

Portraits from 1480- 1560 - beauty and power

[Art & Culture](#), [Artists](#)



Portraits from 1480-1560; Beauty and Power Portraits are unarguably some of the forms of preserving history that have helped historians today understand the social constructs that existed in the societies of the past. Through the use of portraits painted centuries ago, it is possible to draw a conclusion in regard to how both men and women were expected to behave. It is also possible to understand what the society deemed elegant and what was not. In most cases, portraits were said to be immortalizing the dead. This discussion is a summary of some of the information that can be drawn from the portraits painted around the period 1480-1560 with regard to important issues such as beauty and power.

Typically, paintings that were done for women signified their status. Many changes occurred in regard to how women would pose for photos as development in painting occurred. Usually, paintings' functions were varied. During the 16th century, they were used as gifts and to preserve the memory of friends. On looking at poems, it may also help the modern view understand what portraits signified in the society (Tinagli86). The portrait would help poets related how much beauty meant to the community by saying that no painter would capture beauty perfectly as it is veiled by the body as beauty is the soul. Some development that occurred was that that allowed the beholder to exchange glances with the portrait. Leonardo was one of the first artists to paint such an image when he painted Portrait Ginevra de' Benci (Tinagli86).

On looking at the precision and detail Leonardo and other artists afforded his portraits, it is evident that what they were drawing was not merely portraits but 'reality' as it were. The artist's attention to detail shows the modern

person how life was during the time (Tinagli88). At the point, the portraits were supposed to be three-quarter so that the sitter could lock their eyes with the painter in a way that signified dialogue. It was believed that the eyes were instrument through which love was communicated yet a few of the most celebrated portraits did not lock eyes with the viewer. Portrait Ginevra de' Benci did not lock eyes with the beholder in spite of her being a renowned poet and hailed for her work which preached love.

In his documentation, Leonardo wrote that he understood the conventions of beauty as depicted in poetry and believed that a painter yields even more power over men's mind as in his work, he could draw a portrait that a man can fall in love to. The painting may not even depict a living person. In his argument, Leonardo is right to state that the paintings had power over the mind of men. Mostly, the eyes were believed to communicate love. In such a case, if person received a portrait of a woman whose eyes were locked to those of the beholder, then there is no doubt the beholder would have translated the images to mean that the person loved them.

In conclusion, there are many changes that have occurred in artistry since the Renaissance. Paintings no longer show status or are given as gifts. Nonetheless, it is undeniable that giving a person a portrait may mean love. From the discussion above, something that comes up beside the use of paintings during the time is a comparison between the power portraits had over the mind of men and the beauty they possessed and how they compared to poetry. In so many ways, paintings depicted more beauty and power over a man's heart.

Work Cited

<https://assignbuster.com/portraits-from-1480-1560-beauty-and-power/>

Tinagli, Paola. *Women in Italian Renaissance Art: Gender, Representation and Identity*. Manchester University Press, 1997.