



Drag queens prepare to perform on the Debilly Bridge in Paris, during the opening ceremony of the 2024 Summer Olympics, Friday, July 26, 2024. A storm of outrage about the Paris Olympics' opening ceremony took a legal turn Tuesday July 30, 2024, with a DJ who performed at the show saying her lawyer is filing complaints over a torrent of threats and other abuse that the LGBTQ+ icon has suffered online in the ceremony's wake. (AP/Tsvangirayi Mukwazhi, File)

John Leicester

[View Author Profile](#)

Jocelyn Noveck

[View Author Profile](#)

Associated Press

[View Author Profile](#)

## [\*\*Join the Conversation\*\*](#)

Paris — July 30, 2024

[Share on Bluesky](#)[Share on Facebook](#)[Share on Twitter](#)[Email to a friend](#)[Print](#)

A storm of outrage about [the Paris Olympics'](#) opening ceremony — including angry comments from Donald Trump — took a legal turn Tuesday, with French prosecutors ordering police to investigate complaints of online abuse from a DJ and LGBTQ+ icon who performed.

DJ Barbara Butch said she suffered a torrent of online threats in the wake of a contentious scene at the Games' opening ceremony. A lawyer for Butch told The Associated Press that she had filed a formal legal complaint alleging online harassment, death threats, and insults. The lawyer, Audrey Msellati, said the complaint doesn't name any specific perpetrator or perpetrators of the alleged crimes.

The Paris prosecutor's office confirmed that it received Butch's complaint and said it tasked a police unit that specializes in fighting hate crimes to investigate. The police probe will focus on "discriminatory messages based on religion or sexual orientation that were sent to her or posted online," it said.

Although the ceremony's [artistic director Thomas Jolly](#) has repeatedly said that he wasn't inspired by "The Last Supper," [critics interpreted part of the show](#) that featured Butch as a mockery of Leonardo Da Vinci's painting showing Jesus Christ and his apostles. Butch, who calls herself a "love activist," wore a silver headdress that looked like a halo as she got a party going during her segment of the show. Drag artists, dancers and others flanked Butch on both sides.

Trump, in the United States, said Monday he thought it was "a disgrace."

"I'm very open-minded," the former president and current Republican nominee told Fox News host Laura Ingraham, who specifically asked about comparisons to "The Last Supper," "but I thought what they did was a disgrace."

French Catholic bishops and others were among those who said Christians had been hurt and offended. [Paris Olympics organizers have said](#) there was “never an intention to show disrespect to any religious group” and that the intent was to “celebrate community tolerance.”

Jolly has said he saw the moment as a celebration of diversity, and the table on which Butch spun her tunes as a tribute to feasting and French gastronomy.

“My wish isn’t to be subversive, nor to mock or to shock,” Jolly said. “Most of all, I wanted to send a message of love, a message of inclusion and not at all to divide.”

Performer Philippe Katerine, [who appeared in the next scene](#) painted blue and nearly nude in a tribute to Dionysus, also told Le Monde newspaper that “The Last Supper” had not been referenced at all in preparations for the overall sketch.

## Advertisement

In a statement of her own, posted on Instagram, Butch said: “Whatever some may say, I exist. I’ve never been ashamed of who I am, and I take responsibility for everything - including my artistic choices. All my life, I’ve refused to be a victim: I won’t shut up.”

She said she “was extremely honored” to perform in Friday’s ceremony and “my heart is still full of joy.”

“I’m committed, and I’m proud. Proud of who I am, of what I am, and of what I embody, both for my loved ones and for millions of French people. My France is France !” she wrote.

In an AP interview Tuesday, Msellati described Butch as in “a fighting spirit” — eager to defend herself and her choices, and still very proud of her participation. “She has no regrets, even now,” the lawyer said.

She said hateful messages targeting Butch are “arriving almost every minute,” and that Jolly and the ceremony's drag artists have also been targeted by cyberbullying.

Another performer in the controversial scene, drag queen Paloma, said Tuesday that she had not filed her own complaint.

But, she said, "if the insults continue, I will join my friend Barbara Butch in her approach. For now, I am trying to focus on the on the thousands of loving messages I receive."

Of the criticism, Paloma said her "first reaction is to say that if Donald Trump is not reacting, then we have not done our job. Unfortunately, we were going to get a negative reaction no matter what we did." She also said it was hypocritical for critics to use religion as a basis for "a reaction that is very homophobic, very transphobic, queer-phobic, drag-phobic, even antisemitic and fatphobic."

And another drag queen in the scene, Piche, said she was "really happy that queer people were able to be represented in this show. There was no moment that the idea of offending someone or a religion was on somebody's mind. It was just a joyful, happy pop culture moment that most of the planet felt."