The Pied Piper of Hamelin
By Seymour Barab

Cast of Characters and vocal range:

- The Mayor – soprano
- Town Clerk – mezzo-soprano
- Woodland Nymph – mezzo-soprano
- Piper – baritone
- Rats
- Children

Synopsis

Overture

Scene One: The Forest

The Pied Piper introduces himself and the fact that he wears pied or multi-colored clothing in the aria, *I'm Pied!*

The Woodland Nymph enters and questions the Piper’s intentions. The Piper informs the Woodland Nymph that he is on a quest. “I’m traveling the world in search of a place where I am needed”, he says. The Woodland Nymph informs him that there is no need for pipers at the present but if he brings her a book, the great source of knowledge, she will grant him a wish. What he wishes for is a new suit. Unfortunately the Woodland Nymph does not know the incantation for a new suit. However, she can get him a job in Hamelin. The Woodland Nymph sings, *Afraid of Rats!* and uses her magic to give the Piper the magical power to lure the rats away from Hamelin.

Scene Two: The Road to Hamelin

The Piper sings the aria, *To Hamelin, to Hamelin, I’m on My Merry Way!*

Scene Three: Hamelin

The Mayor and the Town Clerk enter and sing, *We’re a Greedy, Selfish Lot!* and informs us that they never keep a promise.

Scene Four: Hamelin

The Piper enters and the Mayor and Town Clerk introduce themselves. We quickly learn that Hamelin has been overrun by *Rats!* The Piper informs the Mayor and Town Clerk that he can rid Hamelin of the Rats. When they find out that he plans to play his flute to dispel of the rodents, the two exclaim, “That’s ridiculous, it’s absurd!” But when he plays his flute and the Rats come out of hiding and begin dancing, they believe him and promise to pay him one gold coin.

Scene Five: Hamelin

Feeling the Piper took advantage of, “their awful plight”, the Mayor and Town Clerk decide to go after the Piper to ask him to lower his price. The Mayor, however, thinks twice and decides that they will, “first… let him get rid of the rats… then… we get him to lower his fee.”

Scene Six: Hamelin: Later that Night

The Piper excitedly sings, *I’m Going To Be Rich and Be Pied No More!* He begins his song and the Rats appear one by one. He leads them out of the city.
Scene Seven: Hamelin: the Following Morning

The Mayor and Town Clerk wake to find that the Rats are gone. The Piper enters and requests his payment but the Mayor and Town Clerk inform him after they take out the taxes, there is no money left for the Piper.

Scene Eight: The Road to the Forest

The Piper realizes he has been cheated and sings, *It Isn’t Fair!*

Scene Nine: The Forest

The Piper meets the Woodland Nymph once more and she asks for the book he promised her. He informs her that the Mayor and Town Clerk wouldn't pay him. The Woodland Nymph exclaims, "They broke a promise? Why that is the most despicable, the most distressing, the most disreputable thing a human can do!" She decides that the town must be punished and therefore the Piper will return to Hamelin, enchant the town children with his music, and bring them to the forest where they will be well taken care of and away from the contemptible adults. She concludes, *Once the Mayor and Town Clerk honor their promise, the children will be returned.*

Scene Ten: The Road to Hamelin and Hamelin


Scene Eleven: Hamelin

The Mayor and the Town Clerk are frantically searching for the Children when the Piper enters and informs them that the Children are safe and sound. The Mayor calls for a Policeman to arrest the Piper. The Piper informs them, "They (the Children) are being cared for by someone who thinks you are a bad example for them." He continues to tell them how a wonderful thing happens when one keeps a promise, "You are trusted." The Mayor and Town Clerk agree to keep their promise and as soon as the Piper takes the gold coin, the Children rush in, laughing and yelling. The entire ensemble sings, "You’ll be better off by far than you are, when you open up your mind and you find that you’ve opened up a door that was always closed before. You’ll be happier than you have ever been when you open up your heart and let the magic in!"