

Leonardo Da Vinci is a world renowned Italian painter, sculptor, architect, musician, engineer, and scientist. His curiosity for the things around him and the research was the fundamental point of his artistic and scientific accomplishments. His creations in painting influenced Italian art centuries after his death and his scientific studies (anatomy, optics and hydraulics) have helped made many developments of modern science. His famous paintings for example the Mona Lisa and the Last Supper are known world wide. People crave to own his paintings, or even just to have a look at them; Leonardo had influenced everyone up to this present day. Even Bill Gates used \$30 million US for Leonardo's painting 'Codex Leicester' ! Who is this remarkable man? And what did he do that taught the world to look at art and science in a new perspective?

Leonardo told us that he was born on April 15<sup>th</sup> 1452 in the city of Vinci in Italy and was the son of a notary and a peasant girl. His parents had a lot of kids, but not with each other and having him ending up with 17 half sisters and brothers.

He said that living in Vinci was the place where he developed his creativity and interest in nature. He was also exposed to the ancient Vinci painting tradition at that time. In 1466, he moved to Florence where he was apprenticed in the famous workshop of 'Andrea Del Verrochio'. While working there, he painted an angel in Verrochio's 'Baptist of Christ'. His painting was so much better than his master that Verrochio never painted again.

In 1482, Leonardo wrote a letter to the Duke of Milan telling him that he could build portable bridges that would enable dry routes for people to travel. At this time, he carried notebooks and started to keep all his ideas, opinions on everything including domestic, personal, scientific and philosophical along with explanatory sketches. These notebooks were full of advice for science and art not only for the people in the Renaissance but also useful painters now. The Duke gave lots of jobs to him that included designing weapons, buildings and machinery. He produced lots of ideas for nature, flying machines, geometry and mechanical things. His eager to start new things made it hard for him to complete the things that he had started making him only completing 6 of 17 works that he had done.

He started to find himself interested in painting, architecture, the elements of mechanics and human anatomy from 1490 to 1495. He spent this time studying science or locking himself up in his room dissecting human bodies to examine and to draw the different limbs and nerves. That's why he paid attention to draw very small

organs and hidden parts of the skeleton. Then he started to move from anatomy to the nature of the solar system, structure of fossils and even the principles of flight.

Leonardo told us that he wanted to create new machines for a new world. With this determination, he came up with ideas including the bicycle, a helicopter, an “auto-mobile” and also some other ghastly weapons. His greatest study was water, he studied all the states of water from liquid to steam to ice. He thought of plans to make a machine that could measure humidity and also another machine that could be powered by flowing water. Leonardo recognised that levers and gears could do a lot of things. Gears were almost in half of his inventions from the crane to the helicopter.

Leonardo’s most famous painting is the ‘Mona Lisa’. No one knows the secret story of the woman in the picture. Some say that she was smiling because she was pregnant but evidence has proven that the Mona Lisa was probably his self portrait! The ‘Last Supper’ is also a famous painting.

<http://www.geocities.com/kavid.geo/leonardo/bio.html>

<http://education.yahoo.com/reference/encyclopedia/entry?id=27750>