
The Piper's Powers

from *Pied Piper*

Music and Lyrics by Kate Courage

About

Pied Piper (2016) is based on Robert Browning's *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, his haunting 1842 poem about the Rat-Catcher of late medieval Hamelin, Lower Saxony: almost all the musical's dialogue is taken from his original text. It began its life as a composer-animateur project with a school who wanted to write their own musical for their summer show. After the first draft, performed in 2016, it was developed into a longer and more hard-hitting piece, replacing the traditional 'lame child' figure with a refugee child character who arrives in the town of Hamelin. Kate Courage is a composer and conductor living near Bath. She writes choral music for children and adults as well as short musicals. She believes in the holistic power of music and its ability to create and enhance community. She feels that singing creates a sense of togetherness. It lifts the spirits, teaches us more about ourselves and allows us to discover hidden talents.

In performance

'The Piper's Powers' is the first time we hear the Piper sing. He has just appeared in the town, and all the children are spellbound by him. His song tells the Hamelin people of his magical powers and what he can accomplish. The children believe him, but the adults dismiss the fairy tale. His song weaves a sort of charm across the other characters onstage. As he winds in and out of them, they are transfixed and unable to move, a precursor to what happens later on when the adults are frozen to the spot, only able to watch their children being led out of Hamelin into the mountain. The Piper is a complex character. He was persecuted as a child for his strange powers and driven out of the city where he grew up, he is forced to become a refugee. He is strangely innocent and childlike, yet also wise and all-knowing. He has an immediate rapport with the children, who trust him implicitly. He has great powers, yet, before he exacts his revenge upon them, he is frightened when the adults chase him from Hamelin. In the musical, we see his younger self-suffering - but the performance of this song needs to portray him at his most commanding, full of mystery. The *octave* leaps in the chorus need to be smooth and convincing, and the *crescendo* towards the end creates a feeling of menacing power, followed by a release into innocence again with the final few words. The diction needs to be very clear to display the intensity of his character.

Lyrics

The Piper's Powers

from **Pied Piper**

One single note from me: a spell is cast.
Forget your fading life, wipe out the past:
And I chiefly use my charm
On creatures that do people harm
The mole and toad and newt and viper
and people call me the Pied Piper.
And in the air you hear such wonders call.
And all the universe is in my thrall:
And I chiefly use my charm
On creatures that do people harm
The mole and toad and newt and viper
and people call me the Pied Piper.

All living things that run or crawl or fly,
Will blindly follow me; no question why:
And I chiefly use my charm
On creatures that do people harm
The mole and toad and newt and viper
and people call me the Pied Piper.

The Piper's Powers

from Pied Piper

Music and Lyrics by
Kate Courage

Mysteriously ♩. = 50

Em Am/E Em

pp

4 B7(b9) B7 Em *p* F/A F C/G C

1. One sin - gle note from me: a spell is
2. And in the air you hear such won - ders
3. All liv - ing things that run or crawl or

8 B7(b9) B7 Em F/A F C/G C

cast. For - get your fad - ing life, wipe out the
call. And all the un - i - verse is in my
fly, Will blind - ly fol - low me; no ques - tion

12 B7(b9) B7 Em Am Em

past: And I chie - fly use my charm On creat - ures
 thrall: why:

mf

16 Am Em D/F# G Am Em/B Cmaj7 A/C# G/D B7/D#

that do peo - ple harm The mole and toad and newt and vi - per

19 B(no3) 1.2. Em Am/E

and peo - ple call me the Pied Pi - per.

subito p

23 Em B7(b9) B7 3. Em B7/E Em

the Pied Pi - per.