

# 101 Most Beautiful Songs for Viola: A Comprehensive Guide

The viola, a beloved member of the string family, has captivated audiences for centuries with its warm, rich tone. From classical concertos to contemporary folk melodies, the viola's versatility shines through in a vast repertoire of captivating compositions. This comprehensive guide presents 101 of the most beautiful songs for viola, each carefully selected for its exceptional artistry, emotional depth, and enduring charm.

## Classical Masterpieces

1. **Bach Suite No. 6 in D Major, BWV 1012**: A cornerstone of the viola repertoire, this suite showcases Bach's genius with its intricate counterpoint and poignant melody.



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2. **Mozart Sinfonia Concertante for Violin and Viola in E-flat Major, K. 364**: A playful and elegant dialogue between the viola and violin, this concerto is a testament to Mozart's wit and musical brilliance.

3. **Brahms Sonata No. 1 in F Minor, Op. 120 No. 1:** A profound and passionate work, this sonata explores the viola's expressive range with its sweeping melodies and dramatic contrasts.
4. **Walton Viola Concerto:** A modern masterpiece, Walton's concerto is a virtuosic showcase that demands technical prowess and musical sensitivity.
5. **Shostakovich Sonata for Viola and Piano, Op. 147:** A haunting and introspective work, this sonata reveals the viola's somber and reflective side.

### **Romantic Era Gems**

6. **Schumann Märchenbilder, Op. 113:** A collection of four enchanting pieces, Schumann's Märchenbilder captures the wonder and magic of fairy tales with its lyrical melodies and evocative harmonies.
7. **Brahms Two Clarinet Sonatas, Op. 120:** Originally composed for clarinet, these sonatas have been beautifully adapted for the viola, presenting a rich and expressive dialogue between two beloved instruments.
8. **Franck Sonata in A Major for Violin and Piano:** Although primarily written for the violin, this sonata features a prominent viola part that adds warmth and depth to the ensemble.
9. **Dvořák String Quintet No. 3 in E-flat Major, Op. 97:** A soaring and lyrical masterpiece, this quintet highlights the viola's ability to blend seamlessly within a chamber ensemble.

10. **Fauré Élégie, Op. 24:** A poignant and serene meditation, Fauré's *Élégie* is a heartfelt expression of sorrow and remembrance.

### Contemporary Classics

11. **Hindemith Viola Sonata, Op. 11 No. 4:** A challenging and rewarding work, Hindemith's sonata pushes the viola's technical and expressive limits.

12. **Bartók Sonata for Solo Viola:** A masterpiece of twentieth-century music, Bartók's sonata combines complex rhythms and harmonies with folk elements.

13. **Crumb Sonata for Solo Cello:** Although originally written for cello, this sonata has been transcribed for viola, creating a haunting and atmospheric work.

14. **Tavener Viola Concerto:** A spiritual and evocative work, Tavener's concerto explores the viola's ability to evoke transcendence and inner peace.

15. **Adès Dark River:** A contemporary masterpiece, Adès' *Dark River* is a powerful and moving meditation on death and rebirth.

### Folk and Traditional Melodies

16. **Scarlatti Sonata in D Minor:** A lively and dance-like piece, Scarlatti's sonata captures the essence of Spanish folk music with its infectious rhythms and intricate embellishments.

17. **Vaughn Williams Suite for Viola and Piano:** A set of evocative pieces inspired by English folk songs, Vaughn Williams' suite showcases the

viola's lyrical and pastoral qualities.

18. **Dvořák Gypsy Melodies, Op. 55:** A collection of haunting and romantic melodies, Dvořák's Gypsy Melodies bring the vibrant rhythms of Eastern Europe to the viola.

19. **Bartók Hungarian Folksongs:** A diverse collection of traditional Hungarian folk melodies, Bartók's arrangements for viola are both authentic and virtuosic.

20. **Grainger Molly on the Shore:** A beloved Irish folk song, Grainger's arrangement for viola captures the spirit of the original melody with its evocative harmonies and lush orchestral accompaniment.

## Film and Television Scores

21. **Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5: Aria (Villa-Lobos):** This haunting and evocative melody from Villa-Lobos' suite has been featured in countless films and television shows.

22. **John Williams Schindler's List: Main Theme:** A poignant and unforgettable melody, Williams' theme captures the emotional weight and tragedy of Schindler's List.

23. **Max Richter "The Leftovers" Theme:** A haunting and introspective piece, Richter's theme perfectly captures the emotional journey of HBO's acclaimed series "The Leftovers."

24. **Ramin Djawadi Game of Thrones: The Rains of Castamere:** A powerful and foreboding melody, Djawadi's "The Rains of Castamere" has become an iconic part of the Game of Thrones soundtrack.

25. **Hans Zimmer Interstellar: Cornfield Chase**: A thrilling and ethereal piece, Zimmer's "Cornfield Chase" perfectly captures the sense of awe and wonder in Christopher Nolan's film Interstellar.

### **Modern Arrangements**

26. **Bach Air on the G String (arr. August Wilhelmj)**: A beautiful and haunting arrangement of Bach's famous air, Wilhelmj's transcription showcases the viola's expressive capabilities.

27. **Pachelbel Canon in D Major (arr. Alfred Reed)**: A timeless and elegant piece, Reed's arrangement of Pachelbel's Canon brings new depth and richness to the beloved melody.

28. **Piazzolla Oblivion (arr. Leonid Desyatnikov)**: A passionate and evocative tango, Desyatnikov's arrangement of Piazzolla's Oblivion captures the raw emotion and energy of the original.

29. **Led Zeppelin Stairway to Heaven (arr. David Hurwitz)**: A legendary rock anthem transformed into a haunting and ethereal piece for viola, Hurwitz's arrangement breathes new life into this classic.

30. **Radiohead Creep (arr. Chris Wood)**: A hauntingly beautiful arrangement of Radiohead's iconic song, Wood's transcription captures the emotional intensity of the original in a new and unexpected way.

### **Jazz and Popular Music**

31. **Miles Davis So What (arr. Wynton Marsalis)**: A beloved jazz standard, Marsalis' arrangement for viola translates Davis' iconic melody into a sophisticated and soulful piece.

32. **John Lennon Imagine (arr. David Juritz)**: A timeless classic reimagined for viola, Juritz's arrangement captures the peace and beauty of Lennon's original.

33. **Bob Dylan Blowin' in the Wind (arr. Dave Morgenstern)**: A poignant and socially conscious anthem, Morgenstern's arrangement for viola gives new depth and meaning to Dylan's lyrics.

34. **The Beatles Eleanor Rigby (arr. Arthur LaBarbera)**: A haunting and evocative ballad, LaBarbera's arrangement for viola brings out the emotional weight and richness of The Beatles' classic.

35. **David Bowie Life on Mars? (arr. David Hurwitz)**: A surreal and enigmatic song, Hurwitz's arrangement for viola captures the otherworldly atmosphere of Bowie's original.

### **World Music Inspirations**

36. **Traditional Indian Raga Mishra Pilu**: A captivating and meditative raga from Indian classical music, Mishra Pilu explores the viola's ability to evoke both serenity and intensity.

37. **Traditional Japanese Folk Song Sakura Sakura**: A beloved Japanese folk song, Sakura Sakura captures the beauty and fleeting nature of cherry blossoms with its delicate melody.

38. **Traditional Chinese Folk Song Yangko**: A lively and energetic folk song, Yangko celebrates the joy and spirit of Chinese culture with its infectious rhythms.

39. **Traditional Irish Jig The Irish Washerwoman:** A spirited and playful jig, The Irish Washerwoman showcases the viola's rhythmic dexterity and Irish folk heritage.

40. **Traditional Brazilian Choro Choro da Saudade:** A soulful and melancholy Brazilian folk dance, Choro da Saudade captures the essence of longing and nostalgia.

### Thematic Expressions

41. **Love: Bruch Romanze, Op. 85:** A heartfelt and passionate piece, Bruch's Romanze is a timeless expression of romantic love with its soaring melodies and lyrical harmonies.

42. **Loss: Shostakovich Sonata for Viola and Piano, Op. 147, II. Largo:** A hauntingly beautiful and deeply moving second movement, Shostakovich's Largo explores the depths of grief and loss.

43. **Joy: Vivaldi Concerto for Viola in G Minor, RV 416, III. Allegro molto:** A lively and exuberant third movement, Vivaldi's Allegro molto bursts with energy and celebrates the joy of life.

44. **Serenity: Schubert Quartet No. 1**



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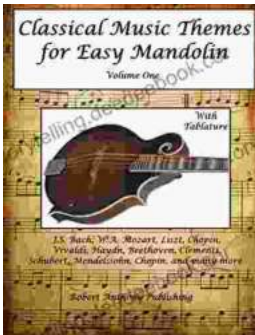
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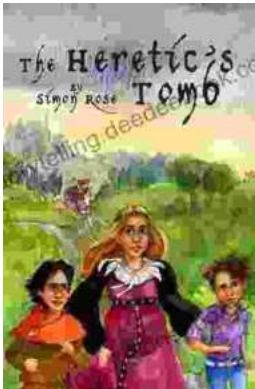
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