

PLATO'S *SYMPOSIUM*

Plato's *Symposium* is an exceptionally multi-layered dialogue. At once a historical document, a philosophical drama that enacts abstract ideas in an often light-hearted way, and a literary masterpiece, it has exerted an influence that goes well beyond the confines of philosophy. The essays in this volume, by leading scholars, offer detailed analyses of all parts of the work, focusing on the central and much-debated theme of *erōs* or 'human desire' – which can refer to both physical desire and desire for happiness. They reveal thematic continuities between the prologue and the various speeches as well as between the speeches themselves, and present a rich collection of contrasting yet complementary readings of Diotima's speech. The volume will be invaluable for classicists and philosophers alike, and for all who are interested in one of Plato's most fascinating and challenging dialogues.

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PLATO'S *Symposium*
A Critical Guide

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