

A "Goode" Story

Spurred on by a directive from Chicago Symphony conductor Daniel Barenboim in 1995 that everyone who wins a position with the [Chicago Symphony Orchestra] have a master's degree in something, Michael Goode began his search for a suitable program. Balancing an already heavily laden schedule that included actively performing in several different small orchestras and teaching orchestral trumpet, finding an appropriate degree to pursue in his minimal spare time presented a great challenge. An ad in the Chicago Tribune for the Master of Liberal Arts Program at the University of Chicago intrigued him so much that, despite concerns about how to potentially finance his pursuit of an advanced degree, Michael decided to find out more.

...the program will make your music better.

Michael next contacted Raymond Ciacci, Director of the Master of Liberal Arts Program. Over the course of two and a half years Michael's questions were patiently answered by Ray. Michael finally decided to apply and was subsequently admitted. He was immediately impressed with the University of Chicago campus, feeling a sense of having come home. He was somewhat skeptical of Ray's claim that "the program will make your music better", but pressed on and decided the MLA program was worth a try.

With Professor Hoffmann's guidance and encouragement Michael completed his thesis on psychoneuromusicology, the study of how the mind and emotions function and interact in the process of playing music. While creating this new field of science Michael discovered that his specific topic of interest, performance anxiety, actually had a universal application in life. Stage fright, as it is more commonly known, affects people in every walk of life whenever there is a deadline or expectation of a certain standard to be met.

After graduating in 2002, Michael began receiving ongoing encouragement from colleagues in the music business to write a book based upon his research for the MLA thesis. Somehow, between the time constraints of playing in three different orchestras as well as teaching 35 students each week, and the requirements of his own practice and lessons, Michael and his wife reformatted, visually enhanced, edited, and proofed a manuscript to submit for publication. In September of 2003 "Stage Fright in Music Performance and Its Relationship to the Unconscious" was published.

Since publication, Michael has had speaking engagements at several universities including Wisconsin-LaCrosse, Southern California, North Texas, Emory, and Georgia State, as well as at the University of Chicago. Michael has



been interviewed on the BBC's "Music Review" and has also done a presentation before physicians at a Performing Arts Medicine Association annual conference. There have also been engagements at several bookstores throughout the United States. Michael now finds himself sought out by others who are interested in understanding and perhaps mastering their own stage fright.

Michael maintains that none of this would have ever been possible were it not for the support, training, inspiration, intellectual rigor and high standards, not to mention boundless opportunity, provided by the Master of Liberal Arts program faculty and staff.

Michael's own words sum it up best, "Ray, you were right!"

