soprano or Mezzo soprano

Source(s): imslp.org (Le rêve de Jésus)

In one of Viardot's very few sacred compositions, this text by Bordèse tells a story of a young Jesus, looking for comfort from his mother after a nightmarish vision of his future crucifixion. We do not often imagine Jesus as a child (only as a newborn and then a man); Viardot truly captured the nature of everything this text has to offer. Moments of fear are accompanied by chromaticism and block chords, while moment of serenity and tenderness are accompanied by legato melodies in the voice and gentle, sweeping melismas in the piano. Even though this is not from an opera, it would work very well in a program of scenes.

Premier trouble

Publication Date: 1892

Publisher: Paris: J. Hamelle

Poet: Louis Pomey

Key: A major

Range: E4–A5

Tessitura: E4–E5

Tempo: Andante

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): haithitrust.org (Premier trouble)

This text is full of passion for a possibly forbidden romance and Viardot set it, beautifully, to an equally passionate melody. Consisting of only three pages, the romance and

mystery pour out of every note in the voice. The piano almost acts as a constant heartbeat, quickening the pulse as excitement draws near. It would be a challenging piece for a young singer as it sits within the upper passaggio and includes quiet, sustained high notes, but it would be a stunning addition on a recital.

Divin sommeil

Publication Date: 1892

Publisher: Paris: J. Hamelle

Poet: Stéphane Bordèse

Key: D major

Range: E4–F#5

Tessitura: A4–E5

Tempo: Adagio

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Any

Source(s): haithitrust.org (Divin sommeil)

Another sacred text by Stéphane Bordèse about a young Jesus, sleeping in his mother's arms. Unlike the fearsome aspects in *Le Rêve de Jésus*, this song allows the child to slumber peacefully through the night until the morning light awakes him to his mother's smiling face. Viardot captured the image of a sleeping baby with the use of a single note sung over a simplistic piano accompaniment, so as not to disturb anything. As the baby wakes up, the accompaniment becomes more active with sweeping, harp-like motion and the vocal melody slowly ascends to the top of the staff, giving off an air of majesty and wonderment. This would be best suited to a high voice as the melody soars to the top of the staff but could be achieved by a lower voice with a strong upper passaggio.

La Japonaise

Publication Date: 1892

Publisher: Paris: J. Hamelle

Poet: Abel de Montferrier

Key: F major

Range: F4–F5

Tessitura: G4–E5

Tempo: Moderato

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): haithitrust.org (La Japonaise)

This text, by Abel de Montferrier, is about a young Japanese noblewoman in her garden as her own beauty is compared to the nature around her. Viardot used exoticism to portray a foreign quality to the French text. The difficulties lie in the fast-paced, short phrases that sit in the upper passaggio. This would work best in the soprano or tenor voice as it glides atop a rather active piano accompaniment.

La Vierge au lavoir

Publication Date: 1892

Publisher: Paris: J. Hamelle

Poet: Gabriel Vicaire

Key: A minor; A major

Range: E4–F#5

Tessitura: A4–E5

Tempo: Andantino

Level: Any

Voice Type: Intermediate

Source(s): haithitrust.org (La vierge au lavoir)

Another sacred text, this time by Gabriel Vicaire, we find Mary and Joseph doing their daily chores as the angels guard the baby Jesus. The song begins rather simply in the rising melody over a chordal piano accompaniment. As the text turns to more divine matters before the fourth verse, the rich sonorities of the sweeping accompaniment reinforce the beauty in the words as the melody rises to the top of the staff. This song would be suitable for any voice type and with its small vocal range, would lend itself to a younger singer.

Suzon, Suzette

Publication Date: 1892

Publisher: Paris: J. Hamelle

Poet: Victor Hugo

Key: G major

Range: D4–E5

Tessitura: D4–D5

Tempo: Allegretto

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Any

Source(s): haithitrust.org (Suzon, Suzette)

This comical text by Victor Hugo was set to a bouncing, bumbling vocal melody. The poor fool cannot choose between the two women he adores, and it is torturous! Any voice type

would be able to sing this song as its range is slightly more than an octave, but it would be comedically suited to the baritone timbre. Since the context of this song is not an appropriate topic for this day in age, it would still make for a delightful, joking, light-hearted addition in a song recital.

Grands oiseaux blancs

Publication Date: 1893

Publisher: Paris: Enoch frères & Costallat; London: Enoch & Sons

Poet: Louis Pomey

Key: Eb major

Range: D4–G5

Tessitura: G4–Eb5

Tempo: Moderato

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): Classical Vocal Reprints: 13 songs

A mother's cry to the great white birds to protect their children on their journey across the sea. This dramatic musical setting of Louis Pomey's text pulls at the heartstrings of any parent who has worried about the safety of their children. The beginning of the song seems like a prayer, a plea, with a simpler melody over a plain accompaniment. As the text changes, the music follows suit. The piano accompaniment becomes almost an entire song of its own under a beautiful, legato melody in the voice. The text comes back to the opening material and the accompaniment adds virtuosic ascending arpeggios between pleas, sending them up to the great

white birds in the skies. This would be a wonderful song for a young singer with a large voice; with the rich, sonorous accompaniment, the singer would not feel the need to hold back.

Les Attraits

Publication Date: 1893

Publisher: Paris: Enoch frères & Costallat, and London: Enoch & Sons

Poet: Anonymous

Key: E major

Range: E4–E5

Tessitura: G#4–C#5

Tempo: Allegretto tranquillo

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Any

Source(s): imslp.org (Les Attraits); haithitrust.org (Les attraits)

Allure and attraction serve a perfect topic in this pleasing, short melody. Viardot placed gentle sixteenth note figures in the piano accompaniment while the vocal melody consists of legato eighth note phrases within a small range suitable for any voice type. Even though this is considered a more intermediate song, it would be a perfect piece for a beginning singer who can hold their own on the melody (as the piano accompaniment does not play the melody with the singer).

Rossignol, rossignolet (Villanelle)

Publication Date: 1893

Publisher: Paris: Enoch frères & Costallat; London: Enoch & Sons.

Poet: Joseph Boulmier

Key: C major

Range: D4–G5

Tessitura: G4–E5

Tempo: Allegretto

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): imslp.org (Rossignol, rossignolet); haithitrust.org (Rossignol, rossignolet); Classical

Vocal Reprints: 13 Songs

As the title suggests, this song is about the sweet sounds of the nightingale. There are two characters within this piece: the singer who wants the nightingale to teach them to sing, and the nightingale, singing his song within the piano accompaniment. This would be a perfect song for a young soprano or tenor to aid in solidifying the *messa di voce* technique in various parts of the vocal range.

Chanson de mer

Publication Date: 1894

Publisher: Paris: Enoch frères & Costallat

Poet: Sully Prudhomme

Key: B major

Range: F#4–G#5

Tessitura: F#4–E5

Tempo: Allegro moderato

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): Classical Vocal Reprints: 13 Songs

This passionate, devotional love song compares the lover to the many magnificent aspects of the sea. Viardot placed the rolling waves of the sea in the piano accompaniment with constant sixteenth note figures and an ascending octave melody. The vocal line consists of a luxurious melody that becomes higher and more dramatic as the text goes by. It would be a wonderful selection for a singer with a large voice, allowing them to use it to its fullest and revel in the dramatic nature of this romantic song.

Bonjour mon cœur

Publication Date: 1895

Publisher: Paris: Enoch frères & Costallat

Poet: Pierre de Ronsard

Key: Eb major

Range: F4–G5

Tessitura: F4–Eb 5

Tempo: Allegretto

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): imslp.org (Bonjour mon cœur!); haithitrust.org (Bonjour mon coeur); Classical Vocal

Reprints: 13 Songs

This would be a wonderful choice for a young soprano or tenor; the range is not large, the text is not quick or abundant, and the singer can focus on breath line and phrasing throughout the short song. I marked this song “intermediate” because of the nature of the piano accompaniment. It does not play the melody with the singer; there is a definite second character in the piano part

that might throw off a beginner, so the singer needs to have a firm grasp on melody and intonation. This would be a perfect song in an undergraduate senior recital.

Au jardin de mon père

Publication Date: 1899

Publisher: Paris: Eugène Fromont

Poet: from *Chansons du XVe siècle*, published by Gaston Paris

Key: E major

Range: C#4–F#5

Tessitura: E4–E5

Tempo: Allegretto

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Any

Source(s): Classical Vocal Reprints 13: Songs

This fifteenth century text, by an unknown author, was delightfully set with a vibrant piano accompaniment featuring sweeping melismas with a bouncy melodic vocal line. Viardot captured the charming nature of a young maiden in her father's garden, safe from harm. Since the text is much older, the singer must be careful to provide an updated translation and pronunciation with the older spellings of French words.

Chanson de la pluie

Publication Date: 1900

Publisher: Paris: Enoch & Cie, and London: Enoch & Sons

Poet: Ivan Turgenev

Key: C major

Range: B3–C6

Tessitura: E4–E5

Tempo: Andantino

Level: Advanced

Voice Type: Soprano

Source(s): haithitrust.org (Chanson de la pluie); Classical Vocal Reprints 13: Songs

At first glance of this song, one would believe this to be a sweet, simple, bouncy melody. Turning to the final page, it is anything but simple. This text, by her longtime friend Ivan Turgenev, depicts how the rain changes everything in nature. Viardot placed the raindrops in the short, staccato piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins in a more simplistic, almost flirtatious manner, but gets more intricate as the songs moves along. It finally ends with an extensive cadenza over the entire two-octave range, making this a very surprising (and charming) song. This would serve well as an encore in a recital setting for an advanced singer.

Poursuite

Publication Date: 1904

Publisher: Paris: “Auditorium Musical”, G. Miran, Editeur

Poet: Victor Hugo

Key: G major

Range: D4–A5

Tessitura: D4–E5

Tempo: Allegretto

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Soprano or Tenor

Source(s): haithitrust.org (Poursuite: poésie toscanne)

The text to this poem, fittingly titled “Pursuit,” is rife with almost an obsessive nature of the love interest; no matter what you do, I will be there. Viardot set this odd text with a bit of a jaunty, babbling, continuous melody (strophic with two verses) that makes it seem that nobody has a chance to interrupt the infatuated lover. This would suit a higher voice type and be fitting as a playful addition to a song recital.

Le vase brisé

Publication Date: 1904

Publisher: Paris: “Auditorium Musical”, G. Miran, Editeur

Poet: Sully Prudhomme

Key: F minor

Range: F4–F5

Tessitura: F4–F5

Tempo: Andante

Level: Intermediate

Voice Type: Any

Source(s): haithitrust.org (La vase brisé)

In this heartbreaking text by Sully Prudhomme, a crystal vase has a slight crack in it that nobody notices, but over time, leaks water until the plant shrivels up and dies. The cracked vase becomes a metaphor for a broken heart, which goes unnoticed over time. Viardot switched between F minor and F major throughout the song, using the major key to signify that the world passes by, not noticing the damage. This is truly a hidden gem in Viardot’s compositions and would make a gorgeous addition in a song recital for any voice type.

APPENDIX A: VOCAL ENSEMBLE WORKS (MORE THAN TWO VOICES)

Les trois belles demoiselles

Publisher: Paris: Au Ménestrel. Henri Heugel, 1886

Voicing: Trio of women's voices

Chœur bohémien: pour voix de femmes

Publisher: Paris: Enoch & Cie. London: Enoch & Sons, 1899

Voicing: Soprano solo with three-part women's chorus

Chœur des elfes

Publisher: Paris: Enoch & Cie., 1899

Voicing: For three women's voices with solo

Cendrillon

Publisher: Paris: "Auditorium Musical", G. Miran, 1904

Voicing: Opera in three acts

La Peronelle

Publisher: Paris: "Auditorium Musical", G. Miran, Editeur, 1904

Voicing: For three women's voices with solo

APPENDIX B: AN HOUR OF STUDY

Pauline Viardot wrote two volumes of exercises for the female voice titled, *Une heure d'étude* (An hour of study). Both volumes were adopted by the Paris National Conservatory of Music. Both volumes begin with long, sustained exercises and as the books go along, the exercises get faster with more melismas to teach solid techniques in melismas, coloratura, and trills.

APPENDIX C: MUSICAL WORKS DEDICATED TO PAULINE VIARDOT

- Casta diva (?) by Friderich Chopin (piano solo)
- Le prophète* (1849) by Giacomo Meyerbeer (opera)
- Orphée* (1859) adapted by Hector Berlioz (opera)
- Sapho* (1860) by Charles Gounod (opera)
- Alto Rhapsody (1870) by Johannes Brahms
- Boléro (1872) by Charles Gounod
- La brise from *Mélodies persanes*, Op.26 (1872) by Camille Saint-Saëns
- Barcarolle from *Trois melodies*, Op. 7 (1873) by Gabriel Fauré
- La bofetá (1873) by Fracisco Salas
- Marie-Magdeleine* (1873) by Jules Massenet (opera)
- Une nuit d'Orient (1876) by Edmond Membrée
- Samson et Dalila* (1877) by Camille Saint-Saëns (opera)
- Chanson du pêcheur (1877) by Gabriel Fauré
- Souvenir (1877) by Paul Lacôme d'Estalénx
- 6 Melodías* (1879) by Ruperto Chapí
- 5 Mélodies* (1880) by Johan Svendsen
- Liederkreis*, Op. 24 (1882) by Robert Schumann (written in 1840)
- La cloche* (1886) by Camille Saint-Saëns
- Ascanio* (1888) by Camille Saint-Saëns (opera)
- The Swan and the Skylark* (1894) by Arthur Goring Thomas

APPENDIX D: ROLES PERFORMED BY PAULINE VIARDOT¹

Role	Opera	Composer
Adina	L'Elisir d'Amore	Donizetti
Alina	Alina	Donizetti
Alceste	Alceste	Gluck
Alice	Robert le Diable	Meyerbeer
Amina	La Sonnambula	Bellini
Angiolina	La Cenerentola	Rossini
Arsace	Semiramide	Rossini
Azucena	Il Trovatore	Verdi
Bianca	Bianca e Gualtiero	Lvov
Desdemona	Otello	Rossini
Donna Anna	Don Giovanni	Mozart
Fidalma	Il Matrimonio Segreto	Cimarosa
Fidès	Le Prophète	Meyerbeer
Isabelle	Robert le Diable	Meyerbeer
Lady Macbeth	Macbeth	Verdi
Leonora	La Favorita	Donizetti
Leonora	Fidelio	Beethoven
Lucia	Lucia di Lammermoor	Donizetti
Maria	Maria di Rohan	Donizetti
Marie Madeleine	Marie Madeleine	Massenet
Norina	Don Pasquale	Donizetti
Norma	Norma	Bellini

¹ Kendall-Davies, *Life and Work of Pauline Viardot Garcia: The Years of Fame*, 593.

Ninetta	La Gazza Ladra	Rossini
Orazio	Gli Orazi	Cimarosa
Orféo	Orféo	Gluck
Orsini	Lucrezia Borgia	Donizetti
Romeo	I Capuletti e Montecchi	Bellini
Rosina	Il Barbiere di Siviglia	Rossini
Prima Donna	La Prova d'una Seria	Gnecco
Sapho	Sapho	Gounod
The Maid	The Maid of Artois	Balfe
Vielka	Der Feldlage	Meyerbeer
Zerlina	Don Giovanni	Mozart

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