

THE SOUND OF MUSIC AUDITIONS MORE INFORMATION AND CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS SRJC THEATRE ARTS FALL 2019

More About the Auditions

It is important that actors take creative risks and show their character versatility during the audition process. Please do not feel obligated to replicate the way other actors have played the characters; share your own interpretations. Character accents/dialects are not expected at these auditions (if applicable, cast members will be coached during the rehearsal process).

How Should I Prepare for the Audition?

In addition to the specific Vocal and Dance criteria listed on the main Auditions page, you need to be fully familiar with the show's story, characters, and songs prior to the preliminary auditions.

Learn more about the show and our production. Here are some suggestions:

- Please read the show description and information under "Current Season" on our website.
- Watch the Oscar-winning film starring Julie Andrews. Keep in mind that a few of the songs are located in a different part of the story, sung by different characters, and/or are different songs in the original musical.
- Listen to the show's songs (on CD, Youtube, etc.). Please be very familiar with them by auditions, including all the songs from the film, as well as "No Way to Stop It" from the original musical. Learn the songs from the show listed in the Vocal Audition Criteria.
- Watch a production of the original musical on Youtube or the recent one on PBS's Great Performances.
- Read a copy of the musical's script.

Production Schedule

Rehearsals: Rehearsals will begin Thursday, August 29, 2019. We will rehearse Tuesdays-Friday nights and Sundays (probably evenings), adding two Saturday nights close to opening.

Performances: 13 performances over three weekends, Nov. 22-Dec. 8, 2019

Cast Details: Approx. 26 actors

Wanted - A talented, creative, and dedicated cast, ready to have a wonderful time bringing this beloved musical to life. Although the show portrays characters from a specific time/place, including family members, we are looking for a diverse cast of approx. 26 adults and children. Actors of all ages, shapes, sizes, races, and gender identities are encouraged to audition.

Adult/Teen Roles: Approx. 8-9 men/13-14 women, including 4 female leads and 3 male leads, several great supporting roles, 2 non-singing roles (1 male/1 female), and a small ensemble of 3-4 men and 3-4 women. Please note that the lead roles of the eldest von Trapp children (Liesl and Friedrich), as well as the featured role of Rolf, will be cast with either young-looking college students or teens.

Children's Roles: 1 boy, 4 girls; age range 7-13 (older children who look young are strongly encouraged to audition). Looking for strong singers who are able to learn choreography (and wonderfully patient parents to support them!)

THE SOUND OF MUSIC – CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

- **Regarding Character Age:** *The age or age range listed for each character is based on the script information. However, recognizing that this is a community college production, we will consider actors from a broader age range for these roles (for example, Capt. von Trapp is approx. age 40 at the start of the show, but could be played by an actor as young as 18 and as old as 55). For those characters for whom a maximum age is not specified in the script, we use a plus sign to indicate that the character can be portrayed at any age over the number listed.*
- **Regarding Character Race/Ethnicity:** *Although we are portraying characters based on real people, as well as members of a family, all actors will be considered for all roles regardless of racial/ethnic background (with the possible exception of the Nazi roles).*
- **Regarding Non-Singing Roles:** *A role designated as “non-singing” means that the character is not included in any musical number. These roles are excellent opportunities for those actors who are not strong singers. However, should an actor cast in one of these roles have the ability to sing well, they may be included in numbers off stage or in group numbers if appropriate.*
- **Regarding Dance and Movement:** *Other than the musical numbers with Maria and the children, the dance between Rolf and Liesl in “Sixteen Going on Seventeen”, and the dances at the von Trapp party, there is little actual dancing in this show. Dance-like movement will be used with the staging of songs, but kept fairly simple.*

LEAD ADULT CHARACTERS

Actors cast these roles will be registered in 5-6 units of credit classes associated with the production.

Maria Rainer (musical theatre mix/soprano, dance; demanding acting role. Age: 22) A free-spirited young postulant whose love of freedom makes it obvious to her superiors that she is not suited for religious life at the Nonnberg Abby. Maria is full of energy, passionate, a country girl who has a charming but gawky, awkward physicality and personality, naive, naughty, witty, strong- minded, and tomboyish. Needs to have an obvious connection with children and an ability to relate at their level.

(Guitar: Absolutely not required, but if actor can play, please note on audition form.)

Captain Georg von Trapp (baritone, moves well; demanding acting role. Age: 40-45) A wealthy and retired Austro-Hungarian Naval Lieutenant Commander. Distinguished, active, handsome, highly organized, and intelligent. Very regimented in the way he runs his life and interacts with his seven children to repress his sadness over the death of his wife; underneath, he is warm, understanding, and determined.

(Guitar: Absolutely not required, but if actor can play, please note on audition form.)

Max Detweiler (tenor/baritone, moves well, 30+) A theatrical agent and First Secretary of Education and Culture; always on the lookout for good talent. Personal friend of von Trapp and a sort of uncle to his children. He is clever at his job and quite pushy when he wants something. Enjoys the good life. Politically neutral, we are not sure whose side he is on until the last moment. Charming and witty, Max is the humor personality of the show. Featured in two songs.

Elsa Schrader (mezzo-soprano, moves well, Age: 35-45) A very wealthy widow, who is president of her late husband’s corporation. An upper class woman of taste and elegance, sophisticated, dignified and mature. Clever and canny; very much into making a good social arrangement and enjoying her good fortune, regardless of the changing political climate. Featured in two songs.

Mother Abbess of Nonnberg Abbey (legit soprano, wide vocal range; demanding acting role. Age: 40+) Motherly, understanding, strong and authoritative, but very kind; she is loved, adored and respected. Featured in three songs, in addition to three others.

LEAD YOUNG ADULT/CHILDREN'S ROLES

Liesl von Trapp (mezzo-soprano, strong dancer, 16) The eldest von Trapp daughter, blossoming into a lovely young lady in the throes of her first infatuation (Rolf). Although the lyrics/lines imply that she's innocent, naïve, helpless, and idealistic, in fact she's much more perceptive, assertive, and self-sufficient than others realize. Struggling without a maternal role model herself, she attempts to fill the void for her younger siblings.

- 1) *Both college students and high school students will be considered for this role. The actor playing Friedrich will be registered for 5-6 units of credit classes associated with the production..*
- 2) *Guitar: Not required for casting, but if actor can play, please note on audition form.]*

Friedrich von Trapp (tenor; moves well; age 14-15) Tough exterior, very much trying to be "the man" of the family. Desperately yearns for his father's attention, which has been in short supply.

- 1) *Both college students and high school students will be considered for this role. The actor playing Friedrich will be registered for 5-6 units of credit classes associated with the production..*
- 2) *Guitar: Not required for casting, but if actor can play, please note on audition form.]*

The five child actors playing the younger children will need to learn basic dance choreography, as well as sing both solo lines and group harmony. They will be enrolled in a special Community Education course for the production's rehearsals and performances. Enrollment fees will be between \$150-\$250 (to be determined).

Louisa von Trapp (age 13) Likes to play tricks on people and is quite a tomboy. Rebellious attitude. Old enough to still remember her mother, who she misses a great deal.

Kurt von Trapp (age 10-12) Gentle and mischievous.

Brigitta von Trapp (age 9) She is a smart avid reader; very observant and always says what she thinks.

Marta von Trapp (age 7-8) Very inquisitive, smart and gentle.

Note: While Marta is intended to be 7 years old, we would prefer to cast a petite older child as Marta because this is a college show with long hours of rehearsals and performances.

Gretl von Trapp (age 5-7) The youngest. Sweet, loving and wants attention; small, doll-like and very cute.

Note: While Gretl is intended to be 5 years old, we would prefer to cast a petite older child as Gretl because this is a college show with long hours of rehearsals and performances.

FEATURED CHARACTERS/SUPPORTING ROLES

Actors cast these roles will be registered for 4-5 units of credit classes associated with the production.

Sister Berthe (alto or mezzo-soprano, moves well) Mistress of Novices. A "no nonsense" type, straight laced with a quick tongue; officious and very strict. She is less tolerant than other nuns, especially when it comes to Maria's behavior.

Sister Margareta (mezzo-soprano, moves well) Mistress of Postulants; very kind, understanding, and rather indulgent when it comes to her young charges, especially Maria.

Sister Sophia (mezzo-soprano or soprano, moves well) Dutiful and kind; takes the middle road to avoid controversy.

Franz – The von Trapp Butler (non-singing, 30+) Rather formal and humorless, but not without spirit; he carries out his duties with somber efficiency. Former military man who served under Capt. von Trapp in the Navy; now retired, he continues to serve the Captain as a private valet and the family's butler. While dedicated to his employer, his greater allegiance is the Fascist cause and the growing power of the Nazi party Anschluss.

Frau Schmidt-The von Trapp Housekeeper (non-singing, 30+) Stoic and dignified. She does her job efficiently but without affection. Strong and somewhat dominating. Has worked for the von Trapp family a long time; appears to be a thoroughly reliable member of the staff and respected by all. Slight hearing loss. Her political views are less clear than others.

Rolf Gruber (low tenor, dance, 17-18) Suitor to Liesl. Telegram delivery boy, later Nazi Youth member. Aryan appearance, blond and handsome. A charming young man, yet rather self-important and over-confident. Inquisitive and yearning to impress, he seems to know an enormous amount of what is going on because of his job.
[Both college students and high school students will be considered for this role.]

ENSEMBLE

*Unlike most musicals of its time, **The Sound of Music** does not require a large singing/dancing chorus, although different productions of the show will sometimes have one. Therefore, we are choosing a smaller ensemble made up of 6-10 versatile individuals who will play a variety of ensemble and cameo roles in the production.*

3-5 Male Ensemble (18-60+ years) – Nazi soldiers, dancing neighbors and friends who come to Captain von Trapp's party, Salzburg citizens, and Georg's friends of naval background who participate in the Festival Concert. Includes cameo roles (*see character descriptions below*).

3-5 Female Ensemble (18-60+ years) – Salzburg citizens, new postulant, nuns, novices, postulants and contestants in the Festival Concert. Includes small speaking roles:

Possible Cameo Roles To Be Played By Ensemble:

Male

Herr Zeller (non-singing, 40+) Stern and unsmiling, a typical Nazi official (the Gauleiter) whose primary concern is to see that everyone toes the line. He is overbearing, arrogant and autocratic, self-important and pompous. Appears in 3 scenes.

Baron Elberfeld (Non-singing; 50+) A neighbor of Captain von Trapp and one of the "Old Guards" of Austria, violently opposed to the takeover of his beloved country by Nazi Germany. Can double with other roles in the ensemble. Appears in 1-2 scenes.

Admiral von Schreiber (Non-singing; 50+) An important figure in the Austrian Navy and appears to be much respected by Captain von Trapp. He has obviously agreed to be part of the new regime with Germany. Appears in 1-2 scenes.

1-2 Male Members of Saengerbund of Herwegen Trio (walk-on; Non-singing; Age open) Male members of the three person performance group who wins 3rd place in the Festival Concert; appears in 1 scene. (Trio will either be 2 men and 1 woman, or 2 women and 1 man; TBD)

Female

Sister Agatha (singing – range TBD) Nun, novice or postulant in Nonnberg Abbey (TBD). May appear in 3-4 scenes.

Sister Katherine (singing – range TBD) Nun, novice or postulant in Nonnberg Abbey (TBD). May appear in 3-4 scenes.

Baroness Elberfeld (Non-singing) A neighbor of Captain von Trapp and wife to the Baron Elberfeld. Appears in 1-2 scenes.

Frau Zeller (one line; non-singing) Herr Zeller's wife. Appears in 1-2 scenes.

Ursula (one line; non-singing) Maid for the von Trapp family. Appears in 1 or more scenes.

A Postulant (walk-on/non-speaking) A smart, well-dressed young girl. Appears in 1 scene.

1-2 Female Members of Saengerbund of Herwegen Trio (walk-on; non-singing) Female members of the three person performance group who wins 3rd place in the Festival Concert; appears in 1 scene. (Trio will either be 2 men and 1 woman, or 2 women and 1 man; TBD)

Fraulein Schweiger (walk-on; non-singing) Female performer who wins 2nd place in the Festival Concert; appears in 1 scene.