

# La gioconda

Business



In 1503, the great artist sat before a blank canvas, unaware that the thing he was about to create would be the most famous painting in history. He began to sketch the maiden sitting in front of him.

He himself didn't know why he chose her, when there were kings and queens asking him for portraits. This girl was a scullery maid compared to them. But there was something about her. Was it the friendliness of her face? Or the way she held herself, so regally. These are all questions that the greatest of art historians find themselves asking about the work of art that is La Gioconda, better known as the Mona Lisa. Painted in 1503 by Leonardo da Vinci, it is the most famous illustration in the world.

Ask anyone, and they will know of her and the world famous smile, and the eyes that always seem to be watching you. Da Vinci uses a number of techniques to draw your eyes to these stunning features. He used a pyramid design to pull your eyes upward to the point of the pyramid- her face. He also utilizes this geometric shape in the folding of her hands. There are other shapes all over in the background of this piece, in the landscape, he makes using lighting. He illuminates certain parts of the buildings in the background to create these figures.

The scenery behind her is dark, to make her face seem full of light. The setting's rolling curves are totally in tune with the curves of her body, giving a sense of natural order, making some ask if he was really painting a person or just an ideal. When you punctuate the curves with the stunning details of her eyes and mouth, you get an almost perfect contrast. In order to make La Gioconda seem more regal, he utilizes the chair she is sitting in, making her

seem elegant and proper. However her smile is friendly, and her eyes seem to always to be on you, giving the sense that she is laughing at you. There are so many mixed emotions in this piece, it makes her seem bipolar, and that is actually a theory supported by art historians.

The form of the painting is actually an extremely common form in the 15th and 16th centuries. It is a modified version of the seated Madonna, although the other paintings have the subjects as a serious face, rather than the smile that Mona brings to the table. Many people are so intrigued by this piece because of the smile. When Leonardo painted the piece, could he sense that it was so far out it would bring such a huge sense of mystery? Or was it just because he wanted to be different? Some say it was because he had a string of the Oedipus complex, meaning that he was in love with his mother, so he translated that love to this painting. This was, after all, one of his mother's friends. Did he want to impress his mother? Some people think that this body feature gives her a sense of familiarity and friendliness.

Maybe da Vinci wanted her to seem more accessible. Or he wanted all artwork to be more positive in general, so he made a piece with someone smiling. Possibly he had no idea what it would happen, he just wanted to be different. A computer program was made in 2005 to analyze how happy people are in photos or paintings. The test came out to say that the Mona Lisa was 83% happy.

Did Leonardo purposely paint her this happy? Another time that technology was involved in this great mystery was when they investigated the Mona Lisa once again, this time by applying X-ray techniques to understand the

shadowing in her face. The painting was one of seven Leonardo Da Vinci masterpieces investigated by Philippe Walter and colleagues. Their investigation describes the super-thin layers of glaze and pigment used to achieve seamless transitions from light to dark. They learned that he used sfumato, a technique used by many renaissance painters to create shadow and contrast. We are still chipping away at this great mystery.

We'll continue to try to find out the true motives, behind the great artist, when he sat at that blank canvas, 500 years ago. [www. aspectart. com](http://www.aspectart.com) [www. wikipedia. org](http://www.en.wikipedia.org) [www. ezine articles. com](http://www.ezinearticles.com)