



I love this sentiment: the self-realized nose!
 Respirare ergo sum ego.
 I breathe, therefore I am.

His nomadic nose does in fact turn up—baked into a loaf of bread, no less—and is later spotted in "a gold-embroidered uniform" jumping in and out of carriages around the city. Major Kovalyov finally confronts his nose in Kazan Cathedral, attempting to coax it back onto his face: "After all, you are my own nose." His nose retorts: "You are mistaken my dear sir, I exist in my own right."

"How can I carry on without a nose?"
 This is the central epithet of Nikolai Gogol's absurdest 1836 short story "The Nose."
 The horror belongs to Major Kovalyov, a St. Petersburg government official who awakens to find himself quite pointedly noseless, the remaining space "absolutely flat, like a pancake fresh off the griddle." The Major is baffled and berft!



GOGOL'S "THE NOSE"

ME!

My nose the compass, my nose The Nose, my nose the arrow pointing me in the direction of my life!

When I was about seven, I noticed my nose was capable of more than mere smell and breath. It was the first part of me to enter a room, and (I sometimes worried) it stayed even after I had left...

But I also noticed there were other noses about. Other noses that launched in uncharted directions, that bulged with humor or snot or genes. Noses that dangled double nose-hair bouquets, noses that soared like a ship over a great wave of mustache. Noses like triangles, noses like potatoes, noses like mysterious monuments revealing our past.

Noses like mine, a being that can't fully see itself, but is.



PICK MY NOSE

FEDERICO DA MONTEFELTRO

It would be terrible to have to look over your shoulder all the time, much less your own nose!

After losing his right eye in a duel, Federico da Montefeltro increased the gyroscopic mobility of his remaining eyeball by having a triangle cut out of the impeding nasal bridge.

This rhinoplasty gave the Duke of Urbino an increased field of vision (quite useful to a condottiere in Machiavellian times), as well as his signature look.

Evangelized twice in profile by Piero della Francesca, da Montefeltro is rumored to have declared: "Patience, I'll see better with one eye than with a hundred!"

Much like Ariana Grande half a millennium later, the Duke only allowed portraiture on his left side.



ORSON WELLES

"In most of the films that I appear in, I put on a false nose. Usually as large as I can find." F for Fake, indeed! It was Orson Welles himself who deemed his button nose too petite to pitch the sail and carry the strong wind of his talent in such films as *Compulsion*, *King Lear*, *Ferry to Hong Kong*, *Touch of Evil*, and many others.

With the aid of make-up artist Maurice Seiderman, Welles rarely acted with naked nose, obsessively (and often wonkily self-affixing) various clay creations. "It's terrible for an actor not to have a nose. For all normal purposes, my nose is pleasant. For dramatic purposes, I detest it."

This reversal of the usual nasal dysmorphia fascinates; those who are maligning for a nose of too much strength or structure typically seek to shrink. But for Welles enhancing this protrusion actually gave him the freedom to be bigger than he felt himself, to rise to the occasion.

If the eyes are the windows to the soul, then are nostrils the exhaust pipes of one's character?