

THE ONE AND ONLY



MATTHEW DARREN

38

WILTON MANORS, FL

HT: OAKLAND, CA

MUSIC TEACHER / PART-TIME YOUTH FOOTBALL COACH

MARRIED / NO KIDS

TRIVIA: 19/20

 @matthewdarrenmusic

GENRE: ROCK/SOUL/COUNTRY/POP

INSTRUMENTS: PIANO

ABOUT

Matthew is a Floridian by way of California who lives for music. A music teacher, Pop Warner football coach, assistant, and part-time "grandpa," Matthew has his hands full and is always looking for the next challenge. But his first love was singing, and he wants to jump back into the competitive waters to see if he's still got "the stuff."



THE DETAILS

- Matthew grew up the son of a pastor in Northern California. He was a church kid who went to Sunday Service each week – and he also attended Tuesday night vocal practice to watch his mother sing in the church. Unfortunately, his father ended up leaving the family, and Matthew took on the role of head of the household at 11-years-old. Money was a struggle, and Matthew even worked as a janitor at his own middle school to help pay bills. In high school, he worked concrete in the mornings and at a restaurant at night. He eventually left home for greener pastures but will never forget what built him into the resilient person he is today.
- Matthew has been singing his whole life, which has led to some very cool opportunities. You can hear his voice each night at Disney's Magic Kingdom during the *Happily Ever After* fireworks show. Additionally, he was selected at random to sing with the Broadway band from *Waitress* after a show he attended. In fact, the performance went so well that Sara Bareilles praised his performance in a New York Times interview.
- Marrying the love of your life has its perks, and for Matthew, it was becoming a grandfather in his 30s. His husband has a grandchild, and Matthew relishes the role of being a young "grandparent" – especially since he skipped parenthood completely and doesn't have to change any diapers.
- Matthew has been a singer all his life, and even though things haven't been easy, he's never lost the itch to belt a ballad. Not only did Matthew survive getting hit by a drunk driver, but a year later, his husband fractured his skull and landed in the ER. Despite life's setbacks, Matthew feels lucky to have so much love and support from his family and friends. Currently working as a music teacher and part-time assistant, Matthew is doing enough to get by monetarily, but not creatively. Ultimately, he's ready to take the leap and show everyone the voice that had Sara Bareilles raving about him.



Casting Note: He made it through Hollywood Week on *American Idol* on Season 10 in 2010. He was cut during Vegas Week.

