

## The Dresden Dolls - Sex Changes

Contributed by Cuervo  
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{audio}mp3/sexchanges.mp3{/audio}

The Dresden Dolls are an American musical duo from Boston, Massachusetts. Formed in 2001, the group consists of Amanda Palmer (vocals, piano) and Brian Viglione (drums, guitar, back-up vocals). They describe their style as "Brechtian punk cabaret", a phrase invented by Palmer because she was "terrified" that the press would invent a name that "would involve the word gothic," and are part of an underground dark cabaret movement that started gaining momentum in the early 1990s. The duo formed shortly after Brian Viglione witnessed Amanda Palmer performing a solo at a Halloween party. Their live performances soon gained them a cult following. During these performances the two band members often wear dramatic make-up and fancy clothing which push their cabaret/theater aesthetic. They encourage fans to become involved at their shows, with the fan's own performance art, varying from stilt walking, living statues, fire breathers, et al. The Dirty Business Brigade coordinates the fan's performances. The duo has secured a loyal fanbase. The name, according to Palmer, was "inspired by a combination of things", including the firebombing of Dresden, Germany and the porcelain dolls which were a hallmark of pre-war Dresden industry; an early song of the same name by The Fall; and a reference to the V.C. Andrews novel *Flowers in the Attic* where the classically blond and blue-eyed protagonists are called "the Dresden dolls." The name also evokes Weimar Germany and its cabaret culture. Additionally, she "liked the parallel between Dresden (destruction) and Dolls (innocence, delicacy), because it is very much in keeping with the dynamics of the music, which sometimes goes from a childlike whisper to a banshee scream within a few seconds.". [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com)