

# Creative *Keyboard*



*Van Arsdale Studio*

DECEMBER 2011 NEWSLETTER

## By and For Pace Piano Teachers

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# Welcome Teachers!

Thank you for being part of the launching of *Creative Keyboard News*. All Pace Teachers are invited to share in this news and idea forum, by reading, responding to, and contributing articles and materials in whatever way they see fit. (Copyrights belong to each individual author for his or her own article).

For now, please send questions or information to *Creative Keyboard News* by going to [www.leerobertsmusic.com/PaceTeacherNews.html](http://www.leerobertsmusic.com/PaceTeacherNews.html) Or, if you prefer, email any of the authors featured in this current issue.

Pace Teachers are about interactive *and* independent learning. We are individuals who may sometimes hold divergent viewpoints. Feel free to express yours—Counterpoint can only add to the lively fun, thought and support that this new Pace Teachers' forum offers. *Welcome aboard!*



# “Collective Intelligence”

*Interactive group learning shines when viewed through the lens of a recent study.*

**What makes one group consistently better than another at grasping various activities?** Not the average of the group-members’ intelligence. Nor the presence of a few exceptionally gifted individuals, says a recent study on “Collective Intelligence.” Instead, observe authors Anita Wooley, et. al., it is *social sensitivity*, and *equal “turn-taking”* (as opposed to domination of activities by one or a few people) that most influence group success at “novel tasks in novel contexts.”\*

Our entire society is informed by our ability to work together effectively (witness our national government). Cooperation is a learned skill. Yet opportunities for our young people to practice this early, are sometimes fewer than we might hope. Realities in school classrooms often necessitate “mass-class” teaching rather than student-

\*Evidence for a Collective Intelligence Factor in the Performance of Human Groups.” Anita Williams Woolley,\* et. al.



*The practice of listening skills, turn-taking, close and careful observation, and constructive feedback through group piano study, helps develop invaluable life skills, along with musicianship.*

interactive learning. Sports activities, though a potential venue for peer teaching and learning, don’t always focus on guiding team members to carefully observe and then provide sensitive feedback on each others’ performances.

By teaching piano through an interactive approach, we create valuable opportunities for students to experience the kind of idea-sharing and social sensitivity that Wooley speaks of—the kind that, as we teachers know, enhances not only musicianship, but also the overall ability to effectively cooperate with others, upon which our society depends. Wooley’s interesting findings reiterate the importance of the listening skills, turn-taking, close and careful observation of others/ourselves, and constructive feedback, that we continuously strive to bring out in each group, and every student!

- Cynthia Pace -  
[cmp12061@aol.com](mailto:cmp12061@aol.com)



## *The Excitement and Rewards of Teaching Comprehensive Musicianship*

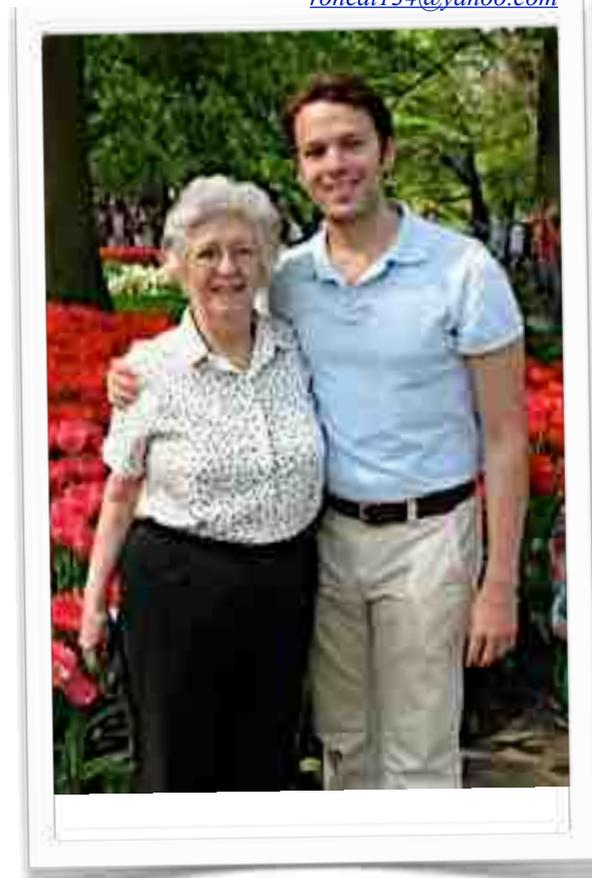
I attended a lecture by Robert Pace in about 1963 at the Lamont School of Music at the University of Denver, and it was truly life-changing for me. I had been teaching piano for 10 years but I immediately understood the value of teaching more about the music than just the notes. Everyone in my family played 2 or more instruments and joined others in many different combinations including voices. I had arranged music for my triple trio of women's voices as young as High School. Much of my love of performance was collaborative, even before it was a buzz word. My lifetime of learning exploded—the Seminars with Dr. Pace, the Pedagogy classes and the teachers I taught at the University of Colorado at Denver, and watching the growth of my students. They absolutely loved the partner lessons, and the small group each week caused so much excitement, they positively bloomed! The parents were so excited about their child's progress that most of them studied until they went off to college. Many of them won in both composition and performance categories locally and nationally.

The wonderfully cooperative and creative Pacesetters keep challenging each other with great ideas about teaching Comprehensive Musicianship. I wish for every teacher to have

the fun and rewards I have had (and I know Dr. Pace had, too). Teaching Piano changes the lives of many families every day.

*Best Wishes to all who are giving the gift of Music to others.*

- Ruth O'Neal -  
[roneal134@yahoo.com](mailto:roneal134@yahoo.com)



Ruth O'Neal and grandson, opera singer (and former Level VI Pace piano student), Mark Van Arsdale.

## *Denver Pacesetters to Host Annual Creative Music Festival*

**Denver Areas Pacesetters** will host their annual Creative Music Festival February 11 and 12 at a local piano dealership (Baker Piano). Students, Level II up, have written compositions.

Uri Ayn Rovner, local composer, will comment on each before and during the festival. Younger students will have an improvisatory experience. At the festival, students are involved with two activities for 45 minutes each. In the composition room, each student performs their composition for a group of students of the same level. Photocopied scores are available to each student. Mr. Rovner then serves as a facilitator, leading a discussion about the composition, suggesting possible new composition or improvisation directions, and offering performance notes. In the ensemble room, students perform duets from the method books together in the piano lab, led by a Pace teacher/conductor. The ensemble portion of the festival prepares students for our large Ensemble Event the following year. A recital of group duet performances (mostly Pace supplementary materials), often with a guest conductor, is the highlight.

*Kathleen Davis and Kathy Van Arsdale will co-teach Level III pedagogy to area teachers January-March in Denver.*

## *Getting the Word Out*

**Clavier Companion:** Several recent issues of *Clavier Companion* have featured Dr. Robert Pace, his philosophy, method and materials. Julie Lovison and Kathy Van Arsdale wrote a review of Pace books for the September 2011 issue, and Cindy Pace wrote a remembrance for the November issue,



Halloween Open Class  
Van Arsdale Studio

and a response to the review and editor's comments. This issue has a fabulous photo of Dr. Pace on the cover, working with his children at the piano. For those who do not subscribe, the journal is available at

***claviercompanion.com***.

Subsequently, many inquiries about the Pace Method have been received at Lee Roberts Music Publications. Some teachers are using the reviews as introductory material for prospective students and teachers. The wonderful photos of the Pace family and detailed biography are well worth having!

### **Sample Music for Dealers:** Did

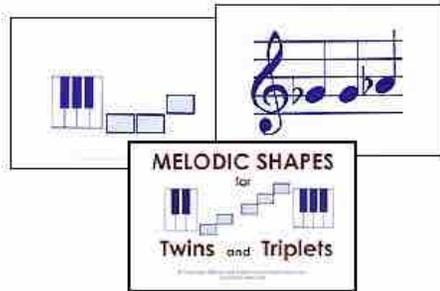
you know that Lee Roberts Music Publications, Inc. will happily send sample copies of a variety of Pace materials to local music dealers? Your local dealer may be more willing to stock Pace items after they have seen the outstanding materials! Email or call Lee Roberts with information about your dealer.

**Find A Teacher:** There are probably many more Pace teachers than those currently listed at the "Find A Teacher" page of the Lee Roberts Music Publications web site. Please submit the name, email address and city of those teachers that YOU know who teach Pace, so that all can be contacted by those seeking a teacher, fellow teachers, and items such as this newsletter. Contact Lee Roberts at their website or mail a list to them.

- *Kathy Van Arsdale* -  
[kathy.vanarsdale@gmail.com](mailto:kathy.vanarsdale@gmail.com)

## 3 Fun Games with Melodic Shapes flashcards

Here are 3 games using the Lee Roberts Melodic Shapes Cards.



### Pre-reading: "Pick a Card"

- Fan cards out face down.
- Student chooses

one card and plays its melodic pattern. Point and say before playing: Student points to notes and says, for instance, "Low, low, high," then plays the pattern on the keyboard.

**"Cookie Jar" Circle Game** (For Halloween "Pumpkin Patch" variation, place pumpkins over patterns)

- Students move to music, around a circle of pattern cards placed face down or face up on the floor. Use animal movements that students suggest, or various rhythms with skipping, hopping, etc.
- When the music stops, students stop. They then play the card they are in front of. Students put the cards in the "cookie jar" (middle of the circle) as they finish, or, they leave cards on the piano and play them together as a song.

**Ear Training, or "Loose Tooth"** (if with 7 year olds)

- Students look at 4 pattern cards on piano rack.
- One student or teacher plays one pattern (out of visual line of other students).
- Students pick the card that they heard. As you take cards away, they are the "teeth that students lose."



If you want to learn some more fun games, I will be presenting “**Can We Play a Game Today?**” at the Music Teachers National Association Conference, Monday March 26, at 11:00 a.m. in New York. For a handout of a similar seminar that I presented at the Illinois State Music Teachers Association this past November, email me at [LSMSPiano@aol.com](mailto:LSMSPiano@aol.com)

*The MTNA presentation is an abbreviated version of a seminar I present at my studio in Chicago every year: **Keyboard Oriented Music Games and Improvisation for Piano and General Music Teachers**, Wed., August 8, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. See [www.LakeShoreMusicStudio.com](http://www.LakeShoreMusicStudio.com) for details.*

## *Accent On Concepts*

### **Waking Up to Brother John: Discovering 35 Music Concepts Using the Tune Frère Jacques:**

*This is another seminar I am fond of giving for Teachers' Groups.*

This presentation shows how this versatile tune can be the vehicle for discovering a multitude of concepts. Four scenarios illustrate the use of the tune in pre-school, level 1, early intermediate, and classroom teaching situations. The idea is to see that you can explain important music theory at any level of learning and also that simple melodies and music phrases are found within more complex pieces as the student's repertoire advances. By focusing on only one melody it is enlightening for teachers and students to see the various concepts within the structure of one simple musical theme. A sample of this presentation was included in the Lee Roberts Showcase at MTNA in Milwaukee, 2011. To see a video and read more visit <http://lakeshoremusicstudio.com/blog/?p=86> Email me if you would like the complete list of 35 concepts. I'd love to hear from you if you think of additional concepts and twists on studying this song.

- Julie Lovison -  
[lsmspiano@aol.com](mailto:lsmspiano@aol.com)



## Interpretive Concepts for Playing Musically



S. Marion Verhaalen

*These points are based on the premise that even the youngest student can learn how to play musically.*

1. **Composers don't write notes**, they write musical ideas. These are musical messages and should be played expressively.

2. **Scales and chords are the vocabulary of the musical language.**

Their use—grammar—organizes the ideas and musical meaning.

3. **Check the title** of a piece and try to express its main feeling or intent.

4. **Notes are explicit symbols** on a page of music; the **interpretation is implicit** in those very notes.

- When a line rises, it usually implies energy/*crescendo*; when it descends, the music usually gets softer unless the composer specifies otherwise. Rising and falling sequences follow the same rule.
- Repeated notes usually *crescendo* if they culminate in a higher point, or *decrescendo* towards a resolution or lower point.
- Harmonic tension or dissonance usually calls for stress, followed by a softer resolution, even in just a V7-I.
- Sometimes, descending passages can create a “snowball” effect, usually indicated by a composer.
- Classical phrase structure—short-short-long—usually implies a *crescendo*.
- Repeated phrases at the end of a work usually suggest a *decrescendo*.

5. **All dynamic markings** and various *legato/staccato* touches [on piano] **should be observed in the context** of the particular piece. *Staccatos* can be sharp and sprightly, gentle releases, or semi-accents in a louder texture.

6. **The style of the particular composer and the historical period** will also suggest other performance nuances, such as *rubato*, how to handle trills and ornaments, touches, etc. *Let the music literature live!*

- S. Marion Verhaalen, SSSS -



### Verhaalen CD

Sister Marion Verhaalen (a/k/a Mary Verne), composer of *Brazilian Duets*, *Solo Adventures*, etc., has made a beautiful CD of all her works. In addition to her wonderful piano works, there are compositions for organ, voice, guitar, and other instruments. If you are interested in knowing more, email her at [mverhaalen@aol.com](mailto:mverhaalen@aol.com). JL

### 2011 Lifetime Achievement Award

See <http://www.civicmusicmilwaukee.org/teachers.shtml> to read about Sister Verhaalen's well deserved 2011 Lifetime Achievement Award. CP.



See Yoko Jimbo's observations on piano teaching in Japan, in November/December Clavier Companion Magazine.

*Fort Lee, NJ*  
[magic1630@gmail.com](mailto:magic1630@gmail.com)

*Yoko Jimbo &*



Sachiko Sampei and Students

*Sachiko Sampei  
Studio*



## *Concert Artists*

**Mark VanArsdale** is the epitome of a total Pace student—a nuanced performer in piano, choral, and vocal solo performances. He aced AP Music Theory in HS, tutored theory



Mark Van Arsdale, (Pace piano student through Level VI), now an operatic artist, takes a bow for his leading role in the *Magic Flute*.

at Northwestern University and Indiana University, created many interesting arrangements for his *a cappella* group as an undergraduate, and is working now on reading piano reductions of opera scores at sight—tricky, un-pianistic literature!

Following Tanglewood performances of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* under the baton on James Levine, Mark Van Arsdale accepted the first of two year-long contracts with L'Opéra du Rhin in

Strasbourg, France. Contracts include solo and ensemble recitals (last year: all Schumann, this year: all Liszt); lead roles in Donizetti's *Don Pasquale*, Rossini's *L'Occasione fa il Ladro*, Cui's *Puss In Boots*, Cherubini's *Ali Baba & the 40 Thieves*, and Thomas' *Hamlet*; and many minor roles and



*Also a nuanced performer in piano, Mr. Van Arsdale has enjoyed many lead operatic roles and appearances, including performances with James Levine, and with L'Opéra du Rhin, Strasbourg.*

benefit performances. L'Opéra du Rhin performs in Strasbourg, Mulhouse, and Paris. Last summer Mr. Van Arsdale took an additional contract to perform in a Chateau Summer Festival in Sediers, France, as Ferrando in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*. Mr. Van Arsdale lives in the charming Alsatian village of Colmar on the fabled Route du Vin.

**Hear/see an excerpt of Mark's wonderful Indiana University performance in *Magic Flute*:**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ntFKct1cUdM>

## *Concert Artists*

### **Winner of the McMahan International Music Competition, and many others,**

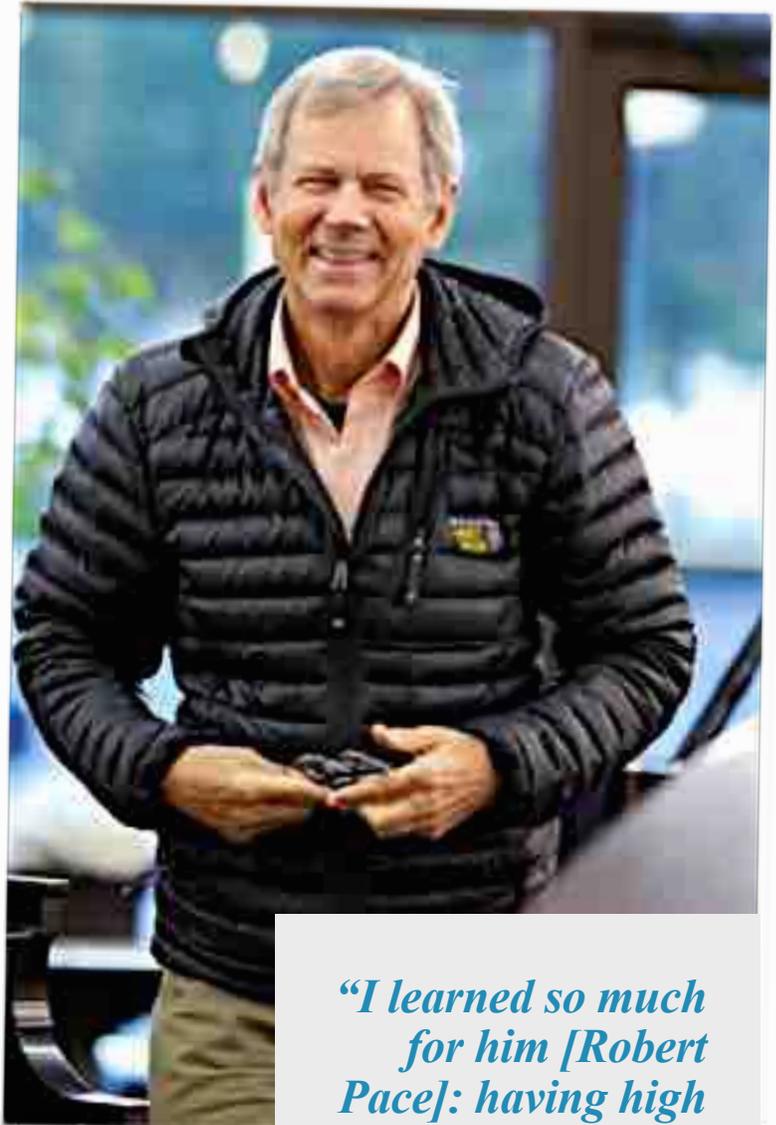
pianist Larry Graham began early piano studies that continued through high school, with Mrs. Mabel Crabtree, of Ada Oklahoma.\* After young Mr. Graham had begun winning numerous state and national competitions, Mrs. Crabtree introduced him to her son-in-law, Robert Pace. For several summers during Mr. Graham's high school summers, Mr. Graham lived with the Pace family and studied with Dr. Pace. About Dr. Pace, Mr. Graham recalled:

I learned so much from him: having high expectations from every practice session; taking difficult passages apart and carefully building back; being analytical as to form, melody, and harmony; gaining much awareness about form and harmony; thorough technical training; introduction to 20th century music; being well-rounded in all aspects of musicianship; being organized and focused in practice.

Following high school, Mr. Graham studied as a scholarship student at the Juilliard School, New York with Rosina

\*Crabtree students who became professional musicians also included jazz pianist, Lee Shaw, and several others.

Lhevinne and Martin Canin. Early successes in piano competitions such as the Kosciusko, Bloch and G.B.Dealey resulted in Graham's debut with Dallas Symphony Orchestra in 1965.



*“I learned so much for him [Robert Pace]: having high expectations from every practice session...”*

*- Larry Graham -*

*“No formula can ever replace sincere and discerning music-making.” - Larry Graham -*

In 1969 Mr. Graham won the Concert Artists auditions which led to his debut at New York’s Carnegie Recital Hall.

Graham’s superb performances have garnered acclaim on both sides of the Atlantic. Winner of the coveted “Prize of the Public,” by overwhelming vote at the Queen Elizabeth Concours in 1975, Graham was also the top-ranked American in this prestigious international competition. Other international successes followed, as in 1977 at the Arthur Rubinstein competition in Tel Aviv. In 1986, he closed out his brilliant competitive career with First Prize at the McMahan international Music Competition.

Mr. Graham has subsequently played over 35 different concerti in performances with orchestras both here and abroad. There have been numerous solo engagements as well. After hearing him, Paul Hume of the Washington Post declared that Mr. Graham “...will emerge as one of the finest of our new generation of pianists.”

Mr. Graham’s mastery of the repertoire encompasses a full range of piano works from Bach through Stravinsky. He avoids both the hyper-emotional theatricality, and the “authentic” sterility that are currently in vogue. “No formula can ever replace sincere and discerning music-making,” he comments.

In addition to his activities as a soloist, Graham has also performed extensively with chamber music ensembles along with such artists as Gil Shaham, Arnold Steinhardt, and Ransom Wilson. He has also appeared with

*“Mr. Graham ... will emerge as one of the finest of our new generation of pianists.”  
- Paul Hume,  
Washington Post -*

the Guarneri, Takacs, and Tokyo string quartets. For eleven years, Larry Graham was the pianist for the highly acclaimed Pablo Casals Trio, the only ensemble that Mr. Casals

personally lent his name to.

For 25 years he was Professor of piano at the University of Colorado and continues working with gifted pre-college students.

Samples of Mr. Graham’s recordings will soon be available on [leerobertsmusic.com](http://leerobertsmusic.com).

## *Pace Teachers - Global Network Outreach*

**Have you searched for a new creative idea** or wondered how other Pace teachers were dealing with a tricky teaching situation? The Pacesetter group in the Greater Seattle Area would like to reach out to connect with Pace teachers from around the globe to get new ideas, teaching strategies, games and to energize each other as we learn new things.

Communication is an important tool, and with technology, the opportunities are endless. But, with so many avenues it's difficult to choose which would work the best. At this time, there is a Yahoo group that has been established, where questions and comments can be posted and shared with all members of the group. The group is

*pacepianoteachers*—all one word—in the Yahoo groups section, and is for those teaching Pace. If you have a Yahoo email address it is easy to set up your account. If not, you can send me an email at [hartnellhouse@hotmail.com](mailto:hartnellhouse@hotmail.com), and as the moderator of this group I will send you an invitation to join.

*We would love to be able to share ideas and connect as one big Pacesetter group!*

- Nancy Hartnell -  
[hartnellhouse@gmail.com](mailto:hartnellhouse@gmail.com)

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*“Upbeat and contemporary”*

### **NCKP**

**NKCP Conference:** Reno and Julie Lovison represented the Robert Pace materials at the Lee Roberts Music booth at the National Keyboard Pedagogy Conference in Lombard, IL (outside Chicago) this past July. Julie reports that, “The buzz at this conference was very upbeat and contemporary in tone. The organizers have somehow captured a way to address both the traditional and historical aspects of piano teaching with the most up to date philosophies and

technological developments. The consequence for us was that many people came into the booth with fresh eyes and ears, and heard for the first time the exciting news of the Pace method's comprehensive musicianship, conceptual learning, and multi-key philosophies. We made a point to tell everyone to go to the Lee Roberts website ([www.LeeRobertsMusic.com](http://www.LeeRobertsMusic.com)) for important articles, teaching tips, descriptions and sound samples of the music, as well as access to ordering the materials directly from this site.”

We enjoyed catching up with consultants Donna Edwards (Michigan) and Ursula Newman (Arizona), and with Karen Kreiger (Vanderbilt University, Nashville); and meeting Yuko Hagiwara, a member of the Pace Teachers' group in Japan.

- Julie Lovison -

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## *Clavier Companion Reprints & MTNA*

**Available at [leerobertsmusic.com](http://leerobertsmusic.com):** Many teachers have asked for copies of the wonderful reviews of the Robert Pace Series by Julie Lovison and Kathy Van Arsdale, as well as the very nice article by *Clavier Companion* editor in chief, Pete Jutras, and the response to the reviews and the Robert Pace Tribute. Dr. Pete Jutras very kindly granted my request for permission to reprint the articles, as long as we include on each copy, the credit line *Clavier Companion* has specified. A pdf of the articles is now being prepared, with the copyright compliant notation. This pdf will be available for download, on the [www.leerobertsmusic.com](http://www.leerobertsmusic.com) website. Anyone who wishes, may make copies to share with students and prospective students, as well as other teachers who may be interested in the approach.

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Companion reprints  
available at  
[leerobertsmusic.com](http://leerobertsmusic.com)*

**MTNA 2012:** I'm looking forward to getting a chance to visit with many of you in March, at the New York MTNA Convention.

- Cynthia Pace -

## *Iptf teacher training*

### *List Your Training Sessions For Free in:*

#### **Clavier Companion Magazine:**

email: Kathy VanArsdale at [kathy.vanarsdale@gmail.com](mailto:kathy.vanarsdale@gmail.com) by 12/22/11

and

#### **Lee Roberts Music Publications - [leerobertsmusic.com](http://leerobertsmusic.com)**

email: Cindy Pace at [cmp12061@aol.com](mailto:cmp12061@aol.com) any time.

### **Sessions Currently Posted:**

#### **Denver: January - March 2012:**

*Pace Curriculum: Comprehensive Musicianship Teacher Training  
Level 3*

*Date: January 11 - March 7, 2012*

*9:00 AM - Noon*

*Eight Wednesday Sessions*

**Clinicians:** Kathleen Davis and Kathy VanArsdale

Info: [kathy.vanarsdale@gmail.com](mailto:kathy.vanarsdale@gmail.com)

#### **Chicago: July 2012**

*Pace Curriculum: Comprehensive Musicianship - Group Piano Teacher Training*

*Preschool - Level 3*

*Preschool - Music Readiness & Beginning Piano Program:*

*Combines Music for Moppets and Level 1*

*Date: July 13-15, 2012*

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*Kinder-Keyboard & Level 2*

*Date: July 17-19, 2012*

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*Working With Level 3*

*Date: July 21-23, 2012*

**Clinician:** Julie Lovison

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#### **Albany, NY: July 2012**

*Pace Curriculum: Comprehensive Musicianship - Group Piano Teacher Training*

*Preschool, & Level 1 (Child and Teen/Adult-Beginner)*

*Date: July 17-19, 2012*

**Clinician:** Cynthia Pace

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