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## *Ballet Stories*

### **Billy The Kid**

The Wild West is filled with stories of gunslingers and one of the most famous is Billy the Kid. The ballet shows that as a young boy, after witnessing his mother's death by a stray bullet from a gunfight, Billy grabs a knife and stabs the man in the back. As a grown man he continues to kill and is pursued by Pat Garrett who captures him and takes him to jail. Billy escapes into the desert led by an Indian guide who is to bring Billy's sweetheart to his hideout. Instead he brings Pat Garrett. A shot is fired; Billy is dead.

### **Rodeo**

Cowboys gather at the Burnt Ranch for a rodeo. A tough Cowgirl tries to get the attention of the Head Wrangler, but he has an eye for the Rancher's Daughter. At the party that evening, the Champion Roper tries to help the Cowgirl by cleaning up her face and dusting off her pants. But when the Head Wrangler enters with the Rancher's Daughter, the Cowgirl runs off. The party continues when suddenly they all stop and stare. The Cowgirl has entered wearing a dress. The Champion Roper asks her to dance, but liking the change he sees, the Head Wrangler also wants to dance with her. She is tossed between them until the Champion Roper kisses her and the Cowgirl realizes that it is really the Champion Roper she loves.

### **Pillar of Fire**

Hagar is a lonely Victorian woman with two sisters. The Eldest Sister is a spinster, prim, proper and straitlaced. The Youngest Sister is beautiful, spoiled, and coquettish. Hagar has feelings for a young male Friend but is afraid to show them. The Friend has affection for Hagar, too. Knowing that the Friend has come to see Hagar, the Youngest Sister flirts with him and the Eldest Sister invites the Friend into the house, leaving Hagar outside. Desperate with pent-up anger and desire, Hagar is both drawn to and repulsed by the house of free love across the street. Hagar, the pillar of morality, is aflame with the fire that she had only guessed were the secrets of the house of ecstasy. She gives in to a suave, seductive man from the house and goes in with him. Coming out of the house, Hagar is filled with remorse and guilt at having given in to lust. Hagar has brought shame to the family and her sisters feel they are outcasts from society. But the Friend returns and offers her warmth and tenderness. Hagar realizes his forgiving love for her is true.

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### **Fancy Free**

This ballet is about three sailors on shore leave in New York City. They chase girls and go to a bar where they begin showing off for the girls by way of a dance contest. But since there are only two girls and three of them, the sailors start fighting and end up in a pile on the floor. The girls leave and the sailors realize that their fight was for nothing. Back out on the sidewalk the sailors agree “no more girls.” That is until a pretty one walks by. The sailors ignore her until they just can’t stand it and chase off after her.

### **Fall River Legend**

The ballet is based on the true story of Lizzie Borden and the ax murders in Fall River, Massachusetts. The Accused, as Lizzie is called in the ballet, was a spinster whose mother had died when Lizzie was a child. The Father remarried and the stern Stepmother created an oppressive and hateful home. Unable to bear it any longer, the Accused murders both the Father and the Stepmother with an ax. In real life, Lizzie was acquitted of the 1892 ax murders and lived the rest of her life in her father’s house. For the ballet, however, she is found guilty and as she faces the gallows for her hanging, flashbacks through her childhood tell a story of how a loveless life led to the commitment of such acts.

### **Trinity**

Without a story line, this “age of Aquarius” ballet reflects the images of the era, the flower children, the peace movement, the Eastern mysticism, burning of incense and love-ins. It captures the spirit of the times with the celebration of youth. The music themes use Gregorian chants, Renaissance church melodies and Baroque styles performed by an orchestra, a boys choir and a rock band with an electric organ.