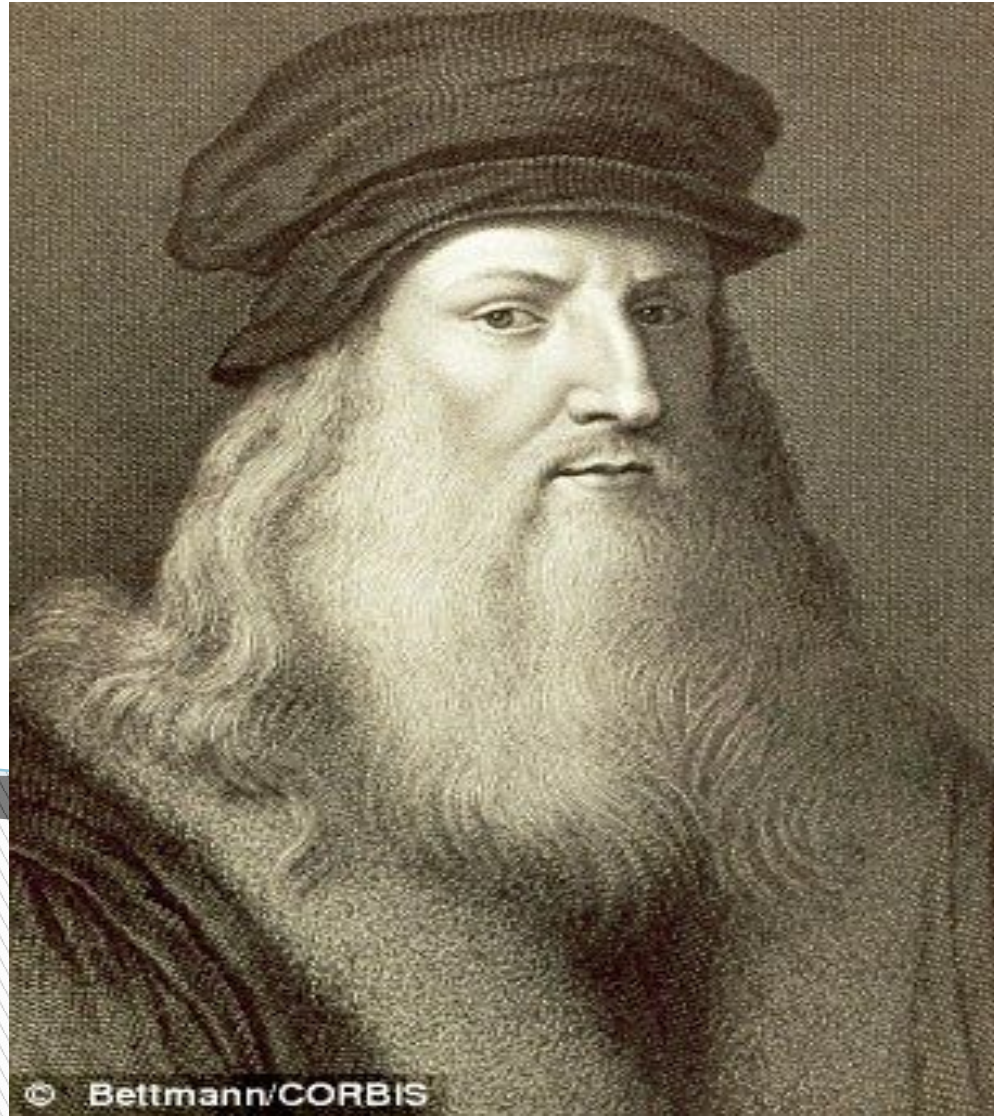
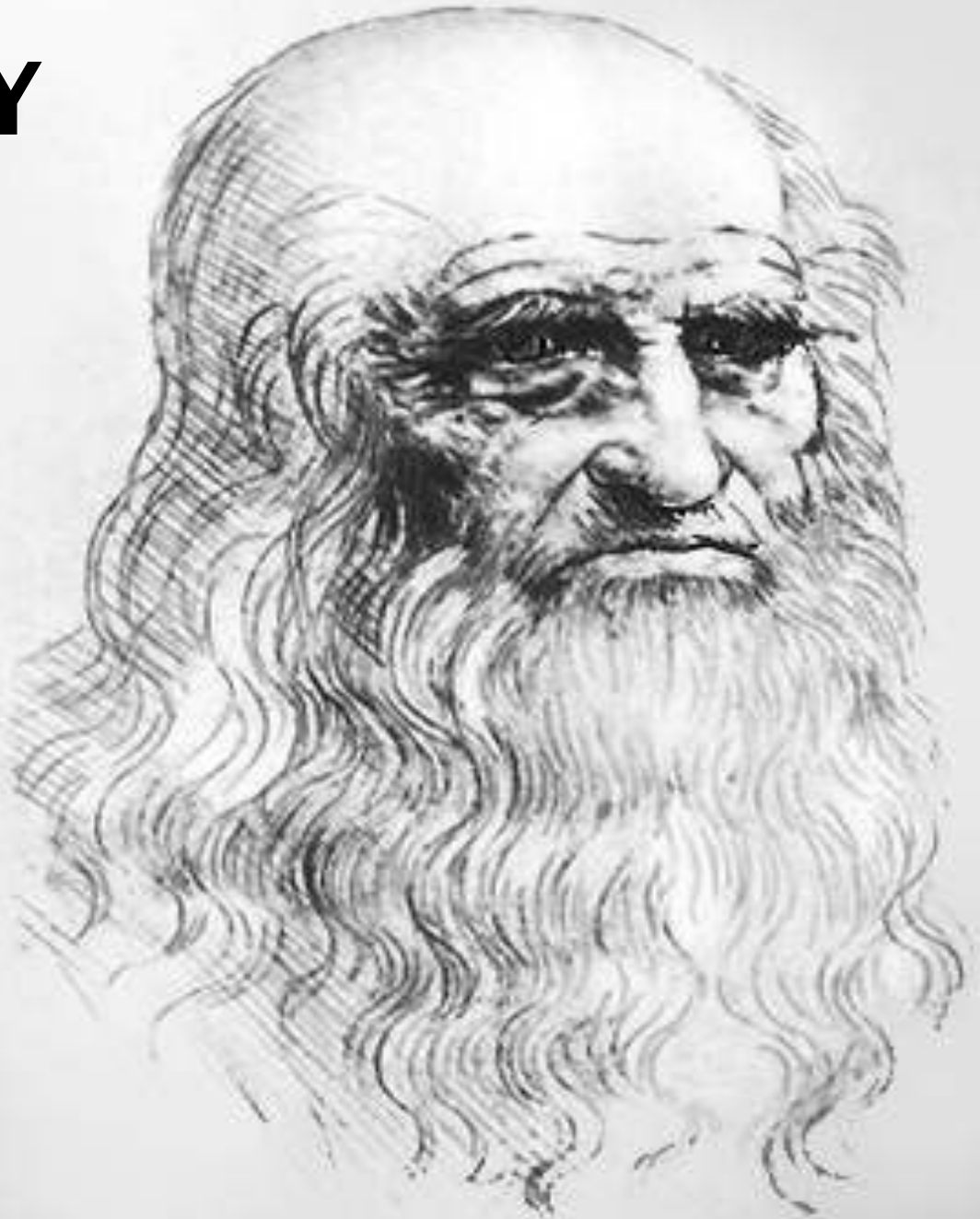


Leonardo di ser Piero da Vinci



BIOGRAPHY

- Leonardo da Vinci (April 15, 1452 – May 2, 1519) was a celebrated Italian Renaissance architect, musician, inventor, engineer, sculptor and painter.
- He has been described as the archetype of the "Renaissance man" and as a universal genius. Leonardo is well known for his masterly paintings, such as *The Last Supper* and *Mona Lisa*. He is also known for his many inventions that were conceived well before their time but of which few were constructed in his lifetime. In addition, he helped advance the study of anatomy, astronomy, and civil engineering. Leonardo was born in Anchiano, near Vinci, Italy. He was an illegitimate child. His father Ser Piero da Vinci was a young lawyer and his mother, Caterina, was a peasant girl. It has been suggested that Caterina was a Middle Eastern slave owned by Piero, but the evidence is scant.



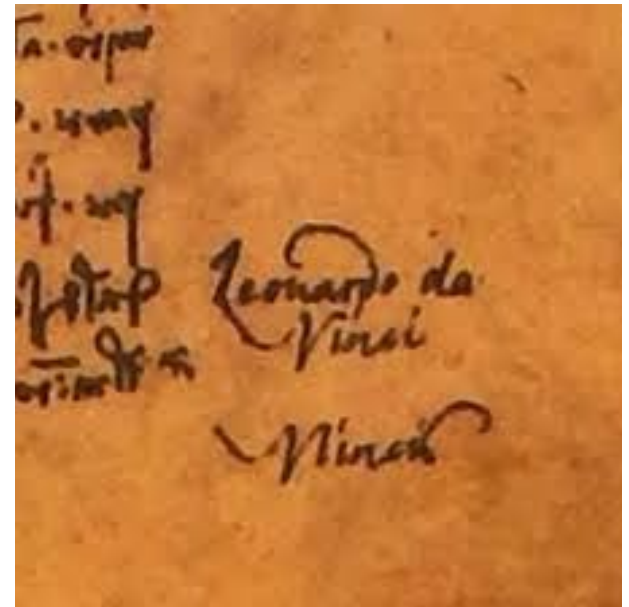
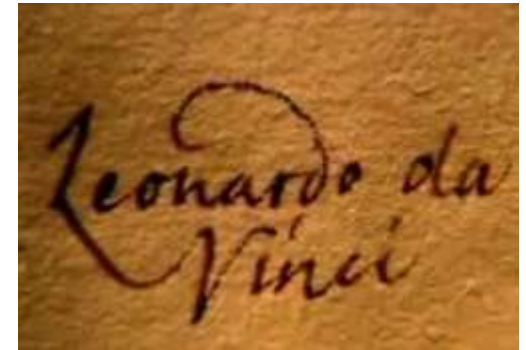
di Leonardo da Vinci

Leonardo da Vinci

This was before modern naming conventions developed in Europe. Therefore, his full name was "Leonardo di ser Piero da Vinci", which means "Leonardo, son of Piero, from Vinci". Leonardo himself simply signed his works "Leonardo" or "Io, Leonardo" ("I, Leonardo"). Most authorities therefore refer to his works as "Leonardos", not "da Vincis". Presumably he did not use his father's name because of his illegitimate status.

Leonardo grew up with his father in Florence. He was a vegetarian throughout his life. He became an apprentice to painter Andrea del Verrocchio about 1466. Later, he became an independent painter in Florence.

Leonardo da Vinci
CANTINE LEONARDO DA VINCI



That Leonardo was homosexual is generally accepted. His longest-running relationship was with a beautiful delinquent Gian Giacomo Caprotti da Oreno, whom he nicknamed Salai (Little Devil), who entered his household at the age of 10. Leonardo supported Salai for twenty five years, and he left Salai half his vineyard in his will.

From 1478 to 1499 Leonardo worked for Ludovico Sforza, Duke of Milan and maintained his own workshop with apprentices there. Seventy tons of bronze that had been set aside for Leonardo's "Gran Cavallo" horse statue were cast into weapons for the Duke in an attempt save Milan from the French under Charles VIII in 1495.

When the French returned under Louis XII in 1498, Milan fell without a fight, overthrowing Sforza. Leonardo stayed in Milan for a time, until one morning he found French archers using his life-size clay model for the "Gran Cavallo" for target practice. He left with his servant and assistant Salai (a.k.a. Gian Giacomo Caprotti) and his friend (and inventor of double-entry bookkeeping) Luca Pacioli for Mantua, moving on after 2 months for Venice, then moving again to Florence at the end of April 1500.



Madonna with a Flower

In Florence he entered the services of Cesare Borgia (also called "Duca Valentino" and son of Pope Alexander VI) as a military architect and engineer. In 1506 he returned to Milan, now in the hands of Maximilian Sforza after Swiss mercenaries drove out the French.

In 1507 Leonardo met a 15 year old aristocrat of great personal beauty, Count Francesco Melzi. Melzi became his pupil, life companion, and heir.

In 1515 Francis I of France retook Milan, and Leonardo was commissioned to make a centrepiece (of a mechanical lion) for the peace talks in Bologna between the French king and Pope Leo X, where he must have first met the king. In 1516, he entered Francis' service, being given the use of the manor house Clos Luce next to the king's residence at the Royal Chateau at Amboise, and receiving a generous pension. The king became a close friend.



Lady with an Ermine

He died in Cloux, France in 1519. According to his wish, 60 beggars followed his casket. He was buried in the Chapel of Saint-Hubert in the castle of Amboise.

Leonardo had a great number of friends, some of whom were:

Fazio Cardano — mathematician, jurist

Giovanni Francesco Melzi — painter, pupil

Girolamo Melzi — Captain in Milanese militia

Giovanni Francesco Rustici

Cesare Borgia — warrior

Niccolo Machiavelli — writer

Andrea da Ferrara

Franchinus Gaffurius — music theorist, composer

Francesco Nani — Brother in the Franciscan Order in Brescia

Iacomo Andrea — architect and author

Fra Luca Bartolomeo de Pacioli — Franciscan father

Galeazzo da Sanseverino — Commanded ducal army of Milan, singer

Ginevra dei Benci

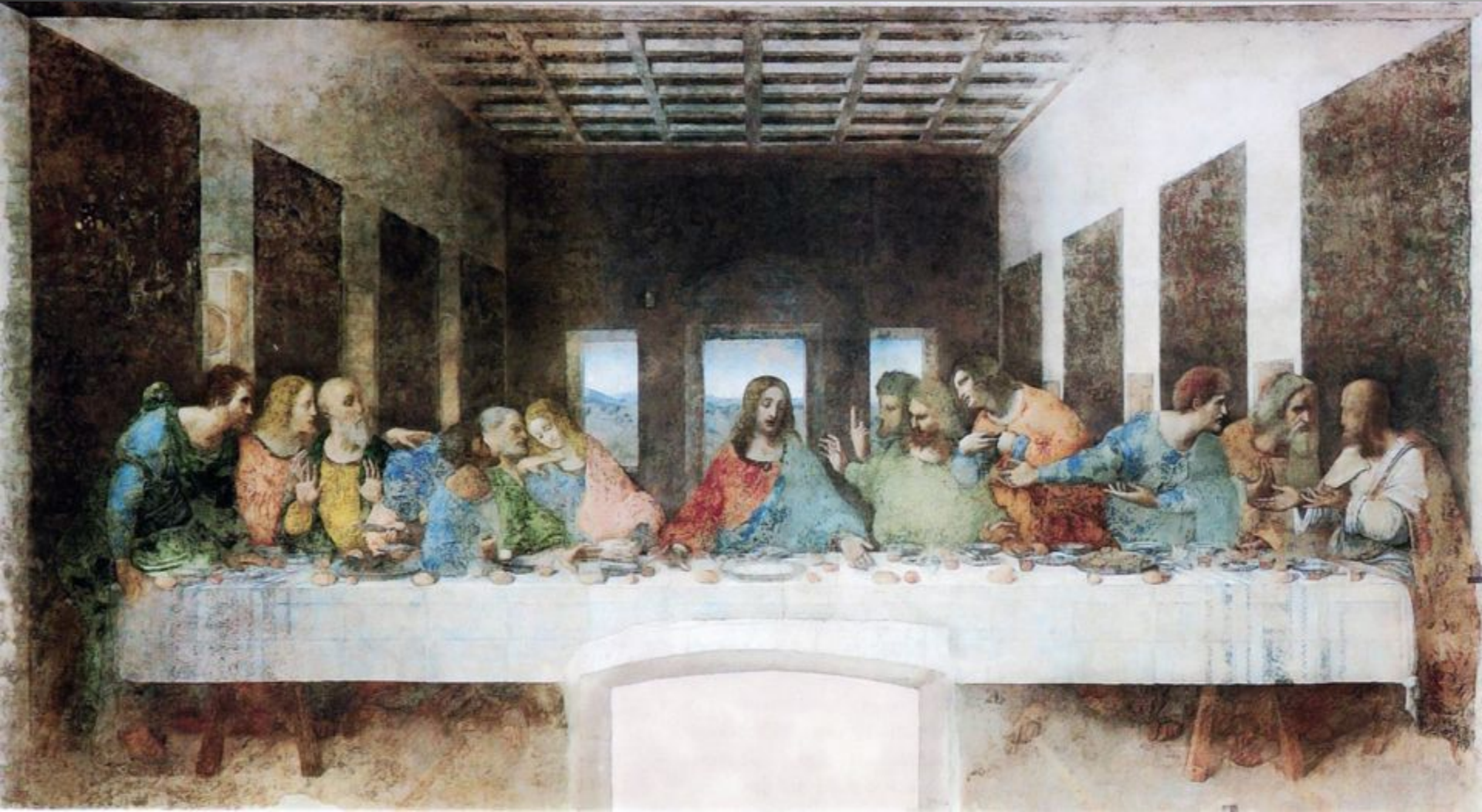
Atalante Miglioretti — singer, artist, actor

Benedetto Dei — writer

Tomasso Masini da Peretola a.k.a. Zoroastro — student of alchemy, occultist

Art

Lord's Supper



Leonardo is well known for the masterful paintings attributed to him, such as Last Supper (Ultima Cena or Cenacolo, in Milan), painted in 1498, and the Mona Lisa (also known as La Gioconda, now at the Louvre in Paris), painted in 1503–1506. There is significant debate however, whether da Vinci himself painted the Mona Lisa, or whether it was primarily the work of his students. Only seventeen of his paintings, and none of his statues survive. Of these paintings, only Ginevra de' Benci is in the Western Hemisphere.

Leonardo often planned grandiose paintings with many drawings and sketches, only to leave the projects unfinished.



**Bakx
(Bacchus)**

in Florence, he was commissioned for a large public mural, the "Battle of Anghiari"; his rival Michelangelo was to paint the opposite wall. After producing a fantastic variety of studies in preparation for the work, he left the city, with the mural unfinished due to technical difficulties.



For these two paintings posed one and the same person.

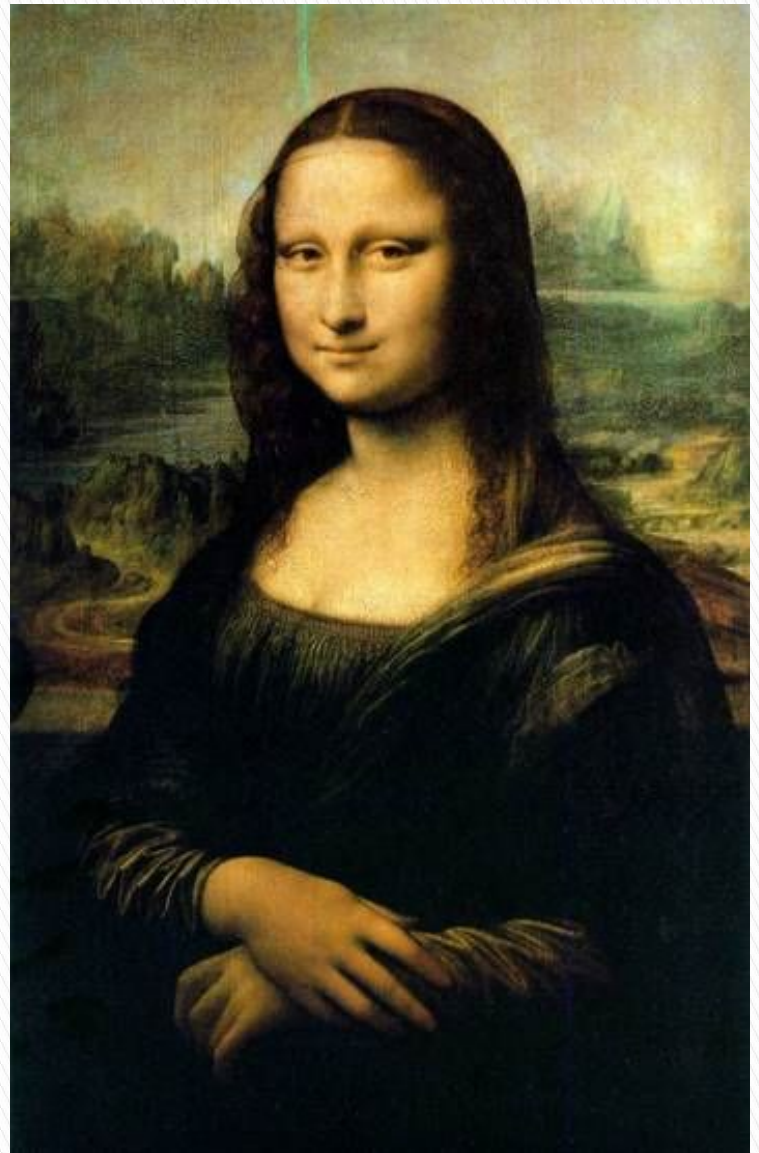


John the Baptist



Mona Lisa

Mona Lisa Smile is one of the most famous mysteries of the picture. This light wandering smile is found in many works as the master himself, and at Leonardeschi, but it is in the "Mona Lisa," it reached its perfection. Especially captivates the viewer a demonic charm of this smile. Hundreds of poets and writers have written about this woman who seems to be something of a smiling seductively, then frozen, cold and heartless staring into space, and nobody guessed her smile, no one has interpreted her thoughts. Everything, even the landscape, mysterious, like a dream, timid as before the storm haze of sensuality (Mutter)



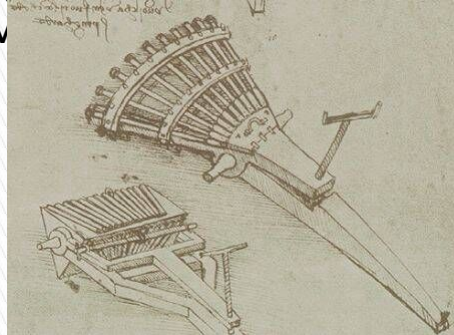
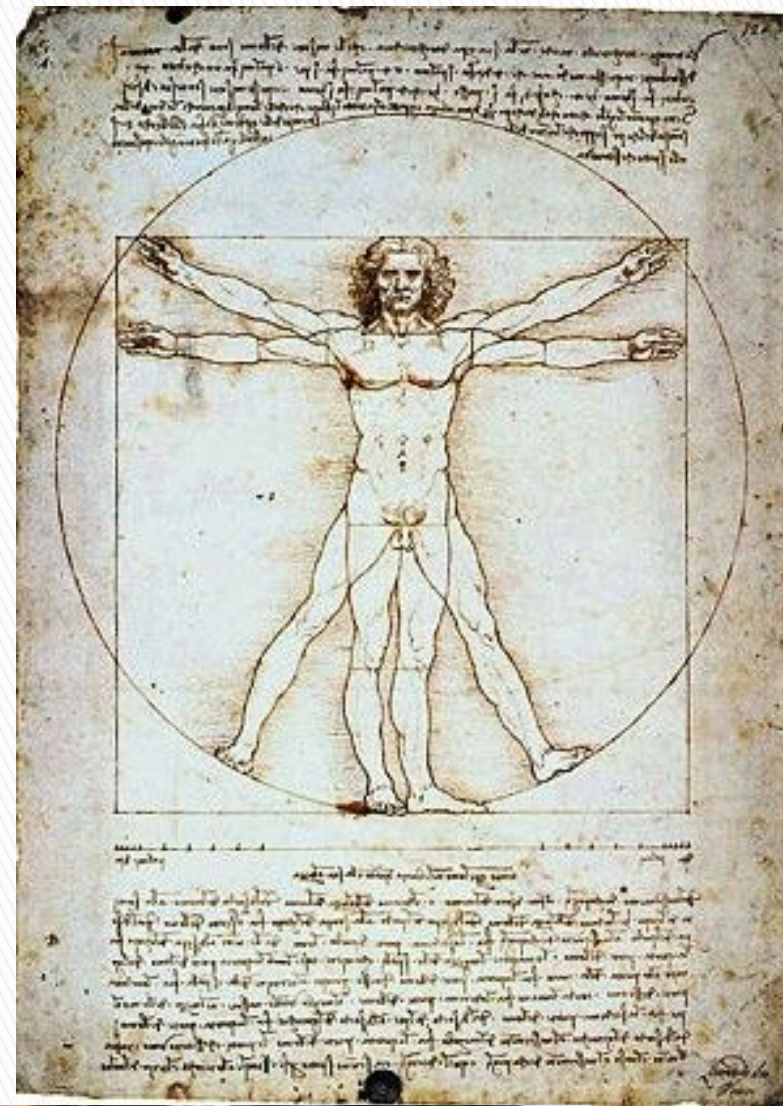
The mysterious smile of the
Mona Lisa

Science and engineering

Perhaps even more impressive than his artistic work are his studies in science and engineering, recorded in notebooks comprising some 13,000 pages of notes and drawings, which fuse art and science. He was left-handed and used mirror writing throughout his life. Explainable by fact that it is easier to pull a quill pen than to push it; by using mirror-writing, the left-handed writer is able to pull the pen from right to left.

His approach to science was an observatory one: he tried to understand a phenomenon by describing and depicting it in utmost detail, and did not emphasize experiments or theoretical explanations. Throughout his life, he planned a grand encyclopedia based on detailed drawings of everything. Since he lacked formal education in Latin and mathematics, Leonardo the scientist was mostly ignored by contemporary scholars.

He participated in autopsies and produced many extremely detailed anatomical drawings, planning a comprehensive work of human and comparative anatomy. Around the year 1490, he produced a study in his sketchbook of the Canon of Proportions as described in recently rediscovered writings of the Roman architect Vitruvius. The study, called the



rks

Madonna Litta (Мадонна Литта)



MADONNA AND CHILD WITH ST. Anna.
(МАДОННА С МЛАДЕНЦЕМ И СВ. АННОЙ.)



Virgin of the Rocks (Мадонна в скалах)



Ginevra de 'Benci

(Портрет Джиневры де Бенчи)



La Belle Ferronnière

(Прекрасная Ферроньера)



Portrait of a musician (Портрет музыканта)



Annunciation (Благовещение)



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Madonna of the Carnation (Мадонна с гвоздикой)



Saint Jerome

(Святой Иероним)

