Zhang Shengliang (a.k.a Niu Niu)

Niu Niu was born in 1997 into a musical family in Xiamen. After showing talent at age 3, Niu Niu initially studied piano with his father, later making his recital debut at age 6. At age 8, he became the youngest student ever enrolled at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. By age 11, he became the youngest pianist to have a solo recital at Tokyo’s Suntory Hall and the National Center for the Performing Arts in Beijing.

Since age 10, Niu Niu has studied with Hung-Kuan Chen, initially at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music and later the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, where Niu Niu and his family relocated. He was admitted by New York’s Juilliard School in 2014 with full scholarship and has graduated in 2018.

The youngest pianist ever signed to a major classical label, his debut album, Niu Niu Plays Mozart (2008) was followed by Niu Niu plays Chopin—The Complete Études (2010) and Niu Niu Liszt Transcriptions (2012). His sixth album, Niu Niu Portrait, was released in 2016. After signing with Universal Music Hong Kong in December 2017, his first album for Decca Classics (recorded in Berlin) was released in June 2018.

Niu Niu opened the 2014/15 season performing the Dvořák Piano Concerto with Jiří Bělohlávek and the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra. In March 2014, he toured with Yutaka Sado and his Super Kids Orchestra on a five-city tour of Japan’s major concert halls, later returning that summer in a critically acclaimed
During August 2016, Niu Niu completed a tour of 16 Chinese cities within 25 days. He has already performed more than a hundred concerts in various parts of the world.

Other career highlights include the 2007 Pearl Awards at London’s Royal Festival Hall, performing Shostakovich’s Piano Concerto No.1 conducted by his coach and mentor Leslie Howard in the presence of His Royal Highness Prince Charles, Prince of Wales. As first laureate of the Artemisia Foundation, he made his debuts in Boston’s Jordan Hall and Yale University’s Sprague Hall in 2012. In 2007, his performance in the CCTV Ministry of Culture Spring Festival Gala was televised nationwide.

In 2017, Niu Niu was invited to perform for the presidents of China, Russia, India, Brazil, and South Africa during the BRICS summit evening gala. He is currently planning a world concert tour (including China and Japan) in 2018/2019.