

Aria List: Checking the Boxes

Check as many skills as you can - preferably all for general auditions. Check at least the skills required by repertoire for role-specific auditions.

The audition panel can only know what you show them.

slow cantabile line
range if your list does not include top or bottom pitches for your voice type, the panel assumes you don't have them

dynamic variation in passaggio and top
agility access to chest voice in all dynamics for treble voices

trill if required in your repertoire

LANGUAGE

	<u>slow cantabile line</u>	range	<u>dynamic variation in passaggio and top</u>	agility	<u>trill</u>	LANGUAGE
ARIA 1 _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
ARIA 2 _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
ARIA 3 _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
ARIA 4 _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
ARIA 5 _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
ARIA 6 _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: Does this list...

- ... demonstrate my abilities to express a variety of moods/emotions?
- ... match the audition situation (competition/general audition/specific role/program)?

Excel in these categories!

Voice

Vibrant singleness of pitch*

Legato (phrasing)

Consistency of vibrato

Clarity of diction/grasp of poetic meter

Registration*

Dynamic range and control in the lower and middle voice (phrasing)

Dynamic range and control above D4 for baritones/basses, above F4 for tenors and above F5 for treble voices (also phrasing!)

Agility

Presence

Believable character

Specificity of visual focus

Invitation to the audience/panel to share the emotional stakes of the character

Listen to legato



Listen to registration



Listen to dynamics



Listen to coloratura



Vibrant singleness of pitch: Vibrato of which the rate and extent is sufficiently quick and narrow is not perceived as a pitch undulation, rather as a steady, stable tone that seems vital, interesting, spinning. We perceive movement **within** the pitch rather than movement **of** the pitch (Ken Bozeman)

Registration: For treble voices we are looking for classical registration as evidenced in the treatises of the bel canto school – chest-dominance up to F4 in all dynamics (see quotes). For non-treble voices it means the presence of head voice above F4 within the chest-dominant production.

On registration

The perfect and imperceptible meeting of the different registers of the voice forms an essential part of the art of singing. The last note of chest-dominance and the first of head-dominance, or vice-versa, have to be connected naturally and effortlessly, in a manner what one would not notice the change.

To pass easily from one to the other, one must sweeten the last note of the chest voice and strengthen the first of the head voice, as it is by nature weaker.

- Alexis Adelaïde de Garaudé (1779-1852)
Méthode complète de chant

One must take care to sing up until F in chest voice, both descending and ascending.

- Pauline Viardot (1821-1910)
Une here d'étude

On legato

Carrying the voice (port de voix - portamento di voce) is leading from one pitch to another passing through all the intermediary pitches possible. ... Its length is taken on the last portion of the note that is left. The speed depends on the character of the music to which it belongs.

- Manuel García (1805-1906)
Traité complet de l'art du chant

On agility

Let the scholar not be suffered to sing Divisions* with Unevenness of Time or Motion; and let him be corrected if he marks them with the Tongue, or with the Chin, or any other Grimace of the Head or Body.

There are many Defects in the Divisions, which it is necessary to know, in order to avoid them; for, besides that of the Nose or the Throat, and the others already mentioned, those are likewise displeasing which are neither mark'd nor gliding; for in that Case they cannot be said to sing, but howl and roar. There are some still more ridiculous, who mark them above Measure, and with Force of Voice, thinking (for Example) to make a Division upon A, it appears as if they said Ha, Ha, Ha or Gha, Gha, Gha; and the same upon the other Vowels. The worst Fault of all is singing them out of Tune

* Coloratura

- Pier Francesco Tosi (c 1653 -1732)
Observations on the Florid Song

What is 'good singing'?

Operatically speaking, good singing embraces several purely physical attributes: the ability to produce tone of **musical quality** over a **range of at least two octaves**, reasonably well equalized as to intensity in a format that is **easily audible with orchestral accompaniment** in large auditoriums **without amplification**. This tone must be connected by an **even legato**, with a **consistent vibrato pattern**, with **distinguishable vowel and consonant formation** throughout the practicable range, along with a span of **dynamic control** ranging from at least mezzo piano to forte (as heard in the theater) through most of it, and the ability to execute at least moderately difficult examples of **florid and ornamented writing**. These qualities are not a definition of great vocalism, which would include greater frequency range, dynamic range, and flexibility. This formula only defines vocalism capable of approximating most of the demands found in standard operatic writing. To these purely vocal skills must be added a **polished instinct for phrasing in various styles** and a developed **sensitivity to poetic forms and linguistic subtleties**.

- Conrad L. Osborne in "Where Have All the Aidas Gone?"
in Music Educators Journal (October 1979)

Believability: We call it Presence

But believability – that is, the ability to induce audience acceptance of the notion that **recognizable persons** are carrying forward **recognizable actions** in which **audience members can share the emotional stakes** ... is just as much the point of operatic acting as of any other form of acting. This idea is supported by the commentaries and letters of all the great composers for the genre and of course by their **scores, which would not exist were it not for their responses to the dramatic possibilities of characters and situations**. ... The job of the singing actor remains the same: to persuade us that if circumstances were as represented, the character would behave as represented. The how of doing so – the knowledge of character analysis, of the logical pursuit of a character's needs and goals under certain given conditions and against certain obstacles – is as much a matter of technique as vocalism. **The performers who act well by "instinct" are no more common than the singers who do the equivalent, and they are subject to the same hazards of unconscious technique.**

- Conrad L. Osborne in "Where Have All the Aidas Gone?"
in Music Educators's Journal (October 1979)