

Joseph Grimaldi

Joseph Grimaldi (1778 - 1837) was an English actor, comedian, dancer and one of the most famous clowns. Grimaldi was born on 18 December 1778 in Clare Market, London, and he came from a long line of dancers and comic performers. His great-grandfather was John Baptist Grimaldi, a dentist by profession but also an amateur performer. He moved from Italy to England in 1730 and performed the role of Pantaloon with John Rich who played Harlequin. Joseph's grandfather, Giovanni Battista Grimaldi also performed since his early years but professionally (so professionally that, according to some sources, he ended up in the Paris Bastille as the result of a scandalous performance). Joseph's father, Joseph Giuseppe Grimaldi (known as "the Signor" or Giuseppe) was also actor and a dancer and he played Pantaloon in pantomimes at the Theatre Royal. Joseph died on 31 May 1837.

