

The Street Performers of Faneuil Hall

By Ryan Forgosh

Faneuil Hall is reportedly the eighth most popular tourist destination in the U.S, according to Travel & Leisure. Many street performers take advantage of Faneuil Hall's popularity. They perform their shows in this busy marketplace for all the tourists and locals to watch and, hopefully, donate some money.

The Red Trousers Show and Alakazam are both street performances at Faneuil Hall. Dozens of people gather each performance to watch their acts. The Red Trousers Show is performed by friends Tobin and David. They use a combination of acrobatics and juggling to amaze the crowds at Faneuil Hall. Alakazam, or Al Miller, uses his contortionist and daredevil skills to perform his act "Tennis the Menace" on the streets of Boston.



The Red Trousers Show performing in front of Quincy Market at Faneuil Hall

According to Travel & Leisure, 41,095 people visit Faneuil Hall every day. This makes it an extremely popular spot for street performers. Currently, there are twelve street performers listed on Faneuil Hall's website who perform at the marketplace.

Miller said, "The audience here is excellent. They're diverse, they come from different places, this is one of the number one tourist destinations in the country and there's always a lot of people here, and a lot of people means good street performing."

David said, "Faneuil Hall was a natural spot as sort of our 'home pitch', right, as we call it....We come into Faneuil Hall which is a lovely spot for performing."



Al Miller performing on the side of Quincy Market at Faneuil Hall

Even though Faneuil Hall is such a popular spot for street performers, David and Miller both said that there is no competition amongst the performers. In fact, all of the performers are friends with one another.

"We all get along really well here," David said, "we hang out as a group of street performers."

David explained that Faneuil Hall's street performances are all organized. They have a schedule. Each performance gets its own time to go on. The shows don't overlap, so there is no real competition among performers.

Miller said, "We do a monthly schedule. So we get together on zoom once a month and choose spots....That's a Faneuil Hall thing."

Even though there isn't competition among performers, Miller says that it's still necessary to stand out. Miller said that you need to be "different" and "unique" in order to succeed in the street performance business.

Miller said, "If you're the same as every other act, then people aren't gonna be that interested in you."

This sentiment applies to the other shows that the performers have done. Both Miller and The Red Trousers Show have done different types of performances in the past. David and Tobin were once part of a larger circus company before dedicating themselves to their own act.

David said, "When we started out, we sort of had these dreams of maybe sort of moving on to other stuff, but we have a lot of friends who work for big companies like Cirque du Soleil and do like big shows and stuff, and we've really fallen in love with real street performing where you're just doing your show....We just thoroughly enjoy street performing."

Miller meanwhile performs his act for larger audiences regularly at places like Las Vegas and different festivals. Additionally, he was a grand finalist on Australia's Got Talent and appeared on America's Got Talent.

"The goal is to be an entertainer. It's not to one day make it. The goal for me is to do what I love." Miller said.

Even though these performers have performed on larger stages, they always return to Faneuil Hall. These performers are out nearly everyday entertaining the crowds of the marketplace. They choose to make their living putting on shows for tourists and locals alike who visit Faneuil Hall.

"There's nothing else that we would rather do to earn our living than do shows like this for people like you." David said, at the end of his act.