

MULAN JR. CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

ENSEMBLE

The Ensemble provides sound effects throughout the show, but also steps into the action when needed to play FATHERS, MOTHERS, DAUGHTERS, SONS, DRESSMAKERS, HAIRDRESSERS, GROOMERS, YOUNG HSAIO, OLDER YI, YOUNG YI, MAGYAR, SUBAR-TU, CHEN, LIU and the CHEONGSAM SALESPERSON. The featured roles vary in size and vocal requirements, but the Ensemble will be needed to provide vocal power throughout and dance in the production numbers, so be sure to cast performers with a wide base of ability.

Ancestors

The Ancestors should have strong focus as they are observing the action throughout. They also need to be strong actor/singers that can carry solo work. It is helpful for them to match what they represent in either manner or physical type. LAOZI (pronounced LAU-tsi) represents Honor and is the leader of the group. LIN represents Loyalty and is the hardest on Mulan; Lin does not appreciate any challenges to the old-world belief system. ZHANG (ZANG) represents Strength, the strong silent type. HONG represents Destiny and is Laozi's right-hand man. YUN (YOON) represents Love and is Mulan's greatest advocate from the beginning - the mother figure that eventually encourages the others to support Mulan for who she is.

FA ZHOU

Fa Zhou (fa zoo), Mulan's father, should be cast with a confident and calm performer who has a strong presence and can sing, at least a little. Without playing "older," his calm strength contrasts with Mulan's frenetic energy at the top of the show. We see that Mulan is truly her father's daughter when she grows wise through her journey.

Fa Li

Fa Li, Mulan's mother, is someone who also possesses strength but understands her place in her generation and culture. There is a definite wisdom that she passes on to Mulan, so use a smart actor who is able to carry a tune.

GRANDMOTHER FA

Grandmother Fa - again, age is not the concern here, but cast a performer who can convey wisdom and humor. Grandmother sees greatness in Mulan, but still wants her to achieve it through tradition. Although she does not need to be a strong singer, an actor with mischief in her eye will work well here.

MULAN

Mulan should be your strongest performer. She is on stage for most of the show and needs to carry a great deal vocally while telling the story. This young performer needs to have strength and courage in her performance and be convincing in her passion and determination to protect her father and family. Casting against a leading-lady type may help your show deliver the story in a surprising and profound way

MUSHU

Mushu (MOO shoo) - although comedy is very important for this character (a talking dragon), remember that we have to feel sympathy for Mushu's struggle to get back into the Temple. Don't just cast your funniest performer, but one that is comfortable talking to and connecting with your audience.

The Matchmaker

The Matchmaker provides comic relief through the "straight man" approach. Cast someone with an overbearing presence who can maintain her composure through a comic scene.

CHI FU

Chi Fu (chee FU) is your typical "bad guy," the quintessential political character, manipulative and proud to a fault. Casting someone with tremendous confidence will help you set up Chi Fu's authority early on. It might be fun to have him model a famous political leader.

SHAN-YU

Shan-Yu (shawn YU) - You want an actor who can command of the stage here - someone with tremendous presence who can convince the audience that he can lead an invasion. Casting an actor of size may be helpful, but is not a necessity.

SHANG

Shang needs to have strength, but also the openness to learn from Mulan. Casting a brawny guy with no heart will weaken the relationship between Mulan and Shang. Remember he is general's son but has a brain too. He needs to be a strong vocalist and should a good stage presence.

YAO, LING AND QIAN-PO

Yao, Ling And Qian-Po (cheeann-PO) - "the Guys" - should be able to work as a team but be diverse in type to help distinguish them from the other Chinese Soldiers. Yao considers himself to be a big tough guy; he has a bark and bite, but all in all a good person. Ling is a bit of a scam artist, and not the brightest guy in the world. Qian-Po is a real sweetheart of a monk who would rather have a good meal than a battle scene. Casting a trio of actors who are willing to have fun is important. They need to be misfits in the army, like Mulan, and able to really play around while dressing up like maidens during the show's climax.

Please prepare the following lines for one character:

MUSHU

(MUSHU takes the helmet from MULAN.)

Now that's just because this needs a little spit, that's all. Let me shine this up for you.

(MUSHU spits on the helmet, polishes it, and then holds it up to MULAN.)

I can see you. Look at you, you look so pretty. The truth is, we're both frauds. Your Ancestors only sent me because they had no other choice. They don't even like me. I don't deserve a place between Love and Honor - I deserve a place between Liar and Loser.

EMPEROR

Citizens of China! Heaven smiles down upon the Middle Kingdom! China will sleep safely tonight, thanks to our brave warriors! I offer thanks to Captain Shang. I know that your father would have been very proud. I present to you the sword of Shan-Yu!

MULAN

Why does it matter if I'm a girl? Isn't what I can do more important than what I look like? I should have never left home. Maybe I didn't go just for my father. Maybe what I really wanted was to prove I could do something right. To know that I could be more than just someone's daughter or someone's wife. So when I looked in the mirror...

LING

(LING bolts out.)

Ling reporting for duty, too. I mean also. I mean, ditto. I've got plenty of that potential stuff, too. I am stinkin' with potential, crawling with potential. And boy, I'm here to tell ya, does it itch!

(LING starts scratching and steps back.)

MATCHMAKER

(The MATCHMAKER makes notes.)

Speaking without permission. Strike one. Hmmm! Too skinny. Humph. Not good for bearing sons. Lack of respect. Strike two. Ruining the Matchmaker's last good pair of slippers - and her pedicure! Strike three! You clumsy, silly tomboy. You are a disgrace. You may look like a bride, but you will never bring your family honor!