

Esther Characters

Small Cast Version

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The small-cast version of Esther has roles for 10 to 15 actors, singers and dancers.
(NOTE: the character delineations are suggestions for a cast of at least 10 people. The character tracks can be changed at your discretion.)

ESTHER:

Female. Appears 18-late 20s. A Jewish orphan, living in exile. Over the course of the play, we see her grow out of girlish insecurity into strength and dignity. She is initially driven by her fear of losing friends and popularity, hoping to blend in. Throughout the play her strength grows and peaks as she prepares to make the ultimate sacrifice and embrace her true identity. Mezzo-soprano (LEAD)

XERXES:

Male. Appears late 20s - late 30s. King of Persia. Thinks of himself as the most handsome, charming man in the world. He quickly proves to be a spoiled, yet lovable child in a grown up body. Although dangerously powerful and frequently drunk, we admire his honesty and (oddly) innocence. He truly believes himself to be a wonderful human being. Queen Esther eventually helps him become a true leader and person of character. Requires a very physical, comedic performer. Tenor (LEAD)

HAMAN:

Male. Appears 30s. King Xerxes' chief advisor and best friend. He is an overly popular politician who has earned his way in society by flattery and deceit. While somewhat likable on the outside, he eventually shows his true colors: he is power hungry, blood thirsty, manic-depressive, and full of hatred for anyone who stands in his way. Baritone/Tenor (LEAD)

MEMUCAN,

Male (or female). Appears 20s-30s. Energetic, comedic, somewhat cynical narrator of the story. Must be an excellent story teller. He has an intense dislike for Haman that is fueled by various power plays. Strong sense of duty to Xerxes and Persia. Could be played by a female dressed as a male if necessary. Baritone/Alto (LEAD)

MORDECAI (can also play a STOOGE in some scenes):

Male. Appears late 30s- 50s. Esther's father figure. One who greatly appreciates his Jewish heritage and faith, wishing Esther would do the same. He is warm and caring with a big heart and personality. Sarcastic and almost painfully honest, he is not afraid to be contrary or offensive. Bass/Baritone. (PRINCIPLE)

TALA (can also play INNOCENT BYSTANDER, LADY IN WAITING, STOOGE, etc):

Female. Appears 18 - 25. An innocent Persian girl who cooks at the Palace. She becomes Esther's best friend. Honest, simple, enthusiastic, a bit slow, and an air head. But completely sincere and lovable. Mezzo-Soprano. (SUPPORTING)

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VASHTI (can also play BIGTHANA, STOOGE, MEAN GIRL, etc):

Female. Appears 20's - 30's. Neurotic, slightly crazed Queen of Persia. Full of confidence and dignity. She probably won beauty pageants as a child and organized them as an adult. Ideally a great singer with a big belt. Alto/Belter (SUPPORTING).

ZERESH (can also play TERESA, LADY IN WAITING, STOOGE, etc):

Female. Appears 20s - late 30s. Haman's wife. Boisterous and manipulative. She married Haman for the power he could give her and uses her influence over him as much as possible. She flatters when necessary but ultimately despises Haman. Does not need to be a great singer. (SUPPORTING)

TERESA:

Beauty Queen Contestant. A young girl, think 10-12 years old. Super sassy and very smart. A child prodigy/villain. She should look overly childish with bright, tacky clothing/hair. Possible speech impediment or Southern accent. She turns out to have a maniacal villain alter ego and ultimately masterminds a plan to kill the King after he breaks her heart. Mezzo/Belter (FEATURED)

BIGTHANA: Beauty Queen Contestant with almost clownish looking makeup, clothing, and hair. She cannot contain her excitement about the competition. Not so smart, she allows Teresa to convince her to dress as a man and kill the King. Mezzo/Belter (FEATURED)

HOST (can also play a STOOGE, INNOCENT BYSTANDER, MAN 1):

Male or Female. Energetic, sarcastic, wears a smile in the worst of situations. Memucan could play this role if necessary. Baritone/Alto. (FEATURED)

STOOGES: Up to 7 males (or females dressed as males). Advisors/servants of the King. They function throughout the play as emotional gauges and often ad-lib with sounds, not necessarily words. There should always be nonverbal communication between them - eye contact and other physicality. Should be actors with great comedic sense, physicality, and ability to improvise. With a small cast, try to have at least 2 Stooges on stage when they are called for in the script.

INNOCENT BYSTANDER: Should be male or disguised as a male. Stands up to the king

MEAN GIRLS 1&2: Make fun of Esther in public.

LADIES IN WAITING: Vashti's attendants who sing/dance in "Vashti's Lament."

ENSEMBLE: To play numerous roles such as Stooges, Ladies in Waiting, Beauty Queen Contestants, Party Guests, Men and Women of the town, and ensemble roles like Mean Girls 1 & 2.

www.EstherMusical.org