

Leonardo da vinci assignment

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The theories about Mona Lisa run from the most theoretical and nonscientific to the most scholarly and technical. The measurements of the portrait are thirty inches by twenty inches. The painting is in a humidified concrete box, protected by a triple bulletproof glass in the museum of Louvre in Paris. It is estimated that over six million tourists a year see her in Louvre. It would surprise many people to know that the Mona Lisa was once regarded as nothing special (Clark, 1999, up 210-220). As mentioned before many theories on the identity of the woman in the painting and why Leonardo painted her vary.

Some researchers go as far as to claim that the living model never existed, but that Leonardo painted an ideal woman or his self-portrait in the body of a woman. However, the majority of the art historians agree that the Vicar's story is one of the most credible and the exact account of the Mona Lisa's identity. According to Vassar, the portrait shows Lisa Gherardini, the wife of a Florentine silk merchant called Francesco del Giocondo. That surname accounts for the painting's Italian title, La Gioconda, which by coincidence also means "smiling woman." The picture is thought to have been commissioned by Lisa's husband around 1503. Leonardo did not finish it, and he took it to France with him when he was invited to join the court of King Francis I. After Leonardo's death, the picture belonged to the royal art collection. Somehow for a period of time, it was hanging in King Francis's bathroom at Fontainebleau by the turn of the 17th century, and it does not seem to have been particularly treasured. Exposure to the steam seems to be responsible for the cracks in the portrait and for discoloration of the blue color in the sky area.

After the French Revolution, Napoleon hanged her in his bedroom. In 1797, when the Royal Palace of the Louvre had been turned into a citizens' museum the Mona Lisa was finally included in the core collection. But it was not until the twentieth century that it began to attract major attention (Clark, 1999, pp. 210-220). Leonardo was in his fifties when he began the Mona Lisa. He worked on it for four years, but not exclusively. He painted her on poplar wood. This was the wood of choice of the artists at the time. Also, it is suggested that Mona Lisa sat for only the head of the portrait; the body and hands were drawn using other models.

It was more likely that what Leonardo was trying to achieve was his view of the most beautiful, irresistible and alluring woman that he could conceive. He was successful in his attempt and he must have known that. This may have been one of the reasons why he refused to separate himself from the painting, keeping it with him for thirteen years until his death. The portrait features Lisa with soft, gentle hands. Her position of the hands resting over the upper abdominal part of the body suggests that she was pregnant at the time. Another factor to suggest this is that her hands are a little bit swollen.

Her dress is painted in dark colors and is plain, and Leonardo gave the dress she is wearing a look of fine cloth. She is married, but Leonardo decided not to show her wedding ring. Also, her loose hair would have been seen as loose morals at the time when she was painted (Clark 1999, pp. 210-230). The style of the Mona Lisa painting was very different from other portraits made until that time. First, she was painted sitting down and not as a bust or drawn in profile like Italian painters did. Second, the portrait was larger and included

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more of the poser's body. Also, Dad Vinci paints a relaxed and three quarter pose of the figure.

This new posing angle consist of a body and face not following in the same direction. This kind of innovation was revolutionary t the time. Traditionally, renaissance portrait paintings up to that time consisted mainly of “ dull” profile faces. This invention of Dad Vine's was such an achievement at the time that it influenced the development of a completely new way of portrait drawing which was followed by many artists. One of the most intriguing features of Mona Lisa is her smile. This smile was done by a combination by Dad Vine's optical effects and his style of suffuse.

Suffuse usually translated as “ dark smoke,” is painting technique using thin layers of color that are superimposed and intermixed in order to create effects of perspective, depth and volume. This is considered a Leonardo invention and was one of his most used and successful styles of painting. (Adams 2001 310). The other part of the special effects is that the smile is sight- lobed. This means that if the half left side of the face is covered it seems that she appears to be serious, while if the half right side of the face is covered than it seem like she is smiling. Also her eyes are not in the same rhythm with her smiling mouth.

For example, if her mouth is covered and we see only her eyes, than it does not appear that she is smiling. These are Leonardo optical effects. Of course, Leonardo did not do anything by mistake and this must have been intentional, but the reason why still remains unknown (Philippic 1 999, up 519-520). What inspired the Mona Alias's smile and that Of Dad Vine's other

women was a source of fascination for Freud. Providing an in-depth psychological study of the artist in his study *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood*, Freud analyses Leonardo's early life in order to understand the enigmatic smiling style of *Mona Lisa*.

Freud explains the *Mona Lisa* smile in the light of Leonardo's mother-child relationship. Freud attributes the smile to a combination of the child living on in the adult, and to the artist's taking the child's memory forward to a creation in a work of art (Gay 1989, p. 220). Freud believes that Leonardo found something in the smile that captivated him. He wrote; "The conclusion seems hardly to be avoided that he found this smile in his model and fell so strongly under its spell that from then on he bestowed it on the free creations of his fantasy" (Gay 1989, p. 460).

Freud asserts the *Giaconda*-like smile is repeated on the faces of *SST. Anne and Mary*, who are looking down on the Christ-child playing with a lamb in a happy scene. Freud supports his arguments with the fact that Leonardo began his artistic career by portraying two different objects, children and laughing women. Thus, it can be hypothesized that from the beginning Leonardo was searching for something. His ability to achieve the *Mona Lisa* smile was a rediscovery of that something he thought was lost at the age of five when he went to live with his father- his mother (Gay 1989, pp. 70-480). If it is true, this finding must have been a revelation of incredible magnitude for Leonardo and it would explain why it took him a long time to complete it and why he ever sold the painting. The other factor that adds up to the painting's mystery is its strange landscape. The landscape includes a bridge that crosses a dry riverbed and a winding road that passes into reddish brown

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rocks. Just above this are two lakes and a range of jagged mountains whose points go from olive green to light blue and blend with the bright light in the horizon.

The right half side of the landscape is inconsistent with the left side. The scene lacks any plant or animals and is probably a composite from Leonardo's mind rather than a specific location. Leonardo seems to have wanted to create something, much like God created the world. This landscape is typical of Leonardo. He repeats this type of landscaping in other paintings such as 'Virgin of the Rocks' and the 'Madonna' (Smith 1999, p 230). Mona Lisa's landscape, even though it has the bridge and road, makes the observer aware of the creation of the rivers and mountains before man touched them.

The mystery of the origin of man and his world seems to be underlying in the painting, bringing the lady and the landscape together. The background of rivers and peaks adds a life of its own to the painting. Leonardo was one of the first painters to use this landscape technique as a background for a portrait (Smith 1999, p 230). This combination of Leonardo's artistic genius and innovations distinguished the Mona Lisa style of painting from others. However, La Gioconda may not have always looked the way it looks today.

According to the French art expert Pascal Cotte, La Gioconda had eyebrows and the dull sky behind Mona Lisa was actually a brighter blue. Cotte was granted special access to the painting in 2009 by Louvre, in which using a special camera, he was able to see past the top paint surface and examine the layers below. Cotte said Leonardo built up the painting in layers, the last being a special glaze. He found that the underlying layers of the face are

painted using lead white and mercury vermilion. Leonardo had then painted details such as the eyebrows on top of the glaze. That could explain why the eyebrows have disappeared. They have faded because of chemical reactions or they have been cleaned off', Cote told the British, Telegraph newspaper. The other finding that Cote made was that a finger on her left hand had been moved by Dad Vinci to create a more relaxed feeling. He said that for Leonardo the Mona Lisa was " more than a painting, it was a challenge to reproduce real life" ([http://www. Telegraph. Co. UK](http://www.Telegraph.Co.UK)). The Mona Lisa may be the simplest painting that Leonardo ever painted, but it is clearly his most effective.

In the end, a person sees her in a personal way with the explanations due only to himself. During the centuries, many questions and theories have been raised about the Mona Lisa painting. Question such as; is she smiling or not? Who is she smiling with? Why is she smiling? I think that these theories and questions have risen because Mona Lisa has such a larger than life petition, So people sometimes forget that she Was a real woman, which her image was caught in a wonderful work of art, and maybe that was all that Leonardo indented to give us, just a simple and wonderful work of art for us to enjoy.