

2022 Senior District Festival Chorus, April 9, East Longmeadow High School

Congratulations for being chosen to sing in this wonderful chorus! My name is Peter Thomsen and with my wife Abby, our accompanist, and Mark Todd, I am working to help us have an amazing musical time together. I have had the honor of conducting all of the senior and junior district choruses in Massachusetts and have always found Western to be the most fun!

Our program has been shortened to four pieces since we only have one day instead of the usual two rehearsal days a week apart. This means two things:

1. **We all must arrive on our rehearsal / concert day super prepared.**
2. **We must rehearse efficiently so as to not use our voices up before the concert.**

Every opportunity to expressively tell stories through music with others is a unique time, and wonderful, magical things always happen. To make the most of that journey I insist of myself and all of us that we know the music well enough to become the music and live it's story together. This means, **SERIOUS PREPARATION = SERIOUS FUN!** I always insist that we make every effort to memorize the music and that almost always happens. You never see people in a show holding scripts. It just makes sense. **IN A GREAT CHORAL PERFORMANCE EVERYONE'S HEART ACTUALLY BEATS AT THE SAME TIME!** They have to be really together. Cool!

I have prepared learning tracks for the music. Each track has a recorded performance with a single voice part highlighted by the piano. This type of track will allow you to learn the music while learning the words and a style similar to what we will create together. They are also available at our website, thomsenmusic.com. Tracks will be also be posted on mmea.org

The program will be presented in four acts, like a play.

It Takes a Village: Our story begins with a solo voice. Then by gathering strength through collaboration, love, and concern for each other, we explode with our unified energy as a community.

Lachrymosa: This is one of the most famous melodies by Mozart. We must stir the common fear of death and feel together the resolution of eternal peace.

Earth Song: This beautiful and timely piece suggests a struggle we feel today. We can use the “**light of song**” and our respect for everything to “**be**” more peaceful.

El Vito: This Spanish folk melody from the 16th century is an exciting recreation of “the dance”. Inspired by the bullfighter, we feel the life, love and passion of this dance and convey this in our performance!

Specific learning points:

It Takes a Village: Male and female solo auditions will be done by sending a phone quality **AUDIO not video** recording to my peter@thomsenmusic.com email by 3/25. Everyone please learn and memorize the number of times your parts repeats as well as the repeats in the music.

Lachrymosa: Parts are lovely and not hard to learn. Practice and memorize the Latin text and its meaning. We will use the same pronunciation as the track.

Earth Song: Notice the dissonant harmonies and how they resolve like conflict does. We will use the bass baritone split and need all the real basses for balance.

El Vito: We will use all of the female divided parts 1 and 2. Please look for guidance from your teacher. Sopranos please don't sing the high A or B if its not easy and controlled. Tenors, mostly sing tenor one if you can. They are the more important parts. Bass and baritones may split, but again the baritone is more important so that we can achieve balance.

Thank you in advance for all of your hard work. I promise it will be worth it!

