

QUEER APPROACHES TO LENA PLATONOS

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Greek National Opera

<https://www.nationalopera.gr/en/alternative-stage/es-events/item/2246-queer-approaches-to-lena-platonos>

Lena Platonos has been seminal for the Greek queer community since the '80s. Both her lyrics, which express distinct, often lonely subjectivities, and her peculiar theatrical electronic music, keep on enchanting and inspiring queer music scenes and collectives. Platonos' music is often described as "odd," "strange," "quirky". The English word "queer" can also be translated as "odd" or "strange". The same word is also known as the derogatory term (equivalent to "abnormal" in Greek), reclaimed by a radical part of LGBT activists in the late 1980s, against the prevailing discourse about normativity and the politics of "not being provocative". In Greece, the term started being used from the mid-2000s onwards, initially by various collectives, with a critical, interdisciplinary and anti-authoritarian political stance. What do we mean, then, when we talk about "Lena Platonos' queer readings"? Do we mean that Platonos' music is "quirky"? That it is "abnormal"? Or that it is preferred by "strange" people because it is "odd"?

The "queer readings" presented here start from the basis that Platonos' songs -their sounds, words and performativity- are not things as such, but they do things; different things to different people. So when we talk about Lena Platonos' "queer readings", we are talking about theoretical and artistic interpretations made by specific people in a particular circumstance. These interpretations are not arbitrary. They detect in Platonos' songs social and artistic alliances of marginalised materials, practices and subjectivities, and they rely on concrete evidence: experiences, emotions, stories and artistic strategies that connect some people to each other.

The event is dedicated to the memory of our friend, fellow activist and colleague Zak Kostopoulos / Zackie Oh, who was murdered on 21 September 2018 in the center of Athens.





