



## JOEL GREY

### BIOGRAPHY

In a career that was launched in the early 1950's (his theatrical debut, however, was at age 9 as Pud in the 1941 Cleveland Playhouse production of *On Borrowed Time*), Joel Grey has created indelible stage roles each decade since: as the iconic Emcee in Kander and Ebb's *Cabaret* (1966, Tony Award), as song and dance man George M. Cohan in *George M!* (1967, Tony nomination), as Charley VII in *Goodtime Charlie* (1975, Tony nomination), as Jacobowsky in *The Grand Tour* (1979, Tony nomination), as Olim in New York City Opera's *Silverlake* (1981), as Amos Hart in the landmark revival of another Kander and Ebb musical, *Chicago* (1996) and as the Wonderful Wizard of Oz in *Wicked* (2004).

After a sensational debut at the famed Copacabana, he appeared Off-Broadway in the Phoenix Theatre's *Littlest Revue* (1956) and made his Broadway debut as a replacement in Neil Simon's first comedy hit, *Come Blow Your Horn* (1961). "I call these years my 'replacement period,'" he remembers. Joel followed with starring roles in the Broadway musicals *Stop the World I Want to Get Off* (succeeding Anthony Newley in 1963) and *Half A Sixpence* (following Tommy Steele in 1965). He also appeared with Dustin Hoffman in the original production of *Harry, Noon and Night* (1965) at the American Place Theatre.

In 1966, Joel Grey got a call from Hal Prince, who offered him the role of the Emcee in his upcoming production of a new Kander and Ebb musical, *Cabaret*. The rest, as they say, is history. For his performance in the 1972 film version (directed by Bob Fosse), Joel received the Academy Award, the Golden Globe and the British Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor. Grey also reprised his role once again under Hal Prince's direction, for the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Broadway production (1987), followed by a cross-country national tour.

Joel's dramatic stage roles include John Guare's *Marco Polo Sings a Solo* (1975) at the Public Theatre; the Williamstown Theatre Festival production of Chekhov's *Platonov* (1978); Larry Kramer's seminal *The Normal Heart* (1986) at the Public Theatre; the

American Repertory Theatre's production of Ibsen's *When We Dead Awaken* (1991) at the Sao Paulo Biennale, directed by Robert Wilson; *Herringbone* at the Hartford Stage (1992); John Patrick Shanley's *A Fool and Her Fortune* (NY Stage and Film, 1992); and in the Roundabout Theatre production of Brian Friel's *Give Me Your Answer, Do!* (1999), for which he received a Drama Desk Award nomination.

In addition to *Cabaret*, Grey's film credits include Frank Perry's *Man on A Swing* (1974), Robert Altman's *Buffalo Bill and the Indians* (1976); Herbert Ross' *The Seven Percent Solution* (1976); *Remo Williams: The Adventure Begins* (1985, Golden Globe Nomination); Steven Soderbergh's *Kafka* (1991); Altman's *The Player* (1992); Phillip Haas' *The Music of Chance* (1993); Michael Ritchie's adaptation of *The Fantasticks* (2000); and Lars von Trier's *Dancer in the Dark* (2000) with Bjork and Catherine Deneuve. Recent television appearances include "Alias," "Crossing Jordan," "Brooklyn Bridge" (Emmy nomination), "OZ," "Law and Order: Criminal Intent," "House" and "Brothers and Sisters."

Joel Grey is one of only eight actors to have won both the Tony and Academy award for the same role.

In addition to his acting career, Joel Grey is an accomplished photographer. He has two books of photographs, *Pictures I Had to Take* (published in 2003) and *Looking Hard at Unexamined Things* (published in 2006). His work is now part of the permanent collection at the Whitney Museum of American Art.

Joel is the father of Jennifer and James and the grandfather of Stella. Visit Joel's website at [www.joelgreypainter.com](http://www.joelgreypainter.com).