

EUROPEAN VISUAL CULTURE READING GROUP

Lisa Mansfield

*The Nose of Valois:
Royal Portraiture in the French
Renaissance*



The nose has a long history of physiognomic signification and has not only been interpreted as a sign of character, but also of virility since antiquity. Despite their potentially unglamorous, comical connotations, noses affect the appearance of the face more than any other feature, as is attested by the popularity of cosmetic surgery or 'rhinoplasty'. In contrast to the modern preference for the perfect petite nasal silhouette, royal portraits from the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries show that large noses were a distinguishing trait of and form of physical iconography for the Valois kings of France. This paper will explore the political significance of the nose in early modern visual culture via the portraits of King Francis I (reign 1515-47) or 'Long Nose' as his courtiers knew him.

Monday 9 May

6.30 pm Room 150 Elisabeth Murdoch Building

All Welcome