

HONK! Character Descriptions

MALE ROLES

UGLY - The ugly duckling and the main character of Honk! Innocent, gawky, easily confused, very impressionable yet endearing. He doesn't understand why being different seems to be wrong. However, his insecurities melt away as his character gradually changes from being innocent and gullible to wise and confident. He is the heart and soul of the show, using comedy and pathos. A good singer and actor who can build a strong relationship with the audience, and make them love him. Tenor – Lead role.

CAT - The sly (slimy even) cunning villain of the show. Suave, crafty and a great comic role. All of the other animals are deathly afraid of him. He is manipulative, cunning, witty and above all, HUNGRY. The Cat pretends to be Ugly's friend so he can eat him. The actor playing this role should bring a real sense of fun to the character and have a good sense of comic timing. Baritone – Lead role. (COULD be played by a female.)

DRAKE - Ida's husband and a somewhat childish and irresponsible father. He's cocky, unmindful of his husbandly duties and rather fond of the ladies. Drake is a sarcastic character. He is the stereotypical sitcom father, often shirking his husbandly/parental duties. Drake finds Ugly quite repulsive and isn't afraid to say it to anyone, including his wife. He should have good comic timing and a strong singing voice. Drake opens the show singing "A Poultry Tale". Baritone – Lead.

GREYLAG - A pompous, blustery goose, based on a stereotypical WWII Air Force commander. Absent-minded, full of himself, and as British as you can make him. (Think Colonel Hathi of the 'elephant' squadron in 'Jungle Book'!) Graylag tends to over glorify his mundane activities (i.e. migrating South) to the level of military operation status. Only his wife, Dot, truly knows how to handle him. He sings a solo in "Wild Goose Chase. Bass – Cameo role. Two scenes.

TURKEY - Stereotypical, 'headmaster' of the ducklings' school. A bit of a bully, he is snobbish and joins in the fun of teasing Ugly. There is of course one word that sends shivers down his spine – CHRISTMAS! Baritone – Cameo role.

BULLFROG - A friendly, huge, loveable character with a BIG personality – a sort of star comedian of the frog world. An actor who loves to get out there and sell himself/herself to the audience. The frog cheers Ugly up with his/her song, "Warts and All." Optimistic and funny, he/she is a stand up comedian type of character well suited to someone with good improvisational skills and comic timing. Bass/Baritone or Alto/Mezzo– Supporting role. One scene. Could double other parts.

FEMALE ROLES

IDA - Ugly's Mom. She is sweet and very maternal, but feisty and independent. She knows how to handle her irresponsible husband, Drake. Ida is extremely protective of her son and committed to his safety. Ida and Ugly's relationship is a key ingredient of the show. She is the one who teaches him that it is OK to be different. Ida sings several solos. Strong actress who needs to bring both comedy and pathos to the role. Alto – Lead role.

MAUREEN - A moorhen and Ida's best friend. She's lively and well meaning, but a busybody. Cockney or northern accent would work well. Maureen genuinely loves Ida, but she can't resist a bit of good gossip. To the little ducklings, she's the typical overly affectionate but rather annoying, "aunt." A lively comic role, Maureen sings "The Joy of Motherhood" with Ida, so she should also be a strong singer. Alto – Supporting role.

GRACE - "The most distinguished duck on the lake." Very aristocratic, she is considered the queen of the duck yard. All of the other animals look up to Grace and respect her. She, of course, is quite aware of this and is therefore a little bit haughty. Alto or Soprano – Cameo role.

HENRIETTA - A hen and another of Maureen's friends. Another busybody in the neighborhood. Henrietta and Maureen gossip about the goings on in the duck yard. She takes great pleasure in making fun of Ugly. Mezzo Soprano - Cameo role.

DOT - Greylag's gentle, understanding wife, and second-in-command. A sort of air hostess-cum-lieutenant. She keeps Greylag in order and organizes the squadron when he muffs everything up and forgets what he is supposed to do. A motherly type, she is genuinely concerned with helping Ugly find his mother. Dot sings solo as well as with Graylag in "Wild Goose Chase." Mezzo/Soprano – Supporting comedy role. Two scenes. Could double other parts.

PENNY – The young, beautiful swan that Ugly saves from a tangled fishing line. She is able to see beyond Ugly's looks and she loves him for who he is. Mezzo Soprano – Cameo role. Could double other parts.

QUEENIE – A very domesticated cat with a saucy streak. Haughty, superior, disdains the great outdoors. Queenie and Lowbutt are two single ladies living a cozy life in what they consider to be a most select neighborhood – out of which they are determined to keep any riff-raff. Mezzo Soprano – Supporting role. One scene. Could double other parts.

LOWBUTT – Queenie’s BFF, a domesticated chicken. A little nervous of disposition and a bit of a worrier. She and Queenie are both rather “superior” characters and “disdain” the great outdoors. Solo and duet with Queenie. Mezzo Soprano/Alto – Supporting role. One scene. Could double other parts.

MALE/FEMALE ROLES

THE DUCKLINGS (UGLY’S SIBLINGS) - Billy, Beaky, Downy, and Fluff. Generally portrayed as trendy, but also rather bratty kids. Gender and vocally negotiable. Females: Mezzo Sopranos. Males: Tenors. Hopefully played by grade school students in Grades 3-8, but **COULD** be young high school students.

BARNACLES, SNOWY, PINKFOOT - Members of Graylag’s Goose Squadron and a little bit, dim. Can be any gender. Goofy, comic. They join in singing “Wild Goose Chase.” Various vocal ranges. Supporting roles. One scene. Could double.

FATHER SWAN, MOTHER SWAN, BEWICK – Penny’s family. They help to console Ida when she thinks her son has died, and offer to take Ugly with them when they migrate. They do not sing solos. They can double other parts.

MAGGIE PIE or JAY BIRD – An investigative reporter. A very “in your face” bird, all she/he cares about is getting a good story. She/he is the typical TV news personality who one would find on a reality TV show. Can be doubled by an ensemble/chorus member, OR a special Cameo role by an adult.

FLOOR MANAGER and CAMERAMAN – **COULD** be members of the stage or tech crews, OR members of the Ensemble/Chorus.

ENSEMBLE - The remaining actors in the company play a number of different ensemble roles as barnyard animals, geese, frogs, fish, and other characters who help move the story along. They serve as a singing “Greek Chorus” in several scenes. Ensemble members could play various small parts in the show.

GENERAL COMMENTS

The audience needs to believe in, identify with, and care about the characters in a human way. The animal quality can still be ‘suggested’ in your character however – for example, a hen might be fussy, a cat might be superior/ predatory/prowling, a goose might be pompous and a frog overblown/hearty. Performances need to be at times comedic and other times very poignant and moving. The feeling should be of local people in a small town or village, where everyone knows each other’s business and who chat and gossip in an overly familiar way. Apart from Ida, Ugly and the Cat, everyone in the cast will also form part of the general ensemble. Doubling of roles is traditional in this show, but depends on size of cast.