

Creative Keyboard



NEW!

SUMMER 2012 NEWSLETTER

By and For Pace Piano Teachers & Special Guests



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**Help [students]
discover that there are
no limits on what they can create
and, that the more they create,
the easier it becomes.”**

Dr. Robert Pace
Improvisation and Creative
Problem-Solving 1999

Hello Teachers!

Welcome to Creative Keyboard, Issue 2

All of us most probably share the common goal of *ongoing musical creativity* for our students. No wonder the topic of “creativity” springs up throughout our *Creative Keyboard* newsletter. The authors in this issue have provided many thoughts, questions, and tips on facilitating creativity and we hope you’ll find these interesting and useful. We invite everyone to add to our ongoing dialogue, by contributing any material you wish for the upcoming third issue, including responses to articles in this current issue. Best wishes for some enjoyable reading and a happy summer.

Structure, Intuition, Innovation

By Dr. Cynthia Pace



Cynthia Pace

From outside the field of music, historian Howard Chudacoff offers a thought-provoking viewpoint on creativity. In his book, *Children At Play: An American History*, Dr. Chudacoff discusses the importance of improvised, imagination-based childhood activities, where children are the ones who decide what and how to play. This kind of play, he

suggests, is key to childhood development of executive functions. Chudacoff finds that over the past half century, child-directed creative play has become crowded out increasingly by other sorts of play, including electronic games and adult supervised activities such as sports:

[Prior to the electronic era]...play was unrestricted by inflexible rules or software... Most...toys could be used in both intended and unintended ways....Monopoly money...could serve countless purposes unrelated to the board game....The point is that many formal toys promoted improvisation and stretched a child’s imagination in a manner that, unlike today’s electronic toys, was not ruled by a media backstory.¹

Dr. Chudacoff’s observations bring to mind the teaching of musical creativity, and the question of how to balance activities originated by teachers, with those originated by students.

We give students invaluable experience in creating their own music when we teach them to improvise/compose with structures such as variation, question and answer, chord progressions, tonalities, musical stories, various forms, etc. At home, many students respond with spontaneous, self-directed creation at the keyboard. Others, however, need help in finding space for self-initiated “free range” piano exploration—the kind that existed before lessons.

• Creativity that is innovative.

By including “open ended” creative lesson activities and home assignments, and, especially, by assuring parents that it’s good to also allow students to create non-lesson material at the piano, we further the sense that there are virtually **“no limits on what [one] can create,”** as Robert Pace said. Through giving students structural tools, but also fostering student-directed intuitive exploration, we aim for creativity that is *innovative*—creativity that not only rearranges what is at hand, but brings something new to hand to start with.

Practicing Recall— Essential to Learning: Jeffrey Karpicke and Janell Blunt’s research on the role of recall in learning, provides intriguing

implications for teaching *Comprehensive Musicianship*. Karpicke and Blunt demonstrate that students learn more when they simply practice recalling something, than when they observe conceptual relationships but do not actively practice recalling this information. The authors conclude that the process of recall is not just a “readout” of what someone already knows, but is an essential element in the “production of learning.” Concept-based study is a valuable learning tool, they note, but practice in reconstructing the concepts from memory is vital to this tool’s effectiveness.²

We piano teachers know that students exercise recall and solidify learning when they practice pieces, improvisation, and games (flashcards, board writing, and playback, etc.), and when they peer teach.

• More “mini-reviews.”

Nonetheless, after coming across this study, I decided that my own teaching might benefit from more “mini-reviews” throughout each lesson. Now, if one of my classes has just finished “discovering” how to improvise with an *ostinato*, we may move on to a flashcard game. But not without looking back. The *ostinato* is not yet put away! During flashcards, and/or several other times in the lesson, I might “surprise” my students with something like, “who can run to the piano now and play the *ostinato* we did a few minutes ago?” Or, “who can make up an *ostinato*?” Or, “what was that word we learned earlier?” and “what does it mean?” and so on. Not only does this help to cement learning. This *in-lesson* reconstruction of knowledge also adds a bit more insurance, in case there’s a shortage of practice some week.

Creative Recall—Basic to Comprehensive

Musicianship: Many years before Karpicke and Blunt’s research, Robert Pace’s *Comprehensive Musicianship* stressed the limitless potential for “re-constructing” knowledge—in a *creative way*. When students give feedback and tips to each other, and explain and teach one another concepts, they are actively reconstructing information and strengthening their ability to access, apply, and expand upon knowledge. Moreover, when students vary music, or transpose it (another form of variation), reconstruction is built in: In creating variations, students must mentally retrieve the original concept. But beyond that, they also must

comprehend it so that they can make something new that is like the original, and simultaneously different. Creative change does not substitute for

• Re-constructing knowledge —in a creative way.

practicing specific recall when learning to perform a particular piece. But, creative change, or “re-construction” can immensely enhance, reinforce and expand learning—especially musicality. To paraphrase Robert Pace, **“the more [students] create, the easier it [all] becomes.”**

Adapted from *Conceptual Learning vs. Plain Old Practice and Leaving Room for Independent Creativity* (<http://leerobertsmusic.com/dynamic-learning-robert-pac/two-new-teaching-studies>) by Cynthia Pace © 2011

¹*Children at Play: An American History*. Howard P. Chudacoff New York University Press, New York and London, © 2007 New York University, xiii.

²*Retrieval Practice Produces More Learning than Elaborative Studying with Concept Mapping*. By Jeffrey D. Karpicke and Janell R. Blunt, in *Science* (Online), January 2011 (10.1126/science.<http://www.sciencemag.org/content/early/2011/01/19/science.1199327.abstract>).

About Creative Keyboard

All Pace Teachers and Guests 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).

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!*

Please send questions or information to *Creative Keyboard News* by going to www.leerobertsmusic.com/PaceTeacherNews.html Or email any of the authors featured in this current issue.

Dr. Cynthia Pace has a lifelong involvement with Dr. Robert Pace’s teaching methods, as a student, teacher, clinician, writer, and editor. At age 15, she started out teaching in her father’s studio, and accompanying her mother’s vocal recitals. She began giving Pace workshops in 1981. Her education includes Juilliard undergraduate studies, an MM (SUNY Stony Brook), and an EdD (Teachers College Columbia University), plus postdoctoral coursework (SUNY Albany). She is a certified public school teacher, and has taught K-12 choral, instrumental, and general music (public and private schools). She is president of Lee Roberts Music Publications, and continues her longtime piano teaching. Her publications include: *Piano Plain and Simple*, *Grand Staff Capers*, *Fur Elise Flash Mob*, and “Accent on Form-Against-Form: Ruth Crawford’s Piano Study in Mixed Accents, (*Theory and Practice*. Vol. 20).”

Guest Author - Time to Create

A Battle for the Creative Spirit

By Dr. Bert Konowitz

I recently phoned a local music school to inquire about their instructional program. My granddaughter, 7 years old, is about to embark on one of the most joyful of human voyages – learning to play the piano. After a pleasant conversation with the Director of the school, I was satisfied to learn about a range of details—recitals, theory classes, the social climate that is maintained. Terrific – I was happy.

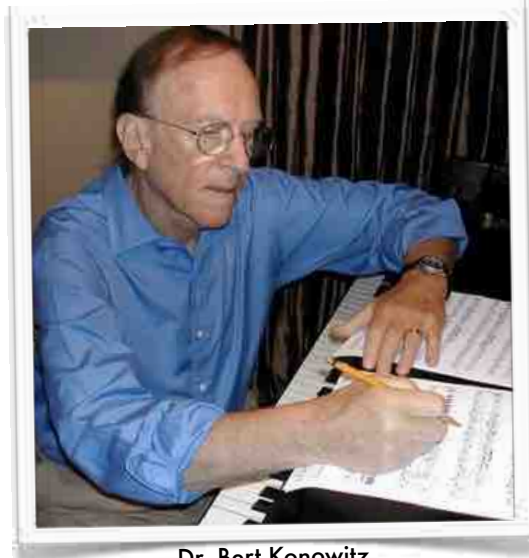
“One more thing,” I said. “Is there any activity in which the musical ear and creative

• The child plays – hesitatingly at first, but I encourage them. “Could you make it sound sunny? Or like it feels when you are in the playground?”

imagination are explored?” After a moment of silence I added, “Is there any improvisation activity in the lessons?” “Well,” said the Director, “you know it’s only a half-hour lesson, and with all the other things that need to be done, it is very difficult to find the time.....” She is correct. It *is* difficult to find the time.

“A man will be imprisoned in a room with a door that’s unlocked and opens inwards, as long as it does not occur to him to pull rather than push,” said a very smart person.

Here is another way to start a beginner, walking into a studio for the very first time, ready to take the first piano lesson. (Can you hear the rapid



Dr. Bert Konowitz

thumping of the child’s heart and sense the surge of adrenalin that envelops the room?)

“Hi,” I say, “I am so happy that you are going to begin playing the piano. You know, when I am happy I feel like this...” Still standing, I play quick, short, happy BLACK notes in different registers. “I know that if you take one finger (select a finger) and play HAPPY (quick, short, detached) on the BLACK notes, then you too will be able to play like me !” The child plays – hesitatingly at first, but I encourage them. “Could you make it sound sunny? Or like it feels when you are in the playground? Or when you are going to have your favorite dessert? Or.....”

The child improvises....

The child composes....

The child begins the journey of Musical Literacy and the Creative Spirit.

.....Lesson Time elapsed: 6 minutes.

New! *Jazz Fun* by Dr. Bert Konowitz

Jazz Fun is a set of six early intermediate pieces, uniquely composed to provide a fun and social experience, as students explore various jazz, rock and pop styles. Special parts are included with each solo, so that parents, teachers, friends, or audiences have the option of joining the performance of each piece.

Have fun, reach out to others and discover the wonderful ways that you can be part of the social media experience through music!

Bert Konowitz



Jazz Fun- newly available

He has received awards for his compositions from the National Endowment for the Arts and ASCAP, and the Teachers College Distinguished Alumni Award. His works have been performed at Lincoln Centre, and his presentations include a recent demonstration of his improv/composition work at the NYSSMA Conference, the MENC Eastern - Division Conference, and the MENC National Conference. He presented a demonstration of his new Lee Roberts publication, *Jazz Fun*, at the MTNA 2012 Conference.

Dr. Bert Konowitz, Professor of Music Education (Retired) at Teachers College, Columbia University, is known for his pioneering work in all areas of improvisation. He founded and conducts SPIRIT, the TC Resident Improv Ensemble. SPIRIT's performances have featured Dave Brubeck, Alexander Bernstein (son of Leonard Bernstein), and Dr. Billy Taylor. Many of Dr. Konowitz' improvisational publications are distributed and performed world wide.

Video presentations by Dr. Konowitz: http://www.leerobertsmusic.com/jazz_fun_konowitz.html and http://www.leerobertsmusic.com/dorian_improv_konowitz.html

Jazz Fun - Thematics:

Stomp Your Foot

(Syncopation*)

Blue-Jazz March Bert Konowitz

* Syncopation (Accent on the "weak" beat)

mp

First Solo - in C Major by Students
Parent, Teacher, Auditor

Text Me Some Jazz

(Call and Response)

Moderate - Steady and even eighths Bert Konowitz

mp

Recesses, Teachers

Whose Blue Note Is It, Anyway?!

(Blue Notes*)

Easy and relaxed, Swing Eighths Bert Konowitz

mp

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Easy Walkin' Blues

(Walking Bass and Comping*)

Easy Going "Trip" - with Swing Eighths Bert Konowitz

mp

Knock, Knock, Who's There? Dorian!

(Mode)

Say and play: "Knock, Knock" Do-it-an' Mode* Bert Konowitz

mp

Audience answer: "Who's there?"

Slowly Say A-loud: "A B C D E"

Moderately slow, with a strong beat & even eighths

Play It Again, Again, and Again

(Riffs*)

Easy going, unhurried Bert Konowitz

mp

Repeat 4 Times with changing dynamics

Repeat Riff 4 times

*Riff (Diminuto) - a repeated musical pattern used in Jazz

slow, steady, soft, recovers, (John Cage)

Creative Connections

Improvisation— At the Top!

By S. Marion Verhaalen, SSSF



S. Marion Verhaalen

If teaching is helping students make connections, then improvisation is a most useful tool. If conceptualization is at the heart of learning, then improvisation is a natural way of observing how much students have really absorbed. If education is a

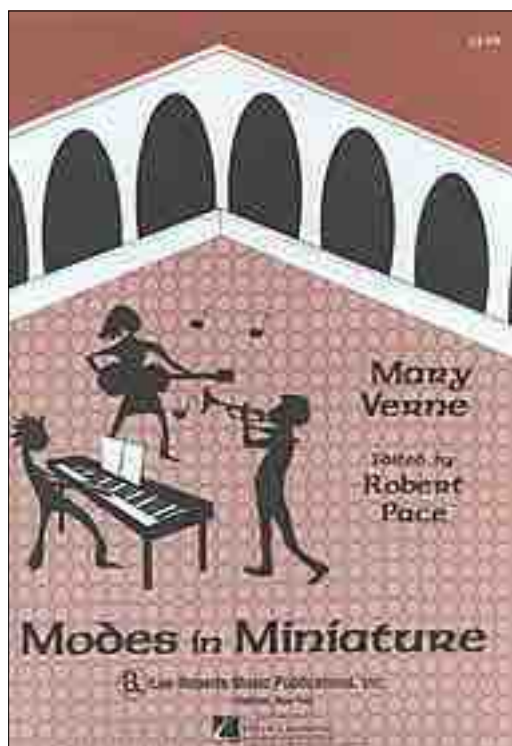
process rather than a product, then improvisation is education par excellence. If the study of music is to give students some lifelong skills for continued participation in music, again, improvisation comes out right on top of the list of desirable learning outcomes. Why then does improvisation play such a small or nonexistent role in the piano study of most students? Why do some teachers not see the broad implications of teaching music through the piano? [If we hadn't learned what Dr. Robert Pace has shared with us, we might be among them.] What is so secret about how music is put together? How can piano study be more useful to a student? What seems so difficult about making music of one's own? Why is it so hard to get inside students' goals and feelings and learning styles? What meaning are our students seeking in studying with us? And -

• Why does improvisation play such a small role in the piano study of most students?

Why all these questions? It is too easy as teachers to focus on the perfect performance of pieces, that is, translating the printed page into a reasonably good performance. That process involves a direct eye-to-finger-to-key circuit that can easily bypass the mental computer. When this happens, students can soon forget the pieces and join an army of adults who "don't remember" what they learned. The study of music through the piano should give them a musical foundation for life. Improvisation is essentially an exploratory process, a freeing experience for a student. It calls for an open and nonjudgmental attitude as they start. It should begin at the first lesson with something as simple as playbacks on the three black keys, first with the teacher, then between their own two hands. This can be both scary and exciting the first time they try it. Students will quickly become conscious of how melodies move as they use what they know

to create something new. The melodies and rhythms can gradually be refined and extended. It is important that they suspend judgment of their own creations initially. The only mistake they can make is to

stop! Alternating four-measure question/answer phrases with the teacher over a continuing accompaniment sets the expectation that "the music must go on." Experiencing this in a group is the most fun of all. As students hear each other and have repeated opportunities in a traffic line to play their phrases, they gain confidence and are encouraged to risk a little more. Several such experiences of getting things rolling are enough to open the creative channels and put fear to rest. Use of minimal material, such as only the black keys at first, is important. Expand the repertoire of



Modes in Miniature—A valuable introduction to modal colors and improvisation.

material as they learn about five-finger patterns, full scales, chord patterns, etc. Analysis of what happened, what seemed to work well, which kinds of ideas were most exciting, can follow after the experience. This kind of reflection is important for nurturing students' skills but it must never become negative criticism. This kind of improvisational

• If the study of music is to give students skills for lifelong participation in music, improvisation comes out right on top

experience has its own inherent values for students. It gives them the sense that creating is not only possible, but a good thing to do, a neat way to learn about music, a super way to develop listening

• What meaning are our students seeking in studying with us?

skills, continuity in performance, and it is a marvelous means of expressing feelings. Hearing that a former student, after a day in school, comes home, sits down at the piano and improvises, speaks loudly to the benefits of learning to improvise. **A demonstration of a group improvising in this way at a recital is "frosting on the cake." Parents are stunned, students love it, and the teacher can be proud of the entire process!**

Sister Marion Verhaalen SSSF [Mary Verne] is a well-known performing pianist, composer, arranger and music pedagogue. She has been involved with the Pace Group Teaching approach and served as a consultant since the mid-1960s. She introduced a Portuguese version of the Pace Program in Brazil where she also did her doctoral research in Brazilian music. Her publications, ten books and a large and varied repertoire of music for piano, voice, choral groups and instruments, include a children's opera, *Under the Greenwood Tree*, and an oratorio, *Judith*. She spent a semester as a Visiting Fulbright Professor (Federal University in Porto Alegre). Her *Camargo Guarnieri, Brazilian Composer: A Study Of His Creative Life and Works*, is published by Indiana U. Press. Her Pace Series publications include: *City Set, Solo Adventures Sets 1-4, Concertina, Brazilian Duets*.

Check for Video presentations by S. Marion Verhaalen at: leerobertsmusic.com

Before School Begins

Early Beginners Share with Friends, Mom, Dad...



Yoko Jimbo

As she taught *Moppets* and *Kinder Keyboard*, Yoko Jimbo noticed her students' special enthusiasm for sharing their musical activities with family and friends. Several years ago, to add to

these experiences, she began creating duet arrangements of songs from the preschool/early elementary books. Her *Very Beginning Duets Set 1*, is an exciting outgrowth of this process, containing seven arrangements of *Kinder Keyboard* favorites.

Students and their partners delight in playing these *Very Beginning* duets, especially when parents or friends who claim to "know nothing about music" can suddenly harmonize along with the student, as in "Step Up Hold-It." "Step Up Hold-It!" makes the first duet experience easy, by having the partners play in parallel rhythm and melody. Partners add "Step Down Hold-It!" to "Step Up Hold-It!" in the next duet, providing a first experience in playing "voice-against-voice."

Along with enjoying the fun of sharing, students are also actually practicing important transfer of learning, since each duet revisits and extends concepts that *Kinder Keyboard* has already introduced. These basics include: transposing; major, minor, dorian, pentatonic, and bitonal sound; pattern/repetition/sequence; variation, question and answer, improvisation; beat-rhythm relation, sensitive listening to a partner, engagement of the imagination, and much more.

Published by Lee Roberts Music. Available through Hal Leonard, Lee Roberts, and online and local dealers.

*• Fun through sharing
musical experience
while expanding
fundamental concepts.*

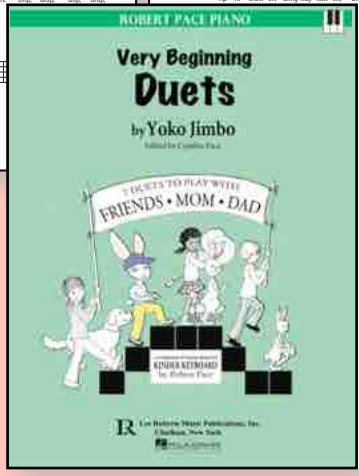
Yoko Jimbo graduated from the National Tokyo Art University with a degree in music. She then moved to the United States, earning a masters in music at Teachers College, Columbia University where she studied with Dr. Robert Pace. In 1982, she became an IPTF Consultant as well as the IPTF coordinator in Japan. Through arranging for Dr. Pace to lecture at major Universities throughout Japan, Ms. Jimbo was instrumental in introducing to Japan, the Pace Teaching method, with its ideas of comprehensive musicianship. She founded the Pace Method Study Group in Japan, and has trained many Pace teachers. She has lectured extensively on the teaching of students of all ages, both in Japan and the US. She continues to work with teachers in both countries, and maintains a large piano studio in the United States.

New! *Very Beginning Duets* by Yoko Jimbo

Students enjoy playing together with family and friends....

The collage displays various pages from the book, including:
 - Page 2: 'STEP UP HOLD-IT!' (SECONDO) with a keyboard diagram and instructions: '1. MARCH with a steady beat. Clap "STEP UP HOLD IT" as you march. 2. SHAPE this melody as you sing "step up hold it..." 3. SING and "play in" you will use for you 4. SING and "play in" you will use for you 5. Find your keys on PLAY "STEP UP HOLD IT" Use one hand, the...'
 - Page 3: 'STEP UP HOLD-IT!' (PRIMO) with a rabbit illustration and instructions: '1. PLAY "STEP UP HOLD-IT (Primo)" on these new keys. 2. PLAY a DUET: One partner plays PRIMO (pg 3), as the other plays SECONDO (page 2).'
 - Page 8: 'RALPH' (SECONDO) with a frog illustration and instructions: '1. CLAP the rhythm while singing "half_note_get quarter_quarter_quarter..." 2. SING and shape this SECONDO. Sing the words. 3. PLAY on your keyboard.'
 - Page 9: 'RALPH' (PRIMO) with a frog illustration and instructions: '1. CLAP the rhythm while singing "half_note_get quarter_quarter_quarter..." 2. SING and shape this SECONDO. Sing the words. 3. PLAY on your keyboard.'
 - Page 12: 'FIRE TRUCK' (SECONDO) with a fire truck illustration and instructions: 'What is alike in the left hand and right hand part? Can you make up new melodies on these three tones? Do you hear the noisy sirens and bells as you play this duet?'
 - Page 15: 'FIRE TRUCK' (PRIMO) with a fire truck illustration and instructions: 'After playing the black keys with your left hand and the white keys with your right hand, reverse. Move your right hand to the nearby bright keys and your left hand to the white keys, C, A, and B, and play.'
 - Page 17: 'APRIL SHOWERS' (PRIMO) with a flower illustration and instructions: 'Ap-ril show-ers bring May flow-ers. Drip, drip, drip, drip, drip, drip, drip, drip.'
 - Page 16: 'APRIL SHOWERS' (SECONDO) with a person under an umbrella illustration and instructions: 'Ap-ril show-ers bring May flow-ers. Drip, drip, drip, drip, drip, drip, drip, drip.'
 - Page 18: 'APRIL SHOWERS' (SECONDO) with a person under an umbrella illustration and instructions: 'Wash-y wash-y, squishy squash-y.'

...while revisiting and extending important concepts.



Second Career—Teaching in the Schools

Creative Music in the Classroom

No Child Left Behind

By Kay Graves



Kay Graves

After thirty years of teaching Pace piano in Atlanta, GA, I retired, along with my husband, and we moved to Fort Walton Beach, FL. There, a local music teachers' group invited me to give a session on the Robert Pace Method and Group Piano. After my presentation, the Public School Superintendent's office called me. They asked about my possibly teaching elementary classroom music at a local elementary school. I agreed to meet with the principal, and left our meeting with the keys to the music room.

Now, I faced a real challenge in teaching music in a public school, having taught only group piano in my Atlanta studio. Quickly, I turned to all the creative ideas and methods I had learned from many summer sessions with

Dr. Pace at Teachers Collage, and from consultant conferences, Pacesetter groups and fellow Pace teachers through the years. I was determined to teach MUSIC and not have a thirty minute play period!

We started with music projected on the board and learned to read and count rhythm patterns.

• I was determined to teach MUSIC and not have a thirty minute play period!

We learned basic concepts of how melodies move up or down by steps and skips. I found two pianos for the classroom, and collected anything that students could use to tap a rhythm. We took turns at the piano while the



Cadet Teachers at Work



rest of the class “pounded out” eighth, quarter, half and whole notes. We learned to shape melodies; make up musical stories, melodies, and Q&A; and learned simple songs. Ninety percent of the 350 students had no music outside class. The students absolutely loved music!

At the end of the year, the assistant principal left to become principal of Saint Mary Catholic School. This was the oldest and largest private school, K3-8th grade, in the area. She asked me to be the school’s music teacher.

When I arrived, music at Saint Mary centered on singing hymns for Liturgy. The principal emphasized that she wanted the children to improve their singing skills. How could they sing well, if they did not understand the music they were singing?

I sent out a letter asking parents to donate any keyboard at home not being used. A parent responded with an offer to purchase 14 Yamaha keyboards. Dr. Pace helped me purchase 150 Music for Moppets books.

Just as I was unpacking the keyboards from their boxes, Hurricane Katrina hit the Louisiana-Mississippi Gulf Coast, and thousands of people evacuated into our area. Saint Mary took in every student who asked to come to our school. Our classrooms were overflowing. I set up the keyboards with three students to a keyboard rather than the planned two. “Katrina Kids” enjoyed learning creative keyboard at Saint Mary School during this time when many of them were essentially homeless.



Cadet Teachers

Today, the Saint Mary music curriculum is a comprehensive program that covers music concepts applied to both singing and keyboard. Basic note reading and rhythm skills are presented in an age appropriate setting. Master Composers, their works, and their historical periods are covered. Materials are presented through a variety of examples and experiences, to address different learning styles. Class activities meet the National and State Standards for Music, and needless to say, meet Dr. Pace's ideal.

In 2005 Saint Mary School was recognized as a Blue Ribbon School, No Child Left Behind.

No child is left behind in music literacy because of the teachings of Dr. Pace, and his encouragement of teachers to step out of the box, continue to learn, and to grow and offer one's best effort to the future, through one's students and an appreciation for music.



Mr. Joe Improvising

One of the students' favorite activities is improvisation. Kindergarten students enjoy "Peanut Butter and Jelly Blues" on the twins and triplets. Fourth and fifth grade students enjoy Betsey Hannah's The Real Blues. Everyone plays the 12 bar blues chord progression, and each student takes a turn improvising a melody. Recently, Mr. Joe Fuller, a local jazz musician, came and demonstrated jazz styles to complete our study on Jazz History. Mr. Joe took us from the blues of the Southern Plantation slaves, through the Harlem Renaissance to the Hip Hop of today.

• One of the students' favorite activities is improvisation.... Everyone plays the 12 bar blues chord progression, and each student takes a turn improvising a melody.

Improvising
with Betsy
Hannah's *The
Real Blues*



Cadet Teachers



Jazz History Report

Kay Graves: In 1974 I was introduced to Dr. Pace at a Mercer University workshop in Atlanta, GA. I knew I wanted to learn more about Group Piano and the creative concepts presented at the workshop. I attended The Piano Pedagogy Institute at Teachers College/Columbia University for many summers. In 1980 I became a consultant. I do not think I missed a single Consultants Conference. I taught for 30 years in the Atlanta area in a group setting. For the past 11 years I taught in a classroom setting, using Dr. Pace's philosophy and methods.



Sharing Our Music in a Local Nursing Home

Guest Author - Working with Dr. Pace

Notes On Polly Wolly Swings

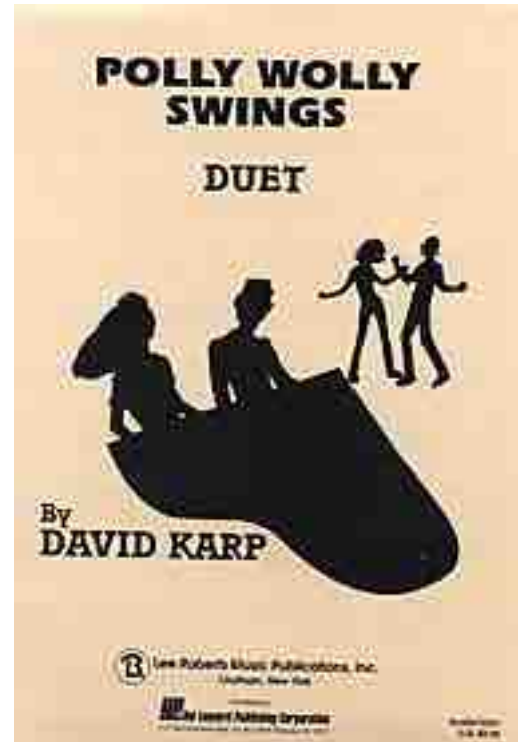
By Dr. David Karp



Composer Dr. David Karp

It was following a Robert Pace workshop at the University of Denver in 1966 that Dr. Pace mentioned that he liked the folk song, *Polly Wolly Doodle* and he asked if I would compose a jazz duet based on this tune. I was very honored that Dr. Pace asked me to compose a work for his piano series and set out to

interesting. For example, he once wrote to tell me he “really liked those ascending mediant seventh chords in the



write the duet. *Polly Wolly Swings* was released in 1967 and it was my first publication. Forty-five years later, it continues to be played at multiple piano festivals and in piano studios around the world. Throughout the years I would receive notes (sometimes hand written) from Bob telling me how much he and the participants at a recent seminar had enjoyed playing this duet. He often would comment about a chord or special sound that he found



Secondo part.” Once he wrote about the quarter note triplets that facilitated the modulation to the dominant key. He said something like: “They really had to count and learn to feel that rhythm.” I went on to

write three more compositions for the Robert Pace series and always enjoyed the process of putting the final product together with Dr. Pace. He

always insisted on perfection and would never settle for anything less. I recall the time we worked on *Israeli Dance* (duet) and he was off doing a series of seminars and workshops around the world. He came back to New York and read the proofs and decided that the “poor *Secondo* player was doing nothing but ‘oompah-pah’ the whole piece.” He went on to say that he always stressed the importance of having the *Secondo* play melody too, and that even though Lee Roberts had expended several hundred dollars for the engraving (that is the way music was printed a few decades ago), he was willing to redo the engravings if I would consider re-writing the duet. Of course I rewrote the duet and we finished with something far more interesting and motivating than the original version.



Another interesting encounter happened with the duet, *Nightfall*. Dr. Pace sent the duet back with the following note: “I want to publish this 4th year duet but I think you need to revisit the ending.” I could not figure out what to do and went to my composition mentor, Normand Lockwood, who was my esteemed colleague at the University of Denver. Normand helped me to

find the right sound for the very last chord – a minor triad with a major seventh; in essence this sonority encapsulated both seventh chords from

• *Pace once wrote to tell me he “really liked those ascending mediant seventh chords in the Secondo part [Polly Wolly Swings].”*

the A section. Bob was ecstatic and loved the ending. He also recalled to me how very highly he esteemed Normand Lockwood’s work as a composition teacher at Columbia University.

It was truly a privilege to study and work with Dr. Robert Pace. I will always be grateful for his mentoring and collegiality. I learned more about teaching and life from Dr. Pace than he ever knew.

Dr. David Karp, well known composer, pianist, and educator, is Professor of Music at Southern Methodist University where he teaches piano performance, composition, aural skills, theory, improvisation, and college teaching of class piano. Dr. Karp’s honors include composition commissions by the South Dakota MTA State Convention, North Dakota MTA, and the SMU National Holocaust Survivors Conference; recognition by the Voices of Change Ensemble for his new music contributions; and the establishment of the annual David Karp Piano Festival. Dr. Karp has adjudicated numerous contests and festivals, including the Van Cliburn Piano Competition for Amateurs. Dr. Karp’s piano recordings include Simor Sargon’s *Divertimento for Piano and chamber Orchestra* (Gasparo Records). Four of his numerous, outstanding compositions for students, “Nightfall,” “Busy Little Train,” “Israeli Dance,” and “Polly Wolly Swings,” are published by Lee Roberts Music Publications.

Tips of the Trade

Learning How to Practice

By Julie Lovison



Julie Lovison

Parents often ask: “Is he ALWAYS supposed to play that as fast as he can?” “Are you ALREADY finished with your practicing?”

The most important step in polishing a performance begins at the students’ first look

at the piece. Understanding every note’s connection, through analysis of melodic and rhythmic patterns, keys, scales and chord structures, as students are learning the piece, shortens learning time.

Similarly, if the technique and fingering concepts required for the piece are already in the students’ arsenal, they are ready to play the piece correctly as soon as they learn it, thus cutting to fine tuning more quickly (and with greater satisfaction.

Once students reach this stage, teachers need to guide students in strategies to efficiently and effectively bring their pieces to a polished and performance-ready level.

Learning how to practice takes time. Polishing a recital piece is one area where students especially need guidance. They typically will play their piece once or twice a day at a rapid tempo, glossing over mistakes. If they get stuck, they go back to the beginning and start over, hoping to

make it to the finish line without any falls even if they stumble.

To help my students structure their practice for maximum results, I’ve developed a set of six practice-concepts we call “POLISH.” Here is our set in case you’d like to try it with your students:

Play 20 times
One Phrase at a Time
Listen
Isolate the trouble spot
Slow and steady
Hands separately

***Play 20 times** – once the notes of a piece are mastered, repetition is needed to kick the piece up to a high level of security, finesse, and polish.*

Students are astonished when I instruct them to

play their piece 20 times a day, as I am equally astonished when they refer to two or three times a day as playing “a lot.” When they try this, inevitably they return the next week truly

amazed at how good the piece feels and how professional it sounds.

***One Phrase at a Time** – practicing the piece one phrase or segment at a time gives a shorter span to focus on. It is easier to concentrate on and evaluate a short section, and fingers and muscles will more readily remember the patterns.*

***Listen** – Practice requires careful listening. Careful listening often means planning how you*

Learning how to practice takes time—Polishing a recital piece is one area where students especially need guidance.

are going to play something, then hearing whether or not you did what you planned. This applies to all musical aspects of a performance, including articulation, dynamics, rhythmic accuracy, correct notes, balance between hands, and clarity of technique.

I encourage students to focus on evaluating one element at a time as they listen. In my view, practice is the process of repeatedly working on individual musical elements until these become assimilated together into the subconscious. When students take responsibility for their own planning and feedback, they become their own teacher.

Isolate the trouble spot – Often the bumpy parts of a piece boil down to a few measures, notes, or chords. Work at the slowest tempo needed to play that measure correctly and securely. It is often helpful to play across the bar line to the first note in the next measure, and then stop. Repeat this slowly and accurately until it is no longer difficult, then gradually bring the tempo up to correct speed.

Slow, steady, rhythmic practice to get the piece securely “into the fingers,” is another necessary component. A metronome is useful to help students establish and keep a slow practice tempo. Even more importantly, it illuminates for students sections where they may be rushing or dragging the tempo without realizing it.

Practicing in a long-short-long rhythm pattern is a strategy often used to help equalize weight on all fingers.

Hands-Separate Practice helps develop the physical security and memory of each hand.
Ask your children to illustrate which of these strategies they are using to POLISH their pieces. They will enjoy teaching you.

Two other ideas I use that you may also enjoy trying:

- Get an “Easy Button” at Staples (another teacher's idea) and let students push it every time they accomplish something that becomes easy (perhaps that one sloppy measure in their sonatina that needs to be isolated and “power-practiced”).

- Download a “Bear Steps” chart (free) from our Practice Buddy site. Use a small stuffed animal or favorite toy to track the repetitions students may need to power practice that sloppy measure described above.



<http://www.renoweb.net/rlam/Music%20Shope/PDF/Practice%20Buddy%20Chart.pdf>
 For more details on all of the above, see www.LakeShoreMusicStudio.com or email: lmspiano@aol.com

Julie Lovison, a group teaching specialist for thirty years, has a Bachelor of Music (Millikin University), and did graduate work with Dr. Robert Pace (Teachers College/Columbia University) and at the National College of Education. She taught at Millikin University (Preparatory Piano), the Young Peoples Arts Program (Alverno College), and Camp Allegro Piano Day Camp, which she founded/directed. Her publications include *Music for Moms: Playing with Music (the DVD)*, and articles in *Keyboard Companion* and *Clavier Companion*. An International Piano Teaching Foundation Consultant, she gives frequent talks and training sessions on pre-school music and group piano teaching. She presented *Can We Play a Game Today?* at the 2012 Music Teachers National Association Conference. She is Past President of Chicago Music Teachers Association, and presently teaches at the Lake Shore Music Studio (Chicago), which she founded.

Tips of the Trade

Jazz Harmonization

~ It's Easy! ~

By Betsy Hannah

Many students and teachers do not know how truly easy it is to learn to improvise. The assumed difficulty comes from the fact that for a number of us, our training has not included a methodology of jazz and improvisation. We therefore relegate the fun of jazz and

blues to some mystical process, available only to the chosen few—and we somehow are never among them!

I am perfect proof that the proper process, taken step by step, will lead you to a level of freedom and creativity you

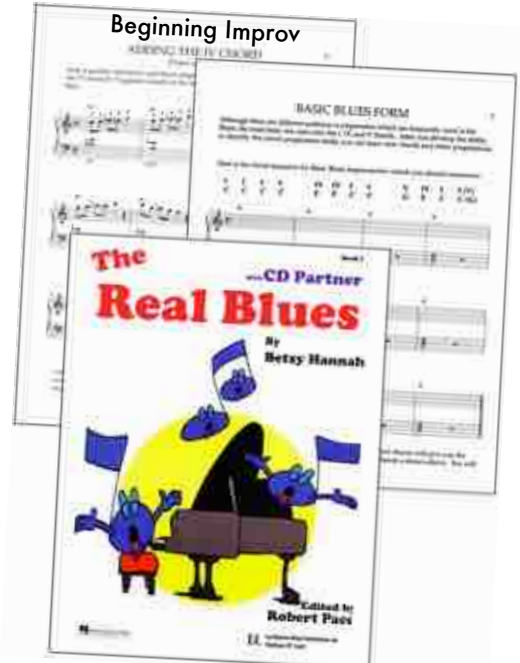
never thought

possible. After completing my Masters in Piano, and a good part of my doctorate, I still could not improvise a note. Now I can run my fingers anywhere, hearing and sensing tone, pulse, and color that I had no access to before undertaking a simple methodology of improvisation learned through all my work with Dr. Robert Pace. At Dr. Pace's Teachers College seminars, I also learned from Dr. Bert Konowitz and Ms. Pat King, who showed me pedagogical stair-steps for jazz, blues, rock, and other improvisation. I was sprung from my musical cage of printed notes and bar-lines!

On the following pages, are some ideas on introducing students to some jazz harmonization and improvisation fun. If you're interested in additional tips and materials, I'd love to hear from you at: bbhannah@nc.rr.com.



Betsy Hannah



Betsy Hannah received her M.M. from Indiana University, studying with the famed Menahem Pressler (Beaux Arts Trio). She continued post-graduate studies with Dr. Robert Pace at Columbia University. She recalls: "I took a Columbia summer session with Dr. Pace and began teaching the Pace method that fall. I bought an expensive outfit, got a loan to buy a grand piano, uprights, electronic pianos, and studio equipment, then, bingo, had a full studio. One woman called from Hawaii saying she'd 'heard' I was starting classes and her two daughters HAD to get in." Ms. Hannah also taught at Colby Jr. College (New Hampshire) and Meredith College. Her documentary sound tracks have received an Emmy nomination and several first place awards from the National Broadcasting Society. An IPTF Consultant, she has trained numerous teachers in the Pace Method.

Betsy Hannah Demos:

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uu1gIuBrxEs>
and
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PXhH7RAgE6o>

Playing & Improvising On Jazz Standards - A Quick Lesson

by Betsy Hannah

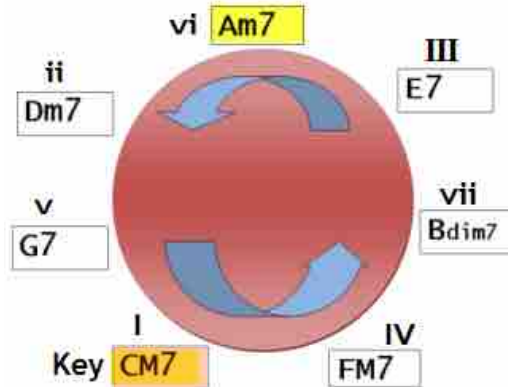
Many jazz standards follow the diatonic circle of 5ths chord progression. The “letters” of the chords skip down by a 5th even if the types (major/minor) of chords change.

The example to the right shows the chord progression for *Fly Me to the Moon*. This progression starts with an Am7 and moves counter clockwise by fifths. In this case, the progression is actually:

vi ii V I IV vii iii

The normally minor iii chord is changed into a Dominant 7

Example: *Fly Me to the Moon*
Diatonic Circle in C



The E chord is normally minor in C, but here a G# is *borrowed* from the key of A minor to create a *Dominant 7th*.

Start with the quick and easy memorization
of the chord progression

Step One:

Play and quickly memorize the LH alone. Start with open 5ths with little finger on the bottom note. Step down saying D C B A G C.

Step Two:

Next break the fifths, playing top/bottom, top/bottom, and now saying A D G C F B E A D G C.

The LH is now memorized.

Step Three:

Now play the sequence of triads in the RH with your thumb on the root. Name the chords as you play. Am Dm G C F Bdim E Am Dm G C If that is difficult, start with just your thumb.

**Step Four:**

Add the 7ths to the chords in the RH and play those in root position.

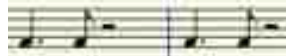
**Step Five:**

Now, apply a smoother and easier voicing: Play a root position 7th chord. Next, drop the top 2 notes, then the bottom 2 notes to form the succeeding chord.



Play the **LH root with the RH chords** to create an **accompaniment**.*

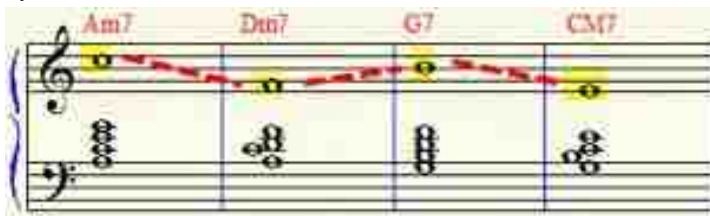
*You can just hold the chords, or play a “Charleston” rhythm or any other rhythmic pattern you like.



“Charleston”

Step Six: Solo Playing

Now play **the 7th chords in the LH and the melody in the RH**. The melody starts on C, which is the 3rd of the A minor chord. It steps down to the 3rd of the D minor chord. For the first 8 chords, the melody is on the 3rd of the accompanying chord every time. You can find the melody online or in a Fake Book. Here are the first four measures. Play the melody an octave higher than written.



Next Comes Improvisation

My favorite way to start improvisation practice is to use **1 2 3 5 melodic patterns** in various orders like this: (See right column)

1 2 3 5, 5 3 2 1, 2 3 1 5, 2 3 5 1

Then “walk” from 2 to 2. Starting melody patterns on the “2” of each chord sounds great right away, because you’re starting with the 9th, a great “color” note. Simplify by “walking” through a progression of 9ths by playing “2” in the RH as you play the seventh chords in the LH. On the chart on the right the “2” is marked in yellow.

You'll be amazed at how easily and quickly your improvisation sounds really quite good.

Now Apply to Other Tunes

Autumn Leaves and ***All the Things You Are*** provide two good examples of the same process.

Autumn Leaves

Here is the progression for the first part of *Autumn Leaves*. It's in E minor. I think of the first 4 chords as being in G Major, then melting into E minor.

Note the exact same letters in the **exact same order as the circle on the first page**, although the quality of the chords is different.

The melody starts on E with a 3 note pickup, and then repeats sequentially. Pick it out by ear, or find it in a Fake Book. Follow the same steps as for *Fly Me to the Moon*.

For more tips and materials, contact me at:
bbhannah@nc.rr.com

Teaching It Forward

Give A Pedagogy Session

By Kathy Van Arsdale



Kathy Van Arsdale

Continuing education is a requirement of many professions.

Lawyers, nurses, teachers, electricians all update their knowledge and skills through in-service training, evening classes, college courses and

guest lectures. An important aspect of the Pace Method of Comprehensive Musicianship is the notion of life-long learning in our field of endeavor. This is rare in piano teaching, with many teachers figuring they learned it all with their famous teacher in college....

We feed each other in a group learning environment, just as our students do in class. Spiraling musicianship is a notion that applies to adults as well as children.

Recently, a group of Denver area Pace teachers got together to review Level III under the guidance of two local IPTF Consultants: Kathleen Davis and myself. Over the past 15 years, all of these teachers had been certified to offer Pace Level III, and had been teaching intermediate learners in their studios. All are members of the local Pacesetters of Colorado, which meets monthly throughout the school year. All realized that teaching intermediate students is an exciting and occasionally daunting task.

Level III is a rich, concept-filled educational experience through which students move toward the "big leagues" of literature and technic. Two-octave scales and arpeggios, modes, music history and much

more, open the gateway to so many beautiful and challenging piano works. So much to teach! So little time to make an impact in each student's life! Teaching this intermediate curriculum completely is vital to student retention and their ongoing musical growth.

- **Fresh ideas!**
- **Multiple approaches to a common problem**
- **Cooperative Learning.**

Those taking the Level III course arrived feeling the need for an injection of information and excitement into their daily teaching, especially at the intermediate levels. Many felt that the local affiliates of national music teachers' associations tended to emphasize beginners and advanced students in programming.

Following the very first session, participants rejoiced at their renewed sense of delight in teaching this material! Fresh ideas! Multiple approaches to a common problem! Pace materials never studied or long forgotten--revealed! Individual teaching issues addressed by like minds! Camaraderie among trusted colleagues offering the same approach to learning! An atmosphere of safety & acceptance (often hard to find), even when asking revealing teaching



Kathleen Davis, Kerry Cottingham and Cheryl Scherer at work on Level III Pace Pedagogy in the Van Arsdale Studio.

questions! Cooperative learning! Model teaching! Beautiful performance! Peer teaching and learning! Hooray! We were implementing the style of education we seek to offer our students each week, refreshing all involved.

The Level III concepts we explored together, at the request of class participants, arose from these questions: How do you teach Twelve Tone music? What is important in intermediate technic? How do you figure out the mode of a given piece? What business practices have you developed into a written studio policy? What supplementary Masterworks pieces are suitable for teaching Baroque ornamentation to beginners? The fact that all present were familiar with the philosophy and the basic materials for instruction allowed for deeper examination and discussion

• The fact that all present were familiar with the philosophy and the basic materials for instruction allowed for deeper examination and discussion than possible the first time through.

than possible the first time through. Reviewing the gems collected and presented by Dr. Pace in Level III deepened our appreciation for these singular materials.

We all have more to learn. We all have important ideas to share. We all have similar problematic experiences in our studios worthy of the group's attention. During this class, great ideas were tossed around, materials shared, enthusiasm developed. All involved felt elevated by the intense

experience of 25 hours of shared learning and teaching together!

IPTF consultants observed that the experience electrified all involved, which sent waves of enthusiasm through the entire Pacesetters group. Many gained clarification on topics found in those fascinating red books. All teachers in the class stepped up their teaching game. Those with more experience assisted those with less experience, and ALL had something to learn, something to share. This adventure provided important stimulation and affirmation to the entire local teachers group!



If you seek inspiration, teach or facilitate a pedagogy class!

Kathy O'Neal Van Arsdale has taught Comprehensive Musicianship for 35 years, and pedagogy classes for 25 years. She is a 3 time local Pacesetter President. At the University of Colorado, she was chosen one of the 20 most outstanding graduates, elected to Pi Kappa Lambda and Sigma Alpha Iota. Her University of Denver Master's thesis was published as a book, and she has written 2 encyclopedia articles. She adjudicates choral and keyboard for the Colorado High School Activities Association and All State Choir, and served as a Guild judge (Colorado, Virginia, Montana, Maryland). While President of her local MTNA, the group was selected "Association of the Year." She presented at 4 national and 2 international conventions. Kathy has conducted numerous Pace Ensemble Festivals in Montana and Colorado. She maintains a studio in suburban Denver.



Kathleen Davis, Cindy Allor, & Cheryl Scherer share their 12 tone compositions

Teaching It Forward

Experiment & Learn!

CM Teacher Training

By Lyn Pohlmann

Continual learning is central to the Pace teaching philosophy. With that in mind, I've set out on my newest adventure—experimenting with presenting both *Moppets* and *Kinder Keyboard* together in my upcoming teacher training session. The course consists of six four-hour

sessions. The teachers and I are enthusiastic, and I look forward to trying out and perfecting this new format.

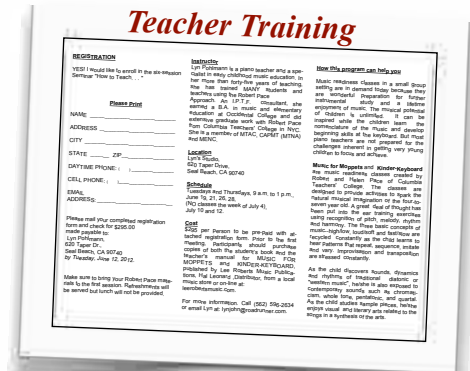
Regarding the publicizing of training sessions, here is the basic info my brochure provides:



Lyn Pohlmann & "Moppets"

"Music readiness classes in a small group setting are in demand today because they are wonderful preparation for further instrumental study and a lifetime enjoyment of music. The musical potential of children is unlimited. It can be inspired while the children learn the nomenclature of the music and develop beginning skills at the keyboard. But most piano teachers are not prepared for the challenges inherent in getting very young children to focus and achieve. Music for Moppets and Kinder-Keyboard are music readiness classes created by Robert and Helen Pace of Columbia Teachers' College. The classes are designed to provide activities to spark the

natural musical imagination of the four-to- seven year old. A great deal of thought has been



put into the ear training exercises using recognition of pitch, melody, rhythm and harmony. The three basic concepts of music--high/low, loud/soft and fast/slow are recycled constantly as the child learns to hear patterns that repeat, sequence, imitate and vary. Improvisation and transposition are stressed constantly. As the child discovers sounds, dynamics and rhythms of traditional diatonic or "western music," he/she is also exposed to contemporary sounds such as chromaticism, whole tone, pentatonic, and quartal. As the child studies sample pieces, he/she enjoys visual and literary arts related to the songs in a synthesis of the arts. Information will be provided on how to interview and group the children and structure home activities. A program for separate parent classes will also be explored."

program for separate parent classes will also be explored.”

If you are currently training teachers or are considering doing so and would like to “talk shop,” please feel to contact me at: Lynjohn@roadrunner.com.

Lyn Pohlmann is a piano teacher and a specialist in early childhood music education. Over her long career in teaching, she has trained MANY students and teachers using the Robert Pace Approach. An International Piano Teaching Foundation consultant, she earned a B.A. in music and elementary education at Occidental College and did extensive graduate work with Robert Pace from Columbia Teachers' College in NYC. She is a member of MTAC, CAPMT (MTNA) and MENC. She currently teaches, and is active giving Pace Teacher Training Seminars.

Music Games Seminar

Julie Lovison will present Keyboard Oriented Music Games and Improvisation for Piano Teachers and General Music Teachers, Wed., August 8, 2012, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at The Lake Shore Music Studio.

This hands on seminar will explore games for all aspects of music study and introduce improvisation in at least 12 styles, including pentatonic and diatonic question and answer phrasing, and easy 12 bar blues. The first 12 participants will receive free materials: *Musical Games and Activities* by Gloria Burnett-Scott, *Classical Composers Card Game*, and *Melodic Shapes Flash Cards*. \$75 tuition, \$35 currently enrolled college students.

See: LakeShoreMusicStudio.com.
Call 312-335-8426 • Email LSMSPiano@aol.com



Online:

Pace Method for Teachers—Intro

If you are interested in ideas for highlighting the Robert Pace method/curriculum for CM sessions, Julie Lovison has an online recording of a recent tele-seminar at:

<http://lakeshoremusicstudio.com/blog/?p=76>

It is about one hour long and includes Q & A.

Betsy Hannah Demos

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uu1gIuBrxEs>

and

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PXhH7RAgE6o>

Bert Konowitz Video Presentation

<http://youtu.be/NyGH-Bw2Wr4>

and

<http://youtu.be/4T6a1EKQtig>

(video: Reno Lovison)

S. Marion Verhaalen Solo Adventures

<http://youtu.be/5p2cglUOTN4>

(video: Reno Lovison)

Iptf Teacher Training

Chicago, IL

Comprehensive Musicianship - Group Piano Teacher Training

Preschool - Music Readiness & Beginning Piano Program:

Combines Music for Moppets and Level 1

Date: July 13-15, 2012

Kinder-Keyboard & Level 2

Date: July 17-19, 2012

Working With Level 3

Date: July 21-23, 2012

Keyboard Oriented Music Games and Improvisation for Piano Teachers and General Music Teachers

Date: August 8, 2012

Clinician: IPTF Consultant Julie Lovison • The Lake Shore Music Studio • Chicago, IL

Info: www.LakeShoreMusicStudio.com, • Ph: 312-335-8426 • Email

LSMSPiano@aol.com

Seal Beach, CA

Musical Readiness through the Keyboard

Pace Curriculum: 4-7 year olds

Dates: June 19, 21, 26, 28, July 10, 12, 17, and 19.

9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Teacher Training for Musical Readiness classes leading to instrumental study.

Music for Moppets and Kinder Keyboard

Clinician: IPTF Consultant Lyn Pohlmann • Pohlmann Music Studio • Seal Beach, CA

Info: Lynjohn@roadrunner.com

Albany, NY

Comprehensive Musicianship through Peer Teaching -One-Day Info Session-

Curriculum Overview: Pre K, Elementary, Teen, and Adult Beginners

Date: Saturday, October 20, 2012

Dynamic Learning in Different Age Groups—Hands-on overview of strategies for peer teaching. Music for Moppets/Kinder Keyboard, Music for Piano Level 1, & Piano Plain and Simple

Clinician: Teacher/Author Cynthia Pace

Info: info@leerobertsmusic.com

West Des Moines, IA

Comprehensive Musicianship

Pace Curriculum: Level 1

Dates: July 28-30.

Clinician: IPTF Consultant Karen Unrau

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