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Lang Lang: Playing With Flying Keys



Synopsis

HE STARTED LEARNING to play the piano when he was three years old in Shenyang, China. Today he is one of the world's most outstanding pianists. In this engrossing life story, adapted by Michael French, Lang Lang not only recounts the difficult, often thrilling, events of his early days, but also shares his perspective on his rapidly changing homeland. He thoughtfully explores the differences between East and West, especially in the realm of classical music and cultural life. Shining through his rags-to-riches story of a child prodigy who came of age as a renowned musician, Lang Lang's positive spirit, his dynamic personality, and his enduring passion for music will inspire readers of all ages. Includes a 16-page photo insert. From the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

Grade 6-9 "Winning his first piano competition in his native China at age five, Lang Lang had only one thought in mind from the beginning: to be "Number One." While his accolades have been many, his trials have been equally numerous, for he was forced to spend most of his childhood away from his kind and loving mother and under the ever-watchful eye of his strict father. He suffered tremendous homesickness and had to learn to cope with situations far beyond those normal for his chronological age in order to realize his dream of being an internationally known

pianist on the classical circuit. This boy wonder explains his life as the pampered only child of parents who placed all of their hopes in him. His father definitely went over the edge, at one point even begging his 10-year-old son to overdose on pills because he had "lost face"â "a part of the story that is sure to horrify readers. The book includes a glossary of Western composers with Lang Lang's personal commentary about their strengths and styles. Much like Li Cunxin's *Mao's Last Dancer* (Walker, 2008), this is the story of a young man determined to make something of himself, not only for his own sake, but also for the sake of his family. However, unlike the former, which places the personal story within the political context of Maoist China, Lang Lang is a totally personal tale. Nevertheless, because of the youthfulness of the author, his autobiography could serve as an additional purchase for libraries building modern-biography and/or Chinese-culture collections.â "Nancy Menaldi-Scanlan, LaSalle Academy, Providence, RI Copyright Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Although he is only 26, Chinese-born Lang is recognized as one of the world's most accomplished classical pianists. This smoothly paced, often rivetingly candid autobiography, written with Michael French, follows the musician through his first encounters with the keyboard and grueling training to his triumphant debut concerts with the Chicago Symphony. The musician addresses the intense pressures he experienced in full detail, and he vividly recounts his turbulent relationship with his father, whose inflexible expectation that his son become the number one pianist in all of China. And then all the world led to incidents of abuse and violence. Throughout, Lang honors the mentors who helped him develop his remarkable gift, and his revealing, humble account may inspire readers not only to apply themselves to their own talents but also to approach music with the openhearted passion that Lang writes about so convincingly. A map of China and a time line help round out this strong autobiography. Older readers might also be interested in Lang and David Ritz's adult book, *Journey of a Thousand Miles*. Grades 7-10. --Gillian Engberg --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I bought this book because I am a fan of Lang Lang. I wanted to read about his story, how he started playing the piano, how he became who he is today. Wow, did I get all that information. I felt so inspired after reading his book. The book is a story of survival and drive to success. My only negative... I wished the book was longer. It finished so quickly. I wanted more!

This is such a moving insight into what is required in the way of work and commitment to achieve one's life long dream. Lang Lang is a very dedicated young man whilst at the same time being loving and compassionate and full of fun and excitement for the future. A very inspiring read.

Couldn't put the book down. Found it completely absorbing. Amazing that a child so abused could come out trumps.

Great inspiring story. Hope it can encourage more young lovers of piano to achieve their goals.

it tells quite the story of a man who chased his dreams and accomplished them beyond belief. I loved it!

Lang Lang is my favorite pianist of to- day and I enjoyed reading about his life as he grew up with all the hardships for him and his parents.

What an inspiration this young man is, full of life and vitality. He has had an interesting life so far, long may it continue.

Inspiring story yet sad because of grueling schedule imposed on Lang Lang as a child. Writing is simple and straightforward--probably written for children but still engaging for adults who want to know more about Lang Lang. Gives a good picture of how the competitive sports mentality has unfortunately entered the art of music. Easy read. Not much depth.

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