

# A BALLAD OF THE WEST

by  
Bobby Bridger

## A COURSE SYLLABUS

**A Ballad of the West** is three original, self-contained, historically-documented epic poem/ballads chronicling the American west of the nineteenth century. Acted and sung in heroic couplets to his own guitar accompaniment, author Bobby Bridger, dressed in authentic period costume, performs each part of the trilogy as a one-man show.

*"A Ballad of the West is poetry to be chanted, sung and acted. It calls to mind the great mavericks Whitman, Sandburg and Earl Robinson. The form is speechsong, written for both eye and ear. It also happens to be electrifying theater."*

Dale Wasserman, Playwright,

**Man of LaMancha, One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest**

*"Bobby Bridger has carved out a unique and captivating place for himself in our culture. A dramatist and a songwriter, an actor and a singer, a historian and a contemporary recording artist; Bridger speaks with the many voices of the west, old and new. A Ballad of the West makes you listen, makes you learn, and makes you dream."*

Alan Menken, Playwright/Composer

**Little Shop of Horrors, and Disney's The Little Mermaid,  
Beauty and The Beast, Pocahontas,  
The Hunchback of Notre Dame, and Hercules**

## PART ONE SEEKERS OF THE FLEECE

**Seekers of the Fleece** explores the Fur Trade Era (1822-1842) and the mountain men through the life story of Jim Bridger. (Program length: 50 minutes)

*"...to me this is a wonderful piece of Americana based on a grand and majestic part of our historical background. It is thoroughly original and exciting in its concept."*

Alvin Josephy, Editor,

**American Heritage Magazine**

## PART TWO PAHASKA

**Pahaska** evokes the Emigration Era (1842-1917) the Indian Wars Era (1860-1890) and the final settlement of the American west through the incredible life story of Colonel William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody. (Program length: 90 minutes.)

*"A major work...a unique historical presentation of monumental dimensions."*

**The Buffalo Bill Historical Center**

Cody, Wyoming

## PART THREE LAKOTA

**Lakota** presents the Indian Wars Era (1860-1890) and the decline and fall of the Great Sioux Nation as told through the life story of Lakota Holy Man, Black Elk. (Program length: 70 minutes.)

*"Bridger's songs and text are splendid!"*

Dee Brown, Author

### **Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee**

The three individual works of the trilogy stand individually, yet are often presented together in two concerts. When experienced in combination **A Ballad of the West** presents the American west from exploration through discovery, emigration, expansion, the Pony Express, Transcontinental Railroad, the Civil War and the Indian Wars, the tragic fall of the Indian Nations, and the eventual final settlement of the region -from 1822-1950.

*"Bridger is a Shakespeare of the American west"*

George C. White

Founder/President, **Eugene O'Neill Theater Center**

Chairman of the Board, **Sundance Institute**

## OPTIONS

### A. THE FULL PERFORMANCE OF A BALLAD OF THE WEST

### B. ARTIST RESIDENCY

**A. The performance of the entire trilogy\***: While experiencing a performance of **A Ballad of the West** reservations and "walls" concerning history melt away as audiences are dramatically engaged in the ancient oral tradition of original heroic poetry and narrative musical storytelling of Bobby Bridger's epic ballads. The principle characters whose historically documented life stories are presented in the three epics -Jim Bridger, Buffalo Bill and Black Elk- are introduced in their adolescent years offering students the opportunity to strongly identify with them as they "age" through the presentation of the epic ballads. The audience experiences the "human" feelings, successes and failures, triumphs and tragedies of the trio of historical characters presented against the backdrop of phenomenal change in Native and Emigrant American culture. This experience allows audiences to "put a face" on critical historical eras and identify with individuals and cultures of the recent past.

\*Note: **A Ballad of the West** may be presented separately (**Seekers of the Fleece**, **Pahaska** and **Lakota**) or collectively.

*"...it blends history, music, poetry and fundamental values.*

*Most important, it tells us something of who we are and how we got here."*

Sam Stanley,

The Center for the Study of Man

## Smithsonian Institution

**B. Artist Residency:** In Bridger's residency session participants experience the history of the west in an absolutely unique series of presentations. To begin with, Bridger leads each of the sessions in authentic period costumes; the authenticity of these costumes immediately engage students of any age and cultural background and begin the critical process of asking fundamental questions about the people of the historical eras depicted in the clothing by creating a remarkable visual stimulation. Bridger's knowledge of the logic and construction of the outfits (he made the costumes himself) opens students eyes and minds to the reasoning behind the clothing of the region and period as an aside to the information in the workshops.

A truly multi-disciplinary work, **A Ballad of the West** draws inspiration from a variety of important fields of study: poetry, music, history, theater, literature and storytelling. A residency with Bobby Bridger allows the author to break his original epic ballads down into workshops analyzing the trilogy from the various perspectives which inform and inspire the piece.

## THE RESIDENCY WORKSHOPS

*"What came aimed directly at my heart, was pure magic. A magic superseding words and tunes, an invocation of deep feeling...This is the magic of Bobby Bridger's A Ballad of the West...a magic that suggests that the richest storied fleece we still have to discover lies in the yet unplumbed psychic resources of America today."*

Frank Waters, Author

**The Man Who Killed The Deer and The Book of the Hopi**

## SESSION ONE: A LITERARY ANALYSIS

**Description:** Participants will explore the historical background of the ballad from a European as well as an American perspective. Several traditional narrative songs will be performed in order to present a concept of the ballad tradition as storytelling, education and entertainment.

Additionally, participants examine the Homeric tradition of writing epic poetry in heroic couplets. Here a distinction will be drawn between the Homeric "mythological" tradition and the Bridger technique of drawing subject matter from historically documented lives and events. Finally, the evolution of the "modern" ballad will be presented in order to create a context for a work such as **A Ballad of the West**.

## Objectives

### Participants will:

- \*Learn more of the rich heritage of poetry, music and theater combined in form.
- \*Develop a broader awareness of the possibilities of epic poetry for modern times.
- \*Gain an appreciation of narrative songs of the past, present and future.

- \*Relate personally to epic poetry, storytelling and balladry.
- \*Explore the unexplored treasure troves of American History as subject matter for epic poetry
- \*Obtain increased awareness of ancient traditions apparent in modern music, poetry and theater.

## LITERARY ANALYSIS

### I. THE BALLAD

- A. A history of the ballad
  - 1. Storytelling
  - 2. Entertainment
  - 3. Educational
  - 4. Traditional
    - a. **Barbara Allen** (European)
    - b. **Banks of the Ohio** (American)
    - c. **Pecos Bill** (American west fictional)
    - d. **Sweet Betsy From Pike** (American west emigration)

### II. THE EPIC POEM

- A. History of epic poetry
  - 1. Storytelling
  - 2. Entertainment
  - 3. Educational
    - a. **The Iliad**
    - b. **The Odyssey**
    - c. The Homeric Tradition
    - d. Epic poetry and Mythology
    - e. Coleridge and his **Ancient Mariner**

### III. FOLK MUSIC REVIVAL OF THE SIXTIES

- A. Renewed interest in old songs and stories
  - 1. Woody Guthrie, Leadbelly, Pete Seeger, etc.
  - 2. "Message" music and protest songs with "meanings between the lines".
- B. Rock and Roll
  - 1. James Dean, Marlon Brando, Elvis and other "rebel" archetypes arising from a materialistic society.
  - 2. "Woodstock Nation" -**Hair** and the hippie "tribal" culture compared to Native American culture.
- C. Folk/Rock Fusion
  - 1. The impact of Bob Dylan
    - a. a synthesis of Guthrie and the Beatles
    - b. the birth of the modern narrative ballad.
  - 2. Early examples of Synthetic Forms
    - a. **Canadian Railroad Trilogy**
    - b. The rock opera **Tommy**.

- c. **Jesus Christ Superstar**
- d. **The Point**
- e. **Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Heart's Club Band.**

*"...I've never heard anything with remotely the scope and vision of Bridger's monumental work. Embracing a history of the American West...the ballad's incarnate a cast of thousands in the person of one man and his two guitars. **A Ballad of the West** is at once a remedial history lesson, a splendid and romantic entertainment and a triumph of the creative imagination. It is without peer in popular American culture."*

John T. Davis, Music Critic  
**The Austin American-Statesman**

## **SESSION TWO: THE CREATIVE PROCESS**

**Description:** Participants will learn the exciting process of meticulously researching personal, family and American history in order to restructure documented events into narrative poetry and song. From personal history Bridger relates the impact of storytellers and musicians on his development as an artist; particular emphasis is placed upon a ballad collecting expedition in the Ozark Mountains of Arkansas as a youth. Bridger also delves into his background in the visual arts (he holds a BA degree in Art Education) and that training's importance to the creative process and the synthesis of forms unutilized in the fusion of a new form he is credited with creating -the epic ballad.

Expanding upon the impact of the visual arts, a discussion of the technique of gazing into period paintings in order to create songs and poetry will be presented. Furthermore, Bridger will discuss the creative problems of "falling through the cracks" when offering a unique work in a materialistic society.

### **Objectives**

**Participants will:**

- \*Develop skills and techniques for researching family history as an artistic medium.
- \*Gain respect for the craft of epic poetry and narrative songwriting.
- \*Relate to their own personal history as vitally important "in the scheme of things".
- \*Explore the world of ballads and storytelling, epic poetry and theater.
- \*Experience the continuity of ballads from European heritage through their impact in modern times.
- \*Obtain an awareness of the songwriting discipline and it's power in the theater.
- \*Learn techniques for synthesizing classical forms of expression into unique contemporary forms of communication.
- \*See "being different" is sometimes really "being unique" and that very *uniqueness* is *essential* to creativity.

### **THE CREATIVE PROCESS**

#### **1. Personal Background**

- A. Impact of a musical family.
- B. Seeds of an artist planted early.
- C. Storytellers and their impact on youngsters.
- D. Natural evolution into folk music.
- E. Ballad collecting in the Ozarks.
- F. Genealogy.
  - 1. The link to Jim Bridger
  - 2. The search for a song.
  - 3. Avocation becomes a quest.
  - 4. "No one talks about 'destiny' anymore."
  - 5. "No one reads poetry anymore."

## II. Synthesis of Forms

- A. A-F (personal background above) explained as the fusion of various forms into **Ballad of the West.**
  - 1. Early training in the visual arts.
  - 2. Imbued with a desire to create something unique.
- B. Intuition
  - 1. "Knowing" when something is "right".
    - a. "inspiration"
  - 2. "Gazing" into Alfred Jacob Miller\* paintings for intuitive inspiration.  
(\*Miller was a historic painter of the mountain men of the Fur Trade Era.)
- C. Structure
  - 1. The discovery of a familial link with a historic character.
  - 2. The discovery of poet John G. Neihardt's historic epic poetry.
  - 3. Learning how to write songs.
    - a. Nashville
    - b. Hollywood
    - c. Austin
  - 4. The use of the guitar as a narrative tool.
    - a. musical motifs and themes
  - 5. The synthesis of these various disciplines and influences into a linear, multi-dimensional narrative -the epic ballad.

## III. How to avoid allowing "uniqueness" from slipping through the cracks in modern society.

- A. "When the record companies don't know what to do with it."
- B. "When the publishers don't know what it 'is'."
- C. "When even PBS can't figure out how to tell the story."
- D. An explanation of a visual/musical artist's evolution into the theater world.
- E. The One-Man Show
  - 1. A true wandering troubadour.
  - 2. A citizen of the world.
- F. Musical Theater

1. The only non-Shakespearean Show in America being done in verse.
  2. Ten years of theater in the Yellowstone Country.
- G. A return to roots.

“...a dynamite piece of work!”  
 Joel Oppenheimer  
 The Village Voice

## SESSION THREE: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

**Description:** Participants will discover the history of the nineteenth century American west from these important perspectives: Exploration, Emigration, Transportation and Communication. A brief background of the global political climate-particularly Napoleon and his “Louisiana Territory” - opens the presentation and introduces the Lewis and Clark Expedition and the Fur Trade Era. Bridger presents the Fur Trade Era in a fundamental perspective to the Emigration Era before intertwining both periods into the Indian Wars Era. Seen in context, the final settlement of the west is presented in the romanticism of Buffalo Bill’s Wild West. Bridger also weaves a chronological sequence of the history of the Transportation and Communication throughout the presentation of these important eras in the west.

### Objectives

**Participants will:**

- \*Gain a broader appreciation of the history of the nineteenth century American west.
- \* Relate to the nineteenth century from a perspective of renewed understanding and appreciation of its people and eras and their contributions to modern times.
- \*Learn the “human side” of the story; “put a face on history” and view it as living rather than dead.
- \* Develop skills for researching personal and American history to relate it to modern times.
- \* Explore history as something vitally important to the future.
- \* Build a broader understanding of the *interconnectedness* of past, present and future.
- \* Increase their awareness of little-known, yet vitally important events in our recent past.
- \*Understand Native America’s contribution to our past, and present, *and*, their place in our future.

### A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

I. America 1800

A. Jefferson’s election

1. Jefferson, the scientist/politician.
2. Washington’s warning of a party system.
3. A revolutionary aftershock
  - a. Federalists and Democratic/Republicans

B. Napoleon’s Louisiana Territory

1. Brief history of tensions between Britain, France and USA
  2. The Louisiana Purchase
  3. The Lewis and Clark and Zebulon Pike Expedition's
    - a. "The Great American Desert"
  - C. The Trans-Mississippi
    1. Native Americans
      - a. Brief history of Plains and Mountain Tribes
      - b. "Home" vs. "Frontier"
      - c. The difference between boundaries and territories.
  - D. The Fur Trade Era
    1. Beaver Hats
    2. Astoria
    3. The American Fur Company
    4. The Ashley-Henry Expedition of 1822
      - a. The importance of the first white men venturing into the west *to live.*
      - b. The Rendezvous system.
      - c. The Exploring Trappers
    5. The Politics of the Upper Missouri
      - a. International
      - b. Inter-tribal
      - c. Allies and Enemies
  - E. The silk hat and the end of the fur trade
    1. Seeds of the Indian Wars
      - a. The French Traders
      - b. Fort Laramie
      - c. The Lakota
    2. What to do after 20 years in Eden.
- II. The Emigration Era
- A. Manifest Destiny
    1. Hall Jackson Kelly
      - a. The Oregon Country
      - b. Nathaniel Wyth
      - c. The Rocky Mountain Fur Company
      - d. Reverend Jason Lee/ Willamette Valley
      - e. Jim Bridger heads home the wrong way.
  - B. The Road of the Emigrants
    1. Brief history of the population explosion in Independence and St. Joseph, Missouri (1842-1849).
      - a. Irish Potato Famine.
      - b. California -Religious zeal becomes Gold Fever!
      - c. Transportation and Communication becomes *essential*.
      - d. The Great Migration begins.
    2. Statistics of the Oregon Trail

- a. the cost of the journey.
  - b. emotional and physical expense.
  - c. deaths on the trail.
- III. America's problem with Sectionalism.
  - A. Jefferson's Louisiana Purchase
    - 1. How the purchase encouraged a phenomenal period of western expansion.
    - 2. Regionalism and Divisiveness
    - 3. The west in the beginnings of the Civil War.
      - a. The Missouri Compromise
      - b. The Kansas/Nebraska Act
      - c. "Bloody Kansas"
      - d. The Civil War
- IV. The Pony Express
  - A. California's growing -and wealthy- population.
    - 1. 'Round the Horn.
    - 2. Through the jungle.
    - 3. Over the Plains
    - 4. Early attempts to deliver mail over the "Northern Route".
  - B. The "Pony".
    - 1. Russell, Majors and Waddell
      - a. army freight shipping
      - b. ancient trails
      - c. brave young riders and 18 months of glory.
      - d. a nation linked with wire -the telegraph.
- V. The Transcontinental Railroad
  - A. A brief history of America's early railway system.
  - B. Railroad pioneers: A race to unite the coasts.
    - 1. Lincoln and the Republican Party
      - a. The Railroad Act of 1862
      - b. The Homestead Act of 1862
    - 2. Theodore Judah
      - a. The Central Pacific
      - b. The "Big Four"
      - c. The Chinese
    - 3. General Grenville Dodge
      - a. Jim Bridger guides the survey
      - b. The Union Pacific.
      - c. The buffalo culture proves incompatible with the Industrial Revolution.
      - d. diplomacy breaks down in Indian Country.
- VI. The Indian Wars
  - A. Brief history of relationships between Native and Emigrant Americans on the Great Plains and Upper Rockies.
    - 1. Initial friendly relationships

2. A Brief history of Fort Laramie.
  - a. Fur trade post.
  - b. Central location to Lakota and Cheyenne Nations.
  - c. Multi-cultural aspects (Native and Emigrant Americans) of the Oregon Trail.
  - d. The purchase of Fort Laramie by the U. S. government in 1849.
  - e. Trouble with emigrants, Indians and the military.
  - f. Gold fever.
  - g. Railroad fever.
- B. Red Cloud's War.
  1. The U. S. government needs gold and land.
  2. Covert government action to provoke conflict on the plains.
    - a. military buildups
    - b. gold hunting expeditions
    - c. encouraging citizens to unwittingly enter hostile Indian territory.
  3. Overt government action to provoke conflict on the plains.
    - a. military movements into sacred hunting grounds.
    - b. the Sand Creek massacre.
  4. The "Bloody Bozeman Trail".
    - a. The Fetterman Massacre
  5. The Laramie Treaty of 1868
    - a. Eastern humanitarians
    - b. Washington deceives the Sioux.
- C. The invasion of the Black Hills
  1. Custer
  2. Prospectors
  3. Little Big Horn
  4. The exile of Sitting Bull
    - a. "Grandmother's Land (Canada)
    - b. Sitting Bull's international foresight
    - c. Sitting Bull's surrender
- D. The Reservation Era
  1. The Christian denominations charged with converting Indians and turning them into farmers.
  2. Eastern Christian Indian Schools.
- VIII. Buffalo Bill and his Wild West
  - A. Romanticizing the west
    1. The rise of the power of media during the Industrial Revolution.
    2. The rise of the power of "show business"
    3. Europe embraces the western myth.
    4. The world's first global celebrity
    5. Lakota and Cheyenne contributions
      - a. Indians were the attraction.
      - b. Humanitarian groups muddy the waters.
    6. Buffalo Bill as pioneer conservationist and supporter of Indian rights.
    7. Buffalo Bill and the American myth.

- IIX. The Massacre at Wounded Knee
- A. The Ghost Dance
    - 1. Missionary work on reservations backfires
    - 2. Hunger is a formula for disaster.
  - B. The murder of Sitting Bull
  - C. The tragedy at Wounded Knee Creek.
  - D. The death of a people's dream.

*"Thoughtful and eloquent"*  
The Austin Chronicle

*"...a stunning realization!"*  
Marlon Brando

## **SESSION FOUR: HISTORICAL EPIC BALLADRY AS MUSICAL THEATER**

Description: Participants will explore the creative evolutionary process of developing an original work for the stage. The tradition of "workshopping" a major Broadway-style musical through "staged readings" and "out-of-town" productions will be outlined as the pitfalls and successes of theatrical productions. The development of outdoor musicals will receive special attention as Bridger spent a decade producing **A Ballad of the West -Part One- Seekers of the Fleece** at the world-famous **Buffalo Bill Historical Center** in Cody, Wyoming, as well as in **Yellowstone** and **Grand Teton National Parks**. (\*Note: In 1990 and 1991 **Seekers of the Fleece** was the very first professional theater produced in **Yellowstone National Park's** 118 year history.) Research techniques for exploring history -particularly personal history- in search of authentic drama will be presented, as will procedures for developing completed research into both one-man and full-company productions.

### **Objectives**

#### **Participants will:**

- \*Develop research skills and techniques for adapting history to the stage.
- \*Build a broader awareness of the theater arts.
- \*Explore the evolutionary process of the playwright and his work.
- \*Increase appreciation of the theater's ability to express *any* topic.
- \*Relate to their personal history as possible subject matter for development into a show.
- \*Learn the process of producing theatrical works
- \*Gain an understanding of the process of developing a musical work for the stage.

### **HISTORIC EPIC BALLADRY AS MUSICAL THEATER**

1. The song and the play
  - A. A brief history of the ballad from an American and European perspective.

1. The ancient links between poetry, music and theater.
  - a. The “Homeric” Tradition.
  - b. The structural similarities between a song and a theatrical play.
- II. The power of a musical story -a personal history of developing a lasting show.
  - A. Rejection is the mother of invention.
    1. Walking away from Nashville and Hollywood.
    2. Accidentally becoming an actor.
      - a. “From the stage to the street”.
      - b. From coast to coast on America’s couches -the life of a modern troubadour.
  - B. Broadway’s calling.
    1. John G. Neihardt, Nebraska, and Christopher Sergel.
      - a. **Black Elk Speaks**
      - b. The Dramatic Publishing Company
    2. To Dream the Impossible Dream -**Man of LaMancha’s** Dale Wasserman.
      - a. **Shakespeare and The Indians** -200 performances.
      - b. **The Eugene O’Neill Theater Center**.
      - c. The workshop process.
      - d. Crash course theatrical training -back to Hollywood.
- III. The O’Neill’s Balladeer-in-Residence
  - A. Emerged in America’s foremost theatrical laboratory.
    1. Teaching **A Ballad of the West** to theater students while also studying American and European master theater teachers.
    2. **A Ballad of the West** workshopped as major musical production.
    3. **Aldebaran and the Falling Star** is workshopped two consecutive years (1984-1985) by the **National Theater Institute**.
    4. **Black Elk Speaks** and the **American Indian Theater Company**.
      - a. **American Indian Theater Company** Board of Directors
      - b. recruiting Native American actors -Wes Studi and others.
      - c. the west is calling again.
    5. Character acting with Joe Sears.
      - a. personal history with the hit comedy **Greater Tuna**.
      - b. Sears and I form a partnership to produce **A Ballad of the West**.
    6. Australia, Europe and the Soviet Union.
      - a. one-man show in the “outback”.
      - b. Theater in the Ukraine -a coyote howls under Lenin
      - c. Oxford, London and England.
      - d. Holland, France, Sweden and Finland.
    7. **A Ballad of the West** returns to Wyoming.
      - a. An Equity contract in the Yellowstone Fires.
      - b. “Paying the price”.
    8. Outdoor Drama
      - a. “hey gang -let’s put on a show.”
      - b. “if the wind quit blowing in Wyoming the state’s population would fall over sideways” -*the elements*.

- c. The National Outdoor Drama Association
  - d. Doing business with an entire town.
9. A return to the one-man show.
10. Nearly four decades of work comes together.  
*"A startling, original work. ...I listened and was deeply moved."*  
 Robert Ward  
**New Times Magazine**

## SESSION FIVE: ARTISTIC ANALYSIS

**Description:** Participants will experience **A Ballad of the West** being broken down into its various collective components and influences and analyzed by its creator. Poetic, Musical, Historical, Theatrical and Storytelling attributes and sections of "Ballad" will be delineated and presented from each of the aforementioned disciplines in order to show how the interdisciplinary aspects of the work are intertwined to create a new form.

### Objectives

**Participants will:**

- \*Learn the process of synthesizing various "classical" forms of expression into a new form of expression.
- \*Gain a broader appreciation of epic poetry, ballads, theater and history.
- \*Relate to history as art; theater as history; music as theater; etc.
- \*Build confidence to experiment with unconventional approaches to subject matter.
- \*Develop skills with which to explore poetry, music, theater, and history with renewed interest.
- \*Increase awareness of interdisciplinary approaches as evolutionary tools.

### ARTISTIC ANALYSIS

I. Epic Poetry

A. Structure

- 1. Homeric Couplets
  - a. technique and craftsmanship
  - b. hypnotic aspects
  - c. retention of information

B. Intuition

- 1. "Unconscious writing"
- 2. "Heart" as dramatist

C. **A Ballad of the West** as epic poetry

- 1. Presentation and analysis of sections of poetry from **Seekers of the**

**Fleece.**

- 2. " " " " " " " " from **Pahaska.**
- 3. " " " " " " " " from **Lakota.**

D. Comparison with classics

- 1. John G. Neihardt's **A Cycle of the West.**
- 2. Homer's **Odyssey.**

## II. The Ballad

### A. Structure

1. Long Narrative Songs
  - a. **Barbara Allen**
  - b. **Sweet Betsy From Pike**

### B. Intuition

1. Music is from the heart; lyrics are from the community.
2. The use of historical paintings as muses.

### C. **A Ballad of the West** as music.

1. The presentation and analysis of a song from **Seekers of the Fleece**.
2. “ “ “ “ “ “ “from **Pahaska**.
3. “ “ “ “ “ “ “from **Lakota**.

## III. Historical Analysis

### A. Structure

1. Emphasis on documented historical lives and events.
2. Cross referencing.

### B. Intuition

1. How to “know” which lead to follow.
2. Different people see different things in history.
3. Verbatim vs. putting words in people’s mouths.

### C. **A Ballad of the West** as history.

1. Presentation and analysis of a section of **Seekers of the Fleece**.
2. “ “ “ “ “ “ “ of **Pahaska**.
3. “ “ “ “ “ “ “ of **Lakota**.

## IV. **A Ballad of the West** as Theater

### A. Structure

1. The One-Man Show.
  - a. How to create a century and its people with a voice and guitar.
  - b. Voices and mannerisms; costumes and lights.
  - c. The advantage of simplicity.
2. The full-company production.
  - a. an era comes to life.
  - b. acting, singing and moving at the same time.
  - c. ensemble “there is no ‘i’ in team.
  - d. The playwright as actor/producer.

### B. Intuition

1. The most important actor’s tool.
2. The essence of the situation.

### C. The drama of **A Ballad of the West**.

#### **Fleece**.

1. Presentation and analysis of a dramatic section of **Seekers of the**

2. “ “ “ “ “ “ “ of **Pahaska**.
3. “ “ “ “ “ “ “ of **Lakota**.

## V. Storytelling

### A. Structure

### B. Intuition

C. **A Ballad of the West** as storytelling.

1. Presentation and analysis of a section of **Seekers of the Fleece**.
2. “ “ “ “ “ “ of **Pahaska**.
3. “ “ “ “ “ “ of **Lakota**.

## **SESSION SIX: PRE-KINDERGARTEN THROUGH THIRD GRADE**

**Description:** **A Ballad of the West** is especially fun to present to smaller children because they focus immediately with questions about Bridger’s costumes. Bridger always brings along a Lakota Courting Flute and plays the soothing instrument for the little ones (and to “court” them into focusing on the subject). The youngsters are given samples of Indian arts and crafts to handle and study and to encourage questions and comments. Special emphasis is added to the lifestyles of Native American children as well as emigrant children on wagon trains and in sod house. In some instances children are given roles to enact in order to understand the problems emigrants and Native American’s faced in trying to communicate with one another. (Example: Children are asked to pretend to trade cherished items with one another using only sign language.)

### **Objectives**

**Children will:**

- \*See history as a living, vital part of their lives.
- \*Obtain a broader understanding of American history.
- \*Gain an understanding of Native American culture.
- \*Experience the difficulty and success of communications across cultures.
- \*Learn why pioneers felt it important to migrate across the continent.
- \*Build a bond with pioneer and Native peoples from the past century.
- \*Relate to children of another culture and time period.
- \*Create a positive, lasting impression of the rich heritage of Native and Emigrant Americans.

### **PRE-KINDERGARTEN THROUGH THIRD GRADE**

I. Discussion of costume

A. Children’s fascination with beaded, buckskin clothing -particularly the coyote headdress.

1. A talk explaining the procedures of obtaining hides and skins and preparing them to become articles of clothing.
  - a. a guessing game to figure out what animals Bridger is wearing.
  - b. religious environmental mysticism.
  - c. the concept of everything being related.
2. Presentation of authentic trade beads as “introductions” between emigrants and Native American. Make the link between the beads and the clothing to emphasize the “blending” of the cultures.

3. The emigrants desire for beaver pelts for hats.
- B. The Lakota courting flute.
  1. The soothing sound of the Lakota courting flute emphasizes the different cultures meeting in the west.
  2. An Indian child's day.
    - a. Spent with Grandparents or Uncles and Aunts.
    - b. Interaction with Father and Mother; sisters and brothers.
- C. The Emigrants.
  1. Why they were traveling.
    - a. Oregon and California.
  2. An Emigrant Child's day.
    - a. life on a wagon train.
    - b. Interaction with father and mother; sisters and brothers.
- D. Effect of the Great Migration on Modern Culture.
  1. How the United States came together as a union.
  2. Our unpaid debt to Native America
- E. Questions and Answers.