

September 21st, 2023

Hosted by Larry Gaga and Rustina Phoenix-Nuttz

LUSH
LOUNGE THEATER
November 3rd, 7-10pm

Special guest vendor

FREE!
18+
Event

This is an Art to Change the World project

Supported by

metro regional arts council

CLEAN WATER LAND & LEGACY INITIATIVE

The Art of Drag

Sher DeWealth Pippin Panic Blackberry Estée Rhettie Alexandro Rox Primordial Chaos Miss Honesty Jackson

The Art of Drag

By Frances Bates

Drag shows are about entertaining you of course, but our show happening on November 3rd will have a twist to it. Art to Change the World wants to teach people about how deep social justice runs in the history of the art of drag. The Art of Drag is an ACW intern project that I designed to show people an inclusive drag show experience.

This article will give you a sneak peek of some of the history you might learn during my drag show. Let's start with what is drag – It's an exaggeration of gender. An entertaining performance, a show, with incredible outfits, unique choreography, and fantastic makeup. Anyone can do drag whether you want to be a queen, king, or just an entertainer.

You can find many examples of drag throughout history. Some of the more influential people in drag are Annie Hindle, Crystal LaBeija, Divine, Marsha P. Johnson, Stormé Delarverie, William Dorsey "The Queen" Swann, and Willi Ninja. Some of the first documents drag performers were Annie and Swann. Marsha and Stormé were instigators in the Stonewall Riots. LaBeija was the founder of the first drag house and Willi was the creator of voguing. Divine was known for roles in Pink Flamingos and Hairspray as well as being the inspiration for Ursula.

Drag has always pushed the boundaries of what society is comfortable with but the drag community continues on. Starting in the 1860s you had drag balls, where participants took part in competitions, danced, and played around with ideas about gender. By the 1960s they had transformed into other styles of this party type drag which is when you get the creation of drag houses. These houses helped bring people together, so no one went hungry or homeless. Today a drag house is more about who you might be connected with in the drag world.

In 1965, the Imperial Court System was founded to build community in an anti-LGBTQ world. Then the Stonewall Uprising happened in 1969. This was during the time of the three-article law. People had to be wearing at least three items of clothing that matched their supposed gender otherwise they would be arrested. A well-known gay club called The Stonewall Inn located in New York was raided by police which sparked riots. The Stonewall Riots ended up becoming the first Pride march.

After that we had the beginning of the age of RuPaul's Drag Race starting in 2009. "It is a competition-style reality series where drag queens compete for the title of America's next drag superstar. Since the show's premiere in the U.S., it has inspired spin off shows such as RuPaul's Drag U and RuPaul's Drag Race: All Stars as well as international incarnations including the UK, Australia, Canada, and other non-English-speaking countries around the world." (2)

Now we have a variety of drag related experiences going on. There are gay bars, drag brunches, drag story hours, and Pride marches/festivals. Depending on what you are in the mood for there is a drag performance for you. Looking to go to a drag show soon? Check out The Art of Drag on November 3rd from 7-10pm at LUSH Lounge and Theater - 990 Central Ave NE, Minneapolis, MN 55413.

More info: <https://www.arttochangetheworld.org/the-art-of-drag/>

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Sources

(1) <https://www.arttochangetheworld.org/the-art-of-drag-resources/>

(2) <https://www.cbc.ca/comedy/the-history-of-drag-on-screen-strutting-from-ancient-times-to-cbc-s-queens-1.5699542>