

BATTLE OF the hoogie

Lizzo released a new reality series on Amazon called "Watch Out for the Big Brrls," where 13 plus-size women audition to become Lizzo's backup dancers for her tour



by mia vogel

THE RESULTS ARE in — Lizzo's reality TV show just took a DNA test, turns out it's 100% that b*tch.

The Grammy-winning superstar has long encouraged people of all shapes and sizes to feel "good as hell" about themselves, campaigning through her music and social media for body positivity, self love and empowerment. Now, she seeks to do exactly that in her new Amazon Prime Video show, "Watch Out for the Big Grrrls."

In the eight-episode series directed by Nneka Onuorah, Lizzo calls for more performers to join the Big Grrrls, her top-tier squad of touring dancers, primarily for a headlining performance at the major Tennessee festival, Bonnaroo. It's Lizzo's first live show since the pandemic, so the stakes are high, pressure on — you get it.

"I've asked dance agencies for big girl dancers, and they gave me nothing," Lizzo says in Episode 1. "Girls that look like me simply don't get representation. So, time to pull up my sleeves and find 'em myself."

In the show, Lizzo explains how discrimination extends to the stage and her dancers, regardless of how much energy, talent and expertise goes into the performance. "Watch Out for the Big Grrrls" immortalizes "Queer Eye" and "RuPaul's Drag Race," in which positivity, support and development of someone's inner strength and potential is paramount. Tossing aside both societal abuse and your inner critic is the goal of the show.

Lizzo narrowed the thousands down to a group of finalists and declared early in the show that she's looking for dancers with precise moves, star quality, stamina, ability to perform under pressure and full-out commitment, but most importantly wants dancers to bring their story to the stage.

Asia Banks — former captain of the Alabama State HoneyBeez, the first exclusively plus-size

dance team at a Historically Black College or University — shares her grief over losing her father who was killed by police, and next-level freestyler Jayla Sullivan from Portland, Oregon shares her experience of being a trans dancer.

"Watch Out for the Big Grrrls" intentionally makes you fall for every dancer vying for the stage — Lizzo, her team and the dancers themselves genuinely want everyone to win. Each dancer has been through personal turmoil to get here — unsolicited comments, fatphobic abuse, experiences with overt sexualization and desexualization, alongside their own personal obstacles — that they unwaveringly support each other through.

"I've had a lot of love, I've had some hate, because of the way that I look," Lizzo says in Episode 1. "As an artist, that's happened a lot. They don't want big girls to be sexy. They don't want us to be happy. And that's why this show is so important to me because...It's hard to love yourself in a world that doesn't love you back. And I've been trying to do it so boldly. I put myself out there. When you put yourself out there, you get attacked."

While there's much at stake to join Lizzo's troupe, at its heart, the show is a joyful, strong montage of women honoring their bodies and destroying dancefloors, and it's an absolute joy to watch. Primarily, finalists reflect on their own progress rather than complaining about other performers' success since Lizzo makes it clear early on that there's no room for toxicity in their house or on tour.

Lizzo is an absolute natural at hosting — her empowering and hilarious talking heads deserve their own TikTok account. She's personally invested but balances her authoritative superstar energy and high standards with genuine love and encouragement. She understands the intimidation and urges each performer to get out of their own heads and

leave everything they've got on the floor. Imagine turning out your best moves while Lizzo is calling out "Fu*k it up!" and on one occasion, throwing cushions around the room in a fit of joy. Pure magic.

The most heartwarming aspect of the show is the journey Lizzo goes on with the finalists. In Episode 3 Lizzo plays her newly-released track, "Rumors," for the group and the room descends into glorious rhythm while she belts it out. Afterward, she digs into the hateful comments she received upon its release, which is one of the most profound moments in the series.

Performers compete in challenges for the camera, as well as for Lizzo and each other. Each challenge demonstrates incredible choreography, personal expression and timing. It's an absolute throwdown of pure talent from the very first battle.

Aside from the main prize of joining Lizzo's dance crew, the artist hands out two regular awards to keep everyone motivated. There's the Juice Award — a cute juicebox-shaped trophy named after Lizzo's single and given to the person who has heart, and has overcome an obstacle. And there's the 100% That B*tch Award, of course, a trophy named for Lizzo's iconic line from "Truth Hurts," and given to someone who has nailed the choreography, teamwork and just crushed it overall. Yes, I'm personally going to strive to award these to myself on the regular, and no one can stop me except perhaps Warner Music's copyright department.

Lizzo's "Watch Out for the Big Grrrls" is one of the most uplifting, joyous reality TV shows you're likely to watch, with eight episodes of sheer triumph over society's bulls*** tracked to the artist's greatest hits. We know Lizzo's her own soulmate, but after this series, you'll be vowing your eternal love.

MEET THE dancers

An overview of three of the dancers auditioning on the show



SYDNEY BELL

from: houston, tx
dancing since: three years old



ASHLEY WILLIAMS

from: inkster, mi
dancing since: five years old



MOESHA PEREZ

from: bronx, ny
dancing since: two years old