

CHARACTERS

LEAD CHARACTERS:

Maria Rainer (soprano/mezzo, some dance, 20-35) A postulant at Nonnberg Abbey, young, free spirited, warm and kind. She is from the Austrian countryside, an orphan, who has used her resourcefulness, intelligence and inner confidence to overcome the difficulties of her early life. There is a part of her that wants sheltering from the uncertainties of the outside world as well, and that, coupled with her absolute faith in God's will, is what has led her to seek life as a nun. The actor must have versatility, a powerful voice, great sense of natural humor, ability to move well.

Captain Georg von Trapp (baritone, moves well, Late 20s -45) A retired Austrian naval captain. Educated, polished, and military in the way he runs his life, his home and his children's lives. The father of seven, ranging in age from six to sixteen, he is a widower. When we meet him he is still in mourning over the death of his wife; his unconscious defense has been to push his children away and remove himself from the home that reminds him too much of what he has lost, resulting in a cool, detached exterior; underneath, he is warm, understanding, and as much in need of love himself as are his children.

Max Detweiler (baritone, 25+) Charming, sophisticated, enjoys the good life, which he can't afford, so he avails himself of the Captain's largesse at every opportunity. He is practical and sees the coming of Nazism as unavoidable, so one must "accommodate", which brings him into conflict with the Captain. Ultimately, he proves a true and loyal friend to the family.

Elsa Schrader (mezzo, moves well, 25-45) A baroness of taste and elegance; she is sophisticated and worldly. Like Max, she will find a way to accommodate the coming Anschluss. She tolerates the children, but would send them off to boarding school, so she and the Captain could spend most of their time in Vienna. She loves the Captain in a measured way; he represents good social standing and a continuation of the comfortable, luxurious lifestyle she enjoys.

Mother Abbess (powerful soprano, wide vocal range, 35+, strong actress) Motherly, understanding, authoritative, she is Maria's guiding light. Her years have brought her wisdom, patience and inner confidence.

THE CHILDREN:

Liesl von Trapp (mezzo, strong dancer, 16-21) The oldest child, blossoming into a woman, and smitten by Rolf. She also has a maternal edge and cares deeply for her younger siblings. Initially she thinks herself too old to need a governess; she discovers otherwise.

Friedrich von Trapp (age 14-18) Proud to be "a boy" in this family of mostly girls, and an often-absent father.

Louisa von Trapp (age 13-17) The trickster of the family, full of mischief.

Kurt von Trapp (age 10-15, some dance) Gentle and a peacemaker. He dances the Laendler with Maria.

Brigitta von Trapp (age 9-14) Smart, reads a lot, always tells the truth, even when it may be inappropriate.

Marta von Trapp (age 7-14) Very much the little princess; pink is her favorite color.

Gretl von Trapp (age 5-10) Very cute, just wants to be loved.

FEATURED CHARACTERS

Three Featured Nuns at the Abbey:

Sister Berthe (alto) moves well. Mistress of Novices (20-60) is the more critical, finding all the faults in Maria's conduct, and may be a little pompous

Sister Margaretta (mezzo) moves well. Mistress of Postulants (20-60) has a good sense of humor, and so appreciates what is humorous in Maria's conduct

Sister Sophia (soprano) moves well (20-60) is more inclined to notice the positive aspects of Maria's conduct. All are frustrated with her inability to settle into the lifestyle of the Abbey.

Rolf Gruber (tenor, ideally a strong dancer or very good mover, 16-20) Rolf is a telegraph delivery boy on bicycle and later drawn into the Nazi youth movement. He and Liesl have fallen in love, and they look for every opportunity to see one another.

Franz (non-singing, 30+, strong actor) The von Trapp butler, formerly the Captain's orderly on shipboard; formal, but not without spirit; his loyalties move very swiftly to the Fascist cause.

Frau Schmidt (non-singing, 30+, strong actor) The housekeeper, rather stoic, but with a guarded sense of humor; she knows how to run the household as the Captain wishes it.

Herr Zeller (non-singing, 25+, strong actor) Bureaucratic neighbor who becomes an early Nazi official. He is critical of the Captain's loyalties to the old Austria and ultimately, as an official of the Third Reich, leads the move to take the Captain into Nazi naval service; hard-nosed, inflexible.

Admiral Von Schreiber (non-singing, 40+, strong actor) Admiral of the Navy of the Third Reich, he arrives to escort the Captain to his forced commission. He is more flexible and accommodating than Zeller.

Ensemble:

Men and Women Ensemble members (16-60+ years) To play nuns, monks, priests, Nazis novices, postulants, guests at the Captain's party, Salzburg citizens, and Contestants in the Festival Concert.