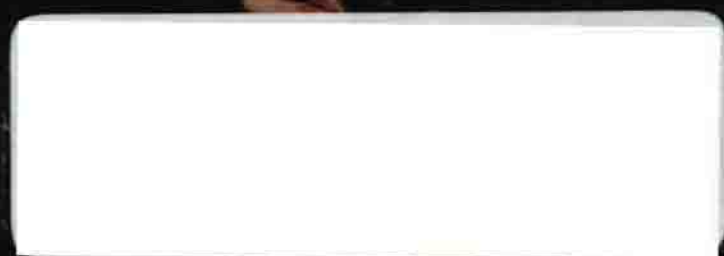


REALIZING THE CHINESE DREAM

THE JIANG WAY TO SUCCESS

*Stories of
Pianist Lang Lang
and His Tiger Mother*



*Liu Yuanju
Translated by Tang Fuchun*

 CHINA INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

Realizing the Chinese Dream

THE LANG WAY TO SUCCESS

Stories of Pianist Lang Lang and
His Tiger Father

Liu Yuanju

Translated by Tang Fuchun

China Intercontinental Press

图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

朗朗是这样练成：英文/刘元举著.

—北京：五洲传播出版社，2014.12

ISBN 978-7-5085-3005-5

I. ①郎… II. ①刘… III. ①朗朗—生平事迹—英文 IV. ①K825.76

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字(2014)第286512号

作 者：刘元举

翻 译：唐富春

出 版 人：荆孝敏

责任编辑：张美景

装帧设计：李 杨

朗朗是这样练成

出版发行：五洲传播出版社

地 址：北京市海淀区北三环中路31号生产力大楼B座7层

邮 编：100088

电 话：010-82005972，010-82007837

网 址：www.cicc.org.cn

印 刷：中煤涿州制图印刷厂北京分厂

开 本：115×185毫米 1/32

印 张：6.5

版 次：2015年1月第一版第一次印刷

书 号：ISBN 978-7-5085-3005-5

定 价：109.00元

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Preface | 7 |
| I. Leave Hometown | 10 |
| Funeral | 10 |
| Yesterday Once More | 19 |
| II. Pursue Study in Beijing | 27 |
| Early Days in Beijing | 27 |
| Setbacks | 33 |
| III. Father's Bet | 45 |
| Admitted to Music School | 45 |
| Enlightening Corridor | 49 |
| Bet Bottom Dollar | 54 |
| IV. Tears in Ettlingen | 64 |
| Fly to Germany | 64 |
| Wish for Good Luck | 65 |

Landlady Nemaia 69

Tears of Joy 71

Pingguo Zhao 80

V. Special Citizen & Growth Traps 82

Special Citizen 82

Growth Traps 84

VI. Shine in Sendai..... 88

New Opportunity 88

Sendai Trip 92

The National Flag 94

Praises from Judges 99

VII. Disagreements Surface 108

Learn from Chengzong Yin 108

Quit Chinese Conservatory 114

Prepare for Curtis Exam 127

| | |
|---|----------------|
| VIII. Parents' Love Story..... | 135 |
| Serious Illness | 135 |
| Traditional Marriage | 139 |
| Quarrel on the Train | 145 |
| IX. Brilliant in the U.S. | 151 |
| Is It a Dream? | 151 |
| Good News | 158 |
| Sign with IMG Artists | 165 |
| Brilliant in the United States | 171 |
| X. Sonata..... | 182 |
| End-Century Chronicles | 182 |
| Follow in the Steps of Maestros | 190 |
| Afterword | 200 |

Realizing the Chinese Dream

THE LANG WAY TO SUCCESS

Stories of Pianist Lang Lang and
His Tiger Father

Liu Yuanju

Translated by Tang Fuchun

China Intercontinental Press

About the Author

Yuanju Liu is the deputy chief of both writers' and reportage associations in Liaoning Province. He is also a member of the China Writers' Association, a senior editor and a top-rank writer.

His writings in a variety of sectors draw widespread attention from home and abroad. As one of the earliest writers visiting western China, he wrote a prose collection *Western Life* with his experiences. He is known as "a writer unique with colorful life."

Mr. Liu published China's first book on pianists and wrote Lang Lang's first biography. The genius pianist got known by ordinary Chinese because of his book.

He was praised by Hongbo Gao, vice chairman of the China Writers' Association, for his cross-region, cross-sector, cross-genre and across-the-time writing.

In terms of either fiction or documentary

literature, he has published a total of 21 books, including *Western Life*, *Genius Lang Lang*, *Tibet in the Lens* and *Urban Music Hall*, totaling five million words. He won prizes of provincial (ministry)-level or above for dozens of times. Many of his books were serialized or excerpted in periodicals, newspapers or textbooks. Some have also been translated and introduced overseas.

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Preface | 7 |
| I. Leave Hometown | 10 |
| Funeral | 10 |
| Yesterday Once More | 19 |
| II. Pursue Study in Beijing | 27 |
| Early Days in Beijing | 27 |
| Setbacks | 33 |
| III. Father's Bet | 45 |
| Admitted to Music School | 45 |
| Enlightening Corridor | 49 |
| Bet Bottom Dollar | 54 |
| IV. Tears in Ettlingen | 64 |
| Fly to Germany | 64 |
| Wish for Good Luck | 65 |

| | |
|-----------------------|----|
| Landlady Nemaia | 69 |
| Tears of Joy | 71 |
| Pingguo Zhao | 80 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| V. Special Citizen & Growth Traps | 82 |
| Special Citizen | 82 |
| Growth Traps | 84 |

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| VI. Shine in Sendai..... | 88 |
| New Opportunity | 88 |
| Sendai Trip | 92 |
| The National Flag | 94 |
| Praises from Judges | 99 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| VII. Disagreements Surface | 108 |
| Learn from Chengzong Yin | 108 |
| Quit Chinese Conservatory..... | 114 |
| Prepare for Curtis Exam | 127 |

| | |
|---|----------------|
| VIII. Parents' Love Story..... | 135 |
| Serious Illness | 135 |
| Traditional Marriage | 139 |
| Quarrel on the Train | 145 |
| IX. Brilliant in the U.S. | 151 |
| Is It a Dream? | 151 |
| Good News | 158 |
| Sign with IMG Artists | 165 |
| Brilliant in the United States | 171 |
| X. Sonata..... | 182 |
| End-Century Chronicles | 182 |
| Follow in the Steps of Maestros | 190 |
| Afterword | 200 |

Preface

I like to listen to music when reading a book. Among the miscellaneous books of my interest, *Vladimir Horowitz: The Last Romantic* is read the most.

One of my frequently watched documentaries is *Great Pianists of the Golden Age*, which introduces all the maestros in the period. Especially in 1903, three piano geniuses Claudio Arrau, Rudolf Serkin and Vladimir Horowitz were born.

It should be a year of piano, although there were also many other exciting stuffs in human memory: Pablo Picasso was experiencing the Blue Period in Paris, Isadora Duncan was exploring new dances, Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel were committed to creating new piano timbre...

The death of Horowitz in 1989 and Arrau and Serkin in 1991 marked an end to piano romanticism. But their legacies remain. Gary

Graffman, a student of Horowitz, is devoted in teaching in the Curtis Institute of Music, Philadelphia. In 1997 he admitted Lang Lang from China as his student.

He successfully shifted Lang Lang's attention away from the championship of Van Cliburn International Piano Competition in Fort Worth, Texas and other international contests. "Do you want to play the piano for a while or for a lifetime?" asked the mentor. Under his guidance, the young Chinese practiced the piano wholeheartedly.

Mr. Graffman, as the most favored disciple of Horowitz, inherited the most from the late maestro. He passed all those skills on to Lang Lang, endowing the inheritance of Horowitz to the Chinese pianist and receiving the most gratitude in return.

Lang Lang was born in 1982 when China started to witness a round of piano frenzy. The last two decades of the 20th century was the most spectacular period in China's 100-year piano development history.

His first best-selling CD in China is his recital in the Carnegie Hall. The cover of the CD

presents a photo of the highly inspired pianist and a sentence of “a pride of Chinese people”.

This book introduces his piano study experiences and presents a model to all the readers.

I. Leave Hometown

Funeral

The spring of 1991 seemed the chilliest for Guoren Lang, who was anxiously waiting for his son's piano study journey. He counted the days, without feeling the rise of temperature despite March approached.

He had long planned to let his 9-year-old son Lang Lang take the entrance exam of the primary school affiliated to the Central Conservatory of Music, the best piano teaching institution in China. But the plan put him into a dilemma. The son was attached to him from the very beginning of piano study and the boy's every progress was closely related to him. If choosing to accompany the boy in Beijing, the 39-year-old father would have to give up his career and future. It was a really hard choice.

Lang Lang is indeed a piano genius. In just a few years, he made incredible progress and surpassed all the peers in his hometown of

Shenyang, northeast China's Liaoning Province. He outpaced children learning the piano half a year or a year earlier, and was poised to surpass all the performers ahead of him. With the spirit of never giving up, he easily won the championship of the first children's piano competition in Shenyang city.

Guoren, a then special police officer, was well-contented. Colleagues whose child studied piano admired him, while his boss Shiteng Ma also provided great support. The boss gave him great work autonomy so that he could arrange Lang Lang's piano courses. The father was often dispatched to maintain orders for local concerts, where he could take his son together for study.

A good teacher is the key to success. Prof. Yafen Zhu, Lang Lang's first piano tutor, helped find a substitute in Beijing with her connections. The Beijing class was scheduled to begin in a week, but the father's job transfer application was not yet approved. All the annoying things emerged in just a few days, adding psychological pressure on him.

He finally decided to quit his job, citing of his son's piano study as the reason. But the resignation letter must be written tactfully. The repeated weighing and examinations took lots of time and energy.