

The Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC)  
announces a Lecture

by

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### **Script as Image**

In *Visible Words*, published in 1969, John Sparrow could still assert that “the Dark Ages and the Middle Ages have little to show in the way of inscriptions in which either the text or its presentation can claim to be a work of art.” This astonishing generalization itself now seems little more than a relic of a benighted period of scholarship. Paleographers have long since ceased to regard the study of the history of handwriting as a subsidiary “Hilfswissenschaft,” witness the ambitious title of an influential journal, launched in 1977, *Scrittura e civiltà*. As one of the most important, influential, persistent and pervasive technologies in the history of humankind -- a technology, moreover, that made the keeping of that history possible in the first place -- writing in relation to such affiliated topics as literacy, linguistics, cognition, and media studies has a central place across and beyond the humanistic disciplines. It is time, in turn, for historians of medieval art to take a broader view of paleography, rather than view it primarily as a means of dating or localizing monuments, or, at the most literal level, deciphering illustrated texts or epigraphic inscriptions.

**Thursday, June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 6 pm**

Room 0001

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