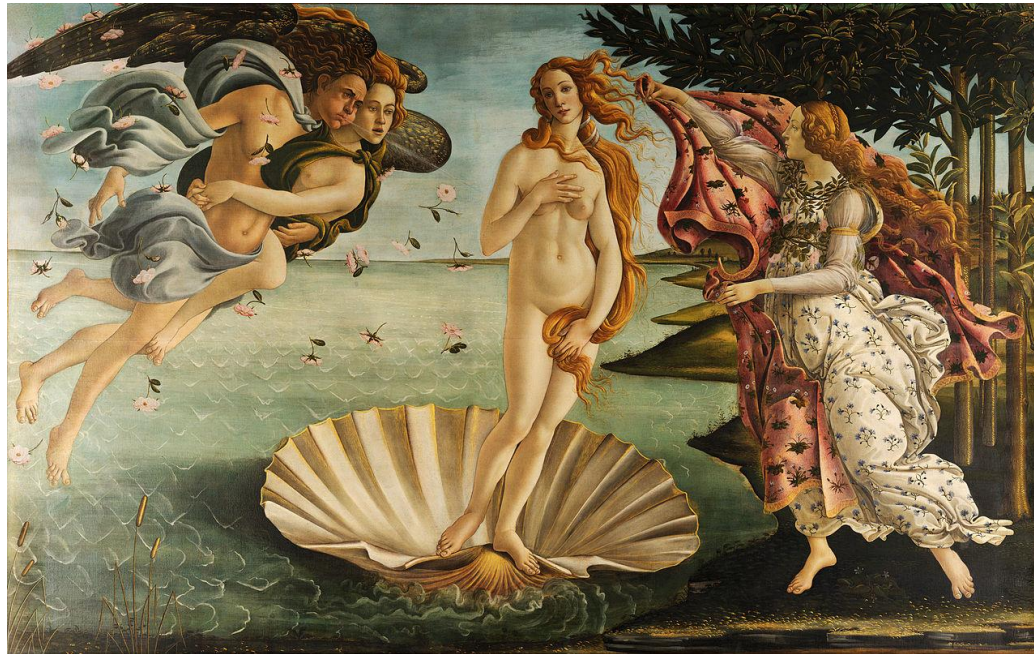


# The Renaissance

The Renaissance occurred between 1400 A.D. and 1600 A.D. It began in the city states of Italy. Renaissance means "rebirth" in French. The art of this period reflected back to the classical time of Rome and Greece. This reflection back to the Greek and Romans was not limited to the arts, but all fields like literature, science, and architecture.



In the fifteenth century, Italy was not the unified country we know today. At that time the boot-shaped peninsula was divided into many small independent states. Naples in the south was ruled by a series of kings. Popes of the Roman Catholic Church ruled the middle section. To the north different families controlled the largest and wealthiest city-states of Florence, Milan, and Venice. They fought wars against each other and against smaller neighboring states to increase their power.





Before 1400, the primary subjects of art were religious in nature. Aside from commissioned portraits, most artists made their livings painting biblical scenes and portraits of saints. In the 1400's this all changed. A new revolution in art opened the eyes of the world to the glory of the world itself. During the Renaissance, a new interest in Greek and Roman culture lead to an explosion in knowledge about the human form along with innovations in mathematics and science. Artist themselves were elevated in social status and their works were looked upon not as mere crafts, but as miraculous creations that were divinely inspired. In addition to sacred images, many of these works portrayed domestic themes such as marriage, birth and the everyday life of the family. While many artists are recognized as having contributed to the body of important work created during the Renaissance, at the forefront of the movement were three prominent artists; **Michelangelo, Leonardo, and Raphael.**





Portion of the painted fresco, Ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Rome, c. 1508 - 1512

## Michelangelo

**Michelangelo Buonarroti** was born in 1475 and died in 1564. In the 89 years that he lived, Michelangelo created many of the works of art that we think of when we think of the Renaissance. A skilled painter who spent many years completing the frescoes that adorn the Sistine Chapel, Michelangelo had trained as a sculptor and created two of the world's greatest statues--the enormous David and the emotional Pieta. It took Michelangelo over four years to paint over 6,000 square feet of the Sistine Chapel with scenes from the Old Testament. His renowned sculpture “David” is thought to take its influence from the Greek sculpture “Spear Bearer.”

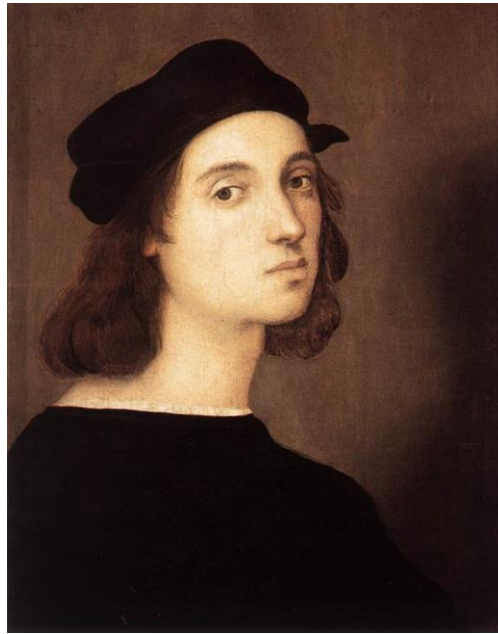
**David**, c. 155 – 1504, Carrera Marble, [Accademia di Belle Arti Firenze](#)







**Portion of the *Sistine Madonna*, c. 1512,  
Dresden, Germany**



*Self Portrait*, 1506, Uffizi Gallery,  
Florence,

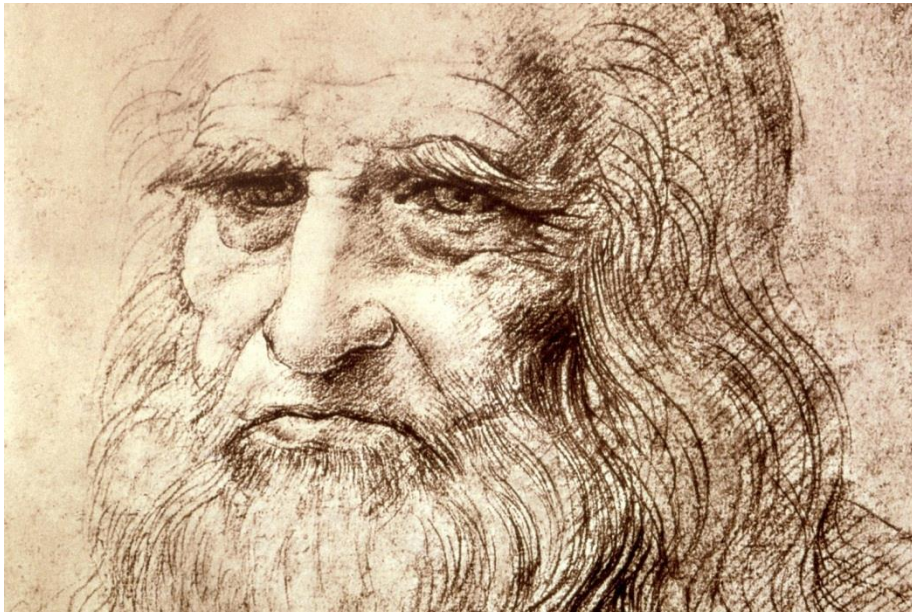
**Raphael Sanzio** was born in 1483 and died in 1520. Popular with the popes of the period, Raphael decorated the papal apartments and served as architect of St. Peter's. He is credited with revolutionizing portrait painting and also designed the "cartoons" that are on the tapestries of the Sistine Chapel. Raphael died suddenly on Good Friday, 1520, before all the work was completed in the chapel and much of it was finished by his students.



*Small Cowper Madonna*, c. 1505, [National Gallery of Art](https://www.nga.gov/)

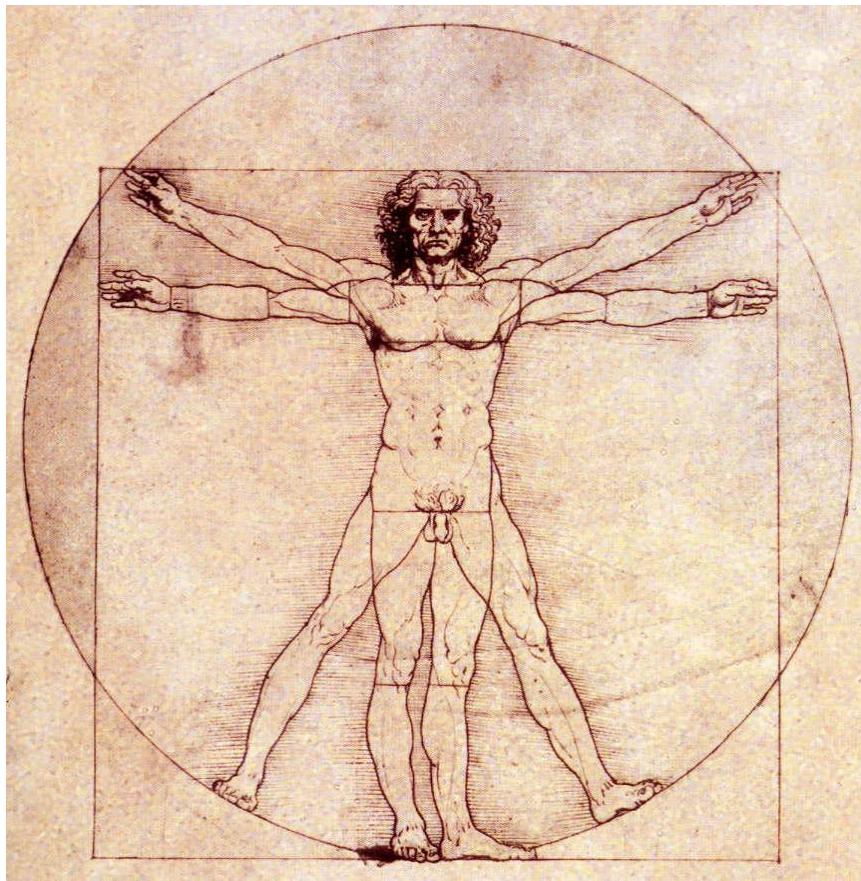
# Raphael

# Leonardo da Vinci



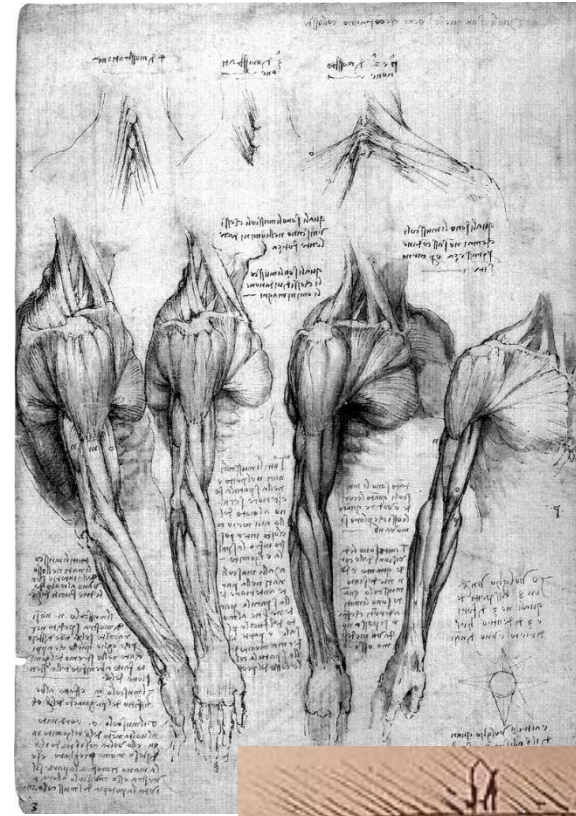
**Leonardo da Vinci** was born 1452 and died in 1519. His most famous works are the *Mona Lisa* and *the Last Supper* which are works in oil. He had a nature that was careful and precise, so that he never hurried to finish a work. He developed what are regarded as technical, manual skills that were so excellent that few artists in history have rivaled his ability. He had an exceptional intellect and fascination with the world around him. Besides his paintings, he left us a legacy of detailed drawings of the human anatomy, plans for a tank, helicopter, ideas on the construction of multi-level canal and road systems. Leonardo was also left handed; and used a special kind of shorthand to make notes. Because he was an artist and a scientist at a time when both art and science, he has come to characterize the ultimate "Renaissance Man." There is so much to learn about this fascinating artist and inventor.



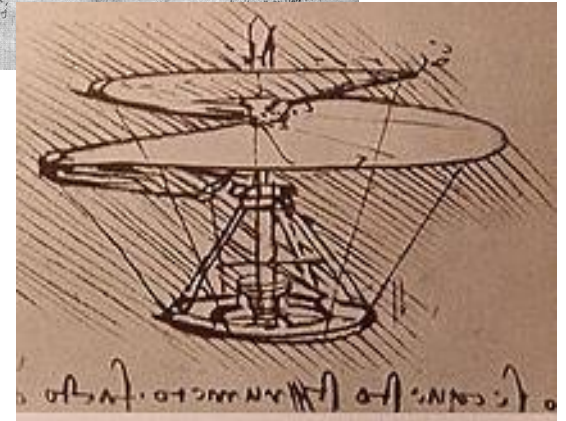
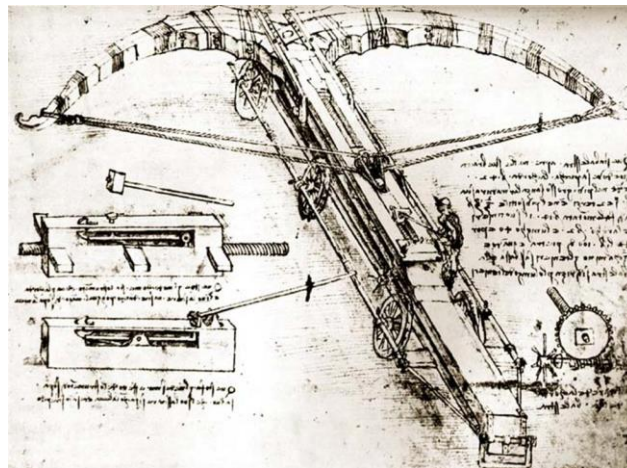


*Vitruvian Man*,  
completed in 1490

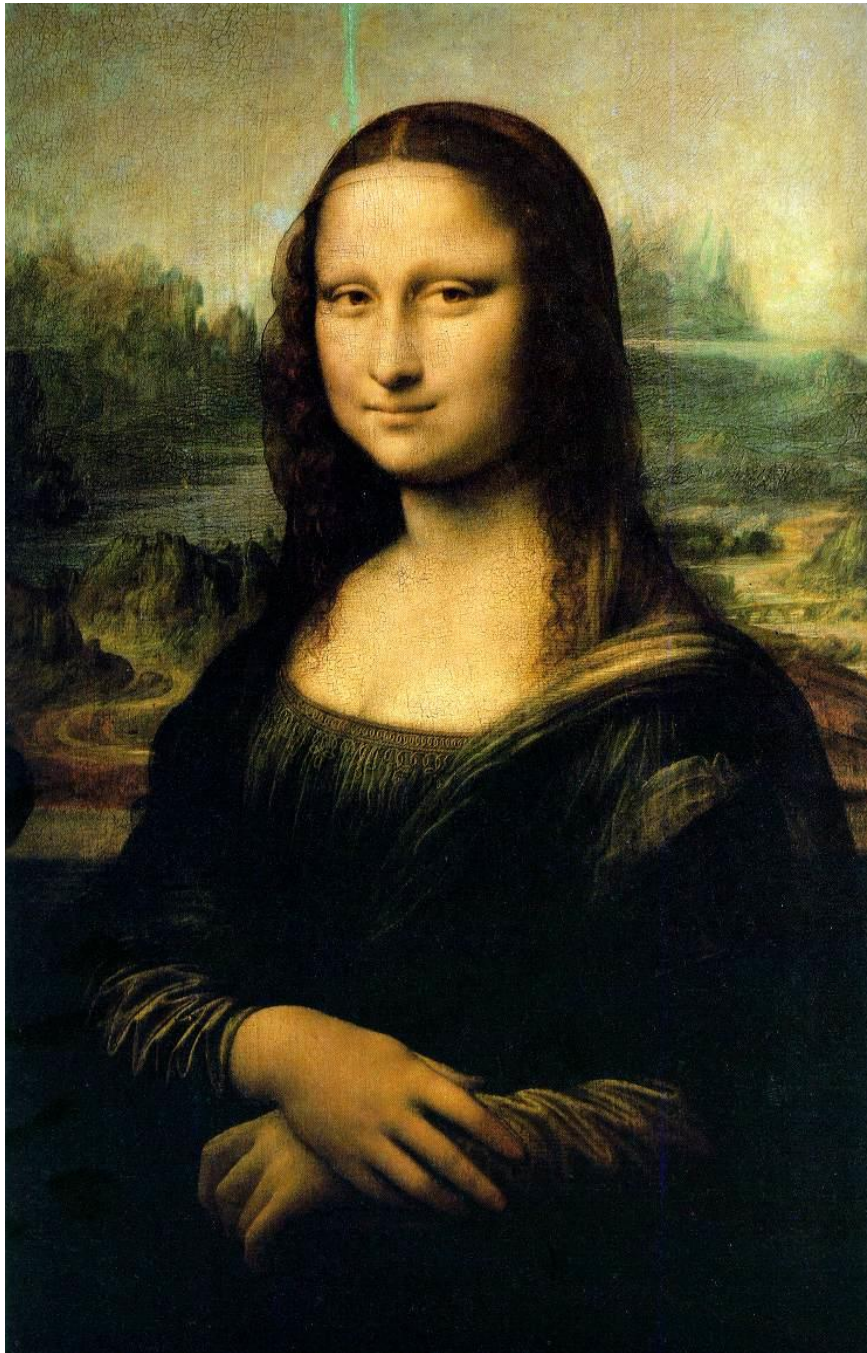
Leonardo  
da Vinci



Various  
Sketches &  
Drawings







The *Mona Lisa* was one of Leonardo's favorite paintings, and he carried it with him until he died. Today, it is regarded as the most famous painting in the world, and is visited by many thousands of people every year at the Louvre.

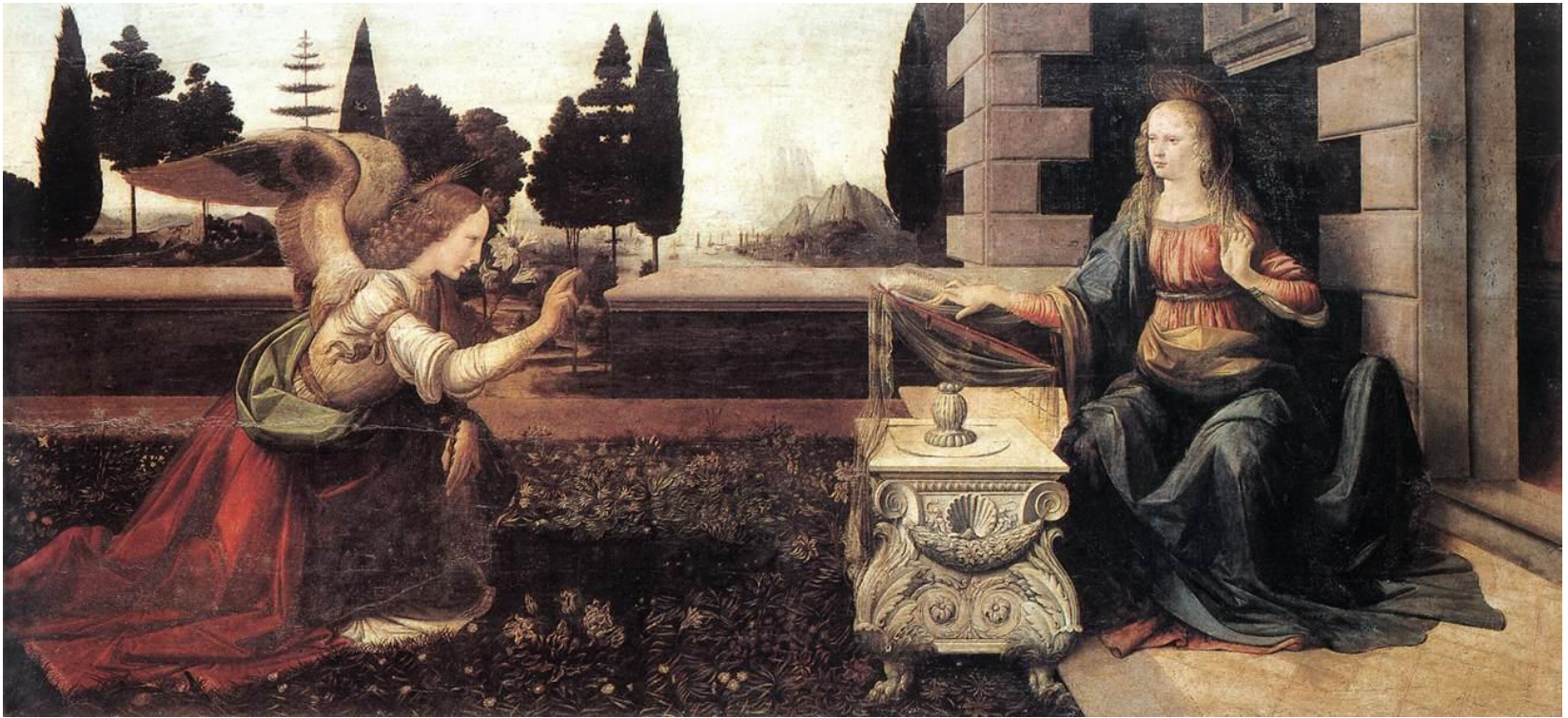
Who is this familiar figure? Many suggestions have been made, but the most likely candidate is Lisa Gherardini, the wife of a Florentine silk merchant.

*Portrait of **Mona Lisa** c*  
1503-06

also known as *La Gioconda*, the wife of Francesco del Giocondo;

Oil on wood,  
30 x 20 7/8 inches;  
Musee du Louvre, Paris



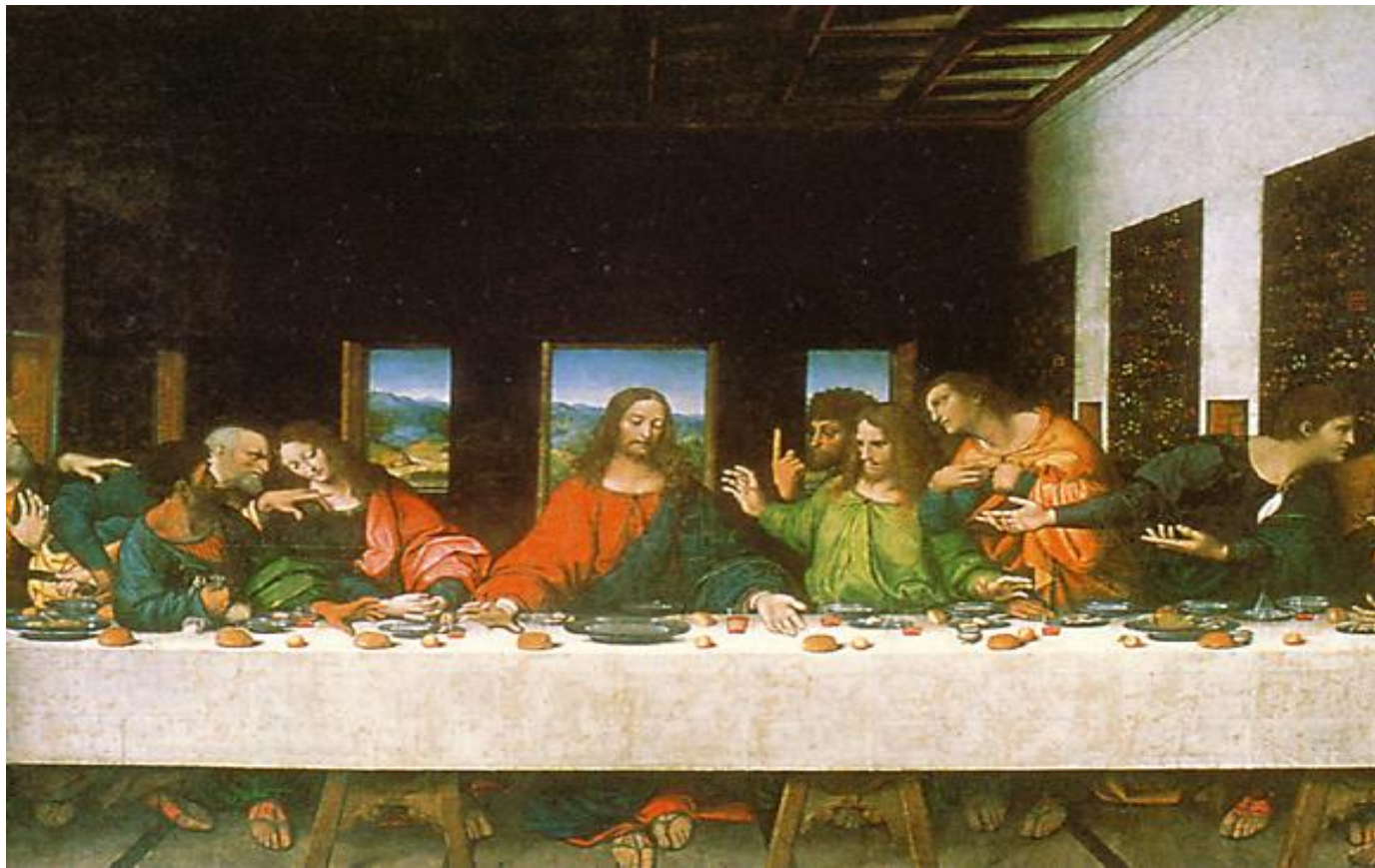


***The Annunciation.*** c. 1472-1475.

Oil and tempera on wood. Uffizi Gallery, Florence, Italy

The Annunciation depicts the moment when the angel Gabriel appears before Mary.

Two versions of this painting exist. The one in the Uffizi gallery is more likely to be Leonardo's own. A second version, which hangs in the Louvre could well be the work of Lorenzo di Credi, who, like Leonardo was also an apprentice of Verrocchio.



***The Last Supper* c. 1495–1498**

**15' 1" x 29' [Santa Maria delle Grazie](#), Milan, Italy**

*The Last Supper* was painted onto the walls of the Convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie near Milan. Leonardo spent three years painting the work, and much of that time was spent searching the streets of Milan for models of Christ and Judas. It is said that only Leonardo's threats to paint the Prior of the convent as Judas bought him the time he needed to finish.



Like many paintings thought to be by Leonardo, controversy surrounds this picture. Some question whether it was painted by Leonardo at all.

Art historians also disagree over who the subject of the portrait was. One theory suggests it shows a young lady named Cecilia Gallerani, who would have been just seventeen when this picture was painted. If the model was Cecilia, then the Ermine in the picture may have had a special meaning. The Greek for Ermine is Galee - a pun on the model's name.

***Lady with the Ermine***

1483-90;

Oil on wood

21 x 15 1/2 inches;

Czartoryski Museum,  
Cracow

