

Dykes 2 Watch Out 4

Dykes 2 Watch Out 4 is an independant collective of multiracial queer and trans organizers, artists, musicians, medics, and care-givers hosting shows and events in Minneapolis.

booking shows and throwing parties focused on pleasure, gay liberation, sexual liberation, and militant feminist praxis. Dykes 2 Watch Out 4 was born in a living room where we met as a group of gender non-conforming friends to regularly discuss our anxieties and ideas in the wake of the imminent overturning of Roe v. Wade. We are a multi-racial group of mostly Black and Brown people bringing a fruitiness to anti-colonial solidarity! Dykes 2 Watch Out 4 also firmly believes in being the queer nightlife you wish to see in the world! If you build it, they will cum.

Literallv anyone can do it: if we can. so can vou.



Photo by Z Kaplan

What do we do?

Dykes 2 Watch Out 4 creates nightlife for true degenerates. We act with desire as theory and as praxis. We enact material change, whether that be raising money for local abortion funds, working with SWOP (Sex Workers Outreach Project), or helping community members make rent. We curate nightlife that is by and for trans people, as well as nightlife that is by and for Black and Brown people. We present direct opposition and a direct alternative to white liberal queerness, morality, so-called inclusivity, and politics of representation. Our spaces are ones in which people are encouraged to stop being afraid of looking at themselves, at their bodies, at their needs, and at their wants. We consider ourselves to be part of a lineage of gay and trans liberation movements and often provide zines (and other literature) to help educate others on our predecessors. We envision a State free of police, a free Palestine, and dance floors that are not endangered by violent homophobes supported by the current culture war. Our nightlife is only the base for establishing community that helps meet each other's needs. We encourage feminist conversations and are currently building up skill shares, culturally specific events, and medic trainings. D2WO4 is the umbrella for so many forms of sharing art, collaborating, and learning.

How big are we?

The size of Dykes 2 Watch Out 4 fluctuates depending on our schedules and varying capacity. Most of us work full time or part time jobs outside of Dykes 2 Watch Out 4 and have other creative side projects. Dykes events are something we all make time for and encourage each other to engage with and plan whenever there *is* the juice! It also takes a village; by the time an event is starting, most of our friends who haven't done any logistical work have helped put up decorations or are set to work doors. One of the wonderful things about being in flux is that it leaves room for all of our friends to play a part in the way that works best for them. Though it's worth noting that we are not a large group with time to kill and money to burn! We are roughly 8-10 good friends just trying to make it all happen.

Who can attend a Dykes 2 Watch Out 4 event?

'Dyke', in this context, is primarily a word of power and reclamation. Which is to say, we are not so much using 'dyke' to signal that our events are for lesbians (though it very much is) but to signal to anyone whose existence resists potentially repressing labels that they're welcome. Part of the creation of D2WO4 was to see specifically lesbian spaces. But we're not interested in deciding who is a lesbian or who can come. We actually find that people do a great job of self selection! To avoid any possible confusion, we want to state explicitly that are events are for fags, fairies, guys who are kinda girls, girls who are sort of dudes, cross-dressers, trannies, femmes, butches, studs, trans men, and trans women; of course, our spaces are created by and for the dolls. The people welcome in our space are Black, brown, and Indigenous. They are poor or working class. If you are non-conforming, if you are fucking weird, if you have been beaten down by the cis-hetero-patriarchy and still stand, then this is the room you belong in!

What is our relationship to The Brass Strap?

Our collaboration first started when May Klug (of D2WO4) and Cj Jennings (of TBS), friends of over a year, developed the idea of having a pop up bar at a party! Though we are not currently collaborating on events with The Brass Strap, they have been the clever queer bartenders behind Abortion Bar and Dicks Out. We also co-hosted Slammed, an event that raised money for their eventual brick and mortar bar together. In the past The Brass Strap has taken care of menus and liquor while we have curated the space (light, design, sound) and acted as hosts. We have built around The Brass Strap so that they could meet their gay ass target demographic, show off their skills, and make money to eventually set up shop for good! Though we have had plenty of wonderful overlapping ideas and fun, we have different creative futures. As the Brass Strap expands to build a business, we continue DIY event organizing, and we will cheer each other on from the sidelines!

Who/What are our inspirations?

Profane Existence, On Our Backs, the Lesbian Avengers. Queer individuals who inspire us are Alison Bechdel, Leslie Feinberg, Bo Brown, Lou Sullivan, James Baldwin, Kuwasi Balagoon, and Sylvia Rivera. We are also inspired by the queer prisoners featured in the zine anthology, In The Belly (distributed by In the Belly Journal).

What about the name?

“Dykes 2 Watch Out 4” comes from the group’s shared love of Alison Bechdel’s comic series, Dykes To Watch Out For. DTWOF ran from the 1980s to the early 2000s and documents the lives of neurotic lesbians living in Bechdel’s version of Minneapolis. Seeing the many specifically queer cafes, restaurants, and bookstores in DTWOF made us think of how we could create our own queer specific spaces!

A note about security:

Each of our parties have had security working to de-escalate and potentially prevent police presence. We have worked in collaboration with Atlas Defense and Sequeerity, both who have provided us with community members trained in de-escalation and self defense. Most of us are trained in either de-escalation and/or self defense and often work security ourselves! We have security at our events not to police people’s actions but to remain aware and vigilant. We do not anticipate security issues, but given our demographic and the current political climate, we find that having security is the responsible choice.

Visuals:

**DYKES 2
WATCH
OUT 4**

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Press:

Our event, *Bathroom Sluts*, was mentioned in a Racket article about local business Bedroom besties

<https://racketmn.com/bedroom-besties-inside-minnesotas-newest-queerest-raunchiest-sex-toy-company>

Be on the lookout for a podcast feature about Dykes 2 Watch Out 4 on the MN Daily podcast and to be able to listen to and watch our oral history in the Tretter Trans Oral History Archive.

Contact:

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