Scottish Ballad Operas I: Pastoral Comedies

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The Beggar's Opera is a ballad opera in three acts written in 1728 by John Gay with music arranged by Johann Christoph Pepusch. It is one of the watershed plays in Augustan drama and is the only example of the once thriving genre of satirical ballad opera to remain popular today. Ballad operas were satiric musical plays that used some of the conventions of opera, but without recitative. The lyrics of the airs in the piece are set to popular broadsheet ballads, opera arias, church hymns and folk tunes. The term ballad opera is used to refer to a genre of English stage entertainment originating in the 18th century and continuing to develop in the following century and later. There are many types of ballad opera. This article describes the... Later in the century broader comedies such as Richard Brinsley Sheridan's "The Duenna" and the innumerable works of Charles Dibdin moved the balance back towards the original style, but there was little remaining of the impetus of the satirical ballad opera. The 19th Century. English nineteenth century opera is very heavily drawn from the "pastoral" form of the ballad opera, and traces even of the satiric kind can be found in the work of "serious" practitioners such as John Barnett.
Ballad operas were satiric musical plays that used some of the conventions of opera, but without recitative. The lyrics of the airs in the piece are set to popular broadsheet ballads, opera arias, church hymns and folk tunes of the time. The Beggar's Opera premiered at the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre on 29 January 1728 and ran for 62 consecutive performances, the longest run in theatre history up to that time (after 146 performances of Rober Cambert's "Pomone" in 1671). After appearing in several comedies, and then in numerous repetitions of The Beggars Opera, she ran away with her married lover, Charles Powlett, 3rd Duke of Bolton. I. ABSENCE. Ye shepherds so cheerfull and gay, Whose flocks never carelessly roam; Should Corydon's happen to stray, Oh! call the poor wanderers home. Allow me to muse and to sigh, Nor talk of the change that ye find; None once was so watchful as I: â€”I have left my dear Phyllis behind. Now I know what it is, to have strove With the torture of doubt and desire; What it is, to admire and to love, And to leave her we love and admire. Ah lead forth my flock in the morn, And the damps of each ev'ning repel Are you sure you want to remove Scottish ballad operas I: Pastoral comedies. from your list? Scottish ballad operas I: Pastoral comedies. by Walter H. Rubsamen. Published 1974 by Garland Pub. in New York. Table of Contents. Ramsay, A. The gentle shepherd; a Scots pastoral comedy. 1775. Cibber, T. Patie and Peggy; or, The fair foundling; a Scotch ballad opera. 1731. William and Lucy; an opera. 1780. Steele, A. The shepherd's wedding; a Scots pastoral entertainment. 1789. Morison, D. Jack and Sue; or, The fortunate sailor; an opera in the Scots dialect. 1790. Edition Notes. Facsims. Series. The Ballad opera., v. 24.
The Gentle Shepherd is Scotland's first opera. All the music is based on popular Scottish fiddle music and folk tunes. It features ballads and traditional dance music and fuses Scottish fiddle-playing with the Italian baroque style. The hero is the shepherd Patie (Patrick), son of Sir William Worthy, who left him in the care of Symon and Elspa when he was forced to flee. The Gentle Shepherd is Scotland’s first opera. All the music is based on popular Scottish fiddle music and folk tunes. It features ballads and traditional dance music and fuses Scottish fiddle-playing with the Italian baroque style.

The ballad opera is a genre of English stage entertainment that originated in the early 18th century, and continued to develop over the following century and later. Like the earlier comédie en vaudeville and the later Singspiel, its distinguishing characteristic is the use of tunes in a popular style (either pre-existing or newly composed) with spoken dialogue. These English plays were 'operas' mainly insofar as they satirized the conventions of the imported opera seria. Music critic Peter Gammond.