

= Lisa del Giocondo =

Lisa del Giocondo (Italian pronunciation : [?li?za del d?o?kondo] ; née Gherardini [?erar?di?ni] ; 15 June 1479 ? 15 July 1542 or ca . 1551) , also known as Lisa Gherardini , Lisa di Antonio Maria (or Antonmaria) Gherardini and Mona Lisa , was a member of the Gherardini family of Florence and Tuscany in Italy . Her name was given to Mona Lisa , her portrait commissioned by her husband and painted by Leonardo da Vinci during the Italian Renaissance .

Little is known about Lisa 's life . Born in Florence and married in her teens to a cloth and silk merchant who later became a local official , she was a mother to five children and led what is thought to have been a comfortable and ordinary middle @-@ class life . Lisa outlived her husband , who was considerably her senior .

Centuries after Lisa 's death , Mona Lisa became the world 's most famous painting and took on a life separate from Lisa , the woman . Speculation by scholars and hobbyists made the work of art a globally recognized icon and an object of commercialization . In 2005 , Lisa was definitively identified as the model for the Mona Lisa .

= = Early life and family = =

Lisa 's Florentine family was old and aristocratic but over time had lost its influence . They were well off but not wealthy , and lived on farm income in a city that was among the largest in Europe and economically successful , while there were great disparities in wealth among its inhabitants .

Antonmaria di Noldo Gherardini , Lisa 's father , had lost two wives , Lisa di Giovanni Filippo de ' Carducci , whom he married in 1465 , and Caterina di Mariotto Rucellai , whom he married in 1473 . Both died in childbirth . Lisa 's mother was Lucrezia del Caccia , daughter of Piera Spinelli , and Gherardini 's wife by his third marriage in 1476 . Gherardini at one time owned or rented six farms in Chianti that produced wheat , wine and olive oil and where livestock was raised .

Lisa was born in Florence on 15 June 1479 on Via Maggio , although for many years it was thought she was born on one of the family 's rural properties , Villa Vignamaggio just outside Greve . She is named for Lisa , a wife of her paternal grandfather . The eldest of seven children , Lisa had three sisters , one of whom was named Ginevra , and three brothers , Giovanguarberto , Francesco , and Noldo .

The family lived in Florence , originally near Santa Trinita and later in rented space near Santo Spirito , most likely because they were not able to afford repairs to their former house when it was damaged . Lisa 's family moved to what today is called Via dei Pepi and then near Santa Croce , where they lived near Ser Piero da Vinci , Leonardo 's father . They also owned a small country home in St. Donato in the village of Poggio about 32 kilometres (20 mi) south of the city . Noldo , Gherardini 's father and Lisa 's grandfather , had bequeathed a farm in Chianti to the Santa Maria Nuova hospital . Gherardini secured a lease for another of the hospital 's farms and , so that he could oversee the wheat harvest , the family spent summers there at the house named Ca ' di Pesa .

= = Marriage and later life = =

On 5 March 1495 , Lisa married Francesco di Bartolomeo di Zanobi del Giocondo , a modestly successful cloth and silk merchant , becoming his third wife at age 15 . Lisa 's dowry was 170 florins and the San Silvestro farm near her family 's country home , a sign that the Gherardini family was not wealthy at the time and reason to think she and her husband loved each other . The property lies between Castellina and San Donato in Poggio , near two farms later owned by Michelangelo . Neither poor nor among the most well @-@ to @-@ do in Florence , the couple lived a middle @-@ class life . Lisa 's marriage may have increased her social status because her husband 's family may have been richer than her own . Francesco is thought to have benefited because Gherardini is an " old name " . They lived in shared accommodation until 5 March 1503 , when Francesco was able to buy a house next door to his family 's old home in the Via della Stufa . Leonardo is thought to have

begun painting Lisa 's portrait the same year .

Lisa and Francesco had five children : Piero , Camilla , Andrea , Giocondo , and Marietta , four of them between 1496 and 1507 . Lisa lost a baby daughter in 1499 . Lisa also raised Bartolomeo , the son of Francesco and his second wife , Camilla di Mariotto Rucellai , who was about a year old when his mother died . Lisa 's stepmother , Caterina di Mariotto Rucellai , and Francesco 's first wife were sisters , members of the prominent Rucellai family .

Camilla and Marietta became Catholic nuns . Camilla took the name Suor Beatrice and entered the convent of San Domenico di Cafaggio , where she was entrusted to the care of Antonmaria 's sister , Suor Albiera and Lisa 's sisters , Suor Camilla (who was acquitted in a scandalous visitation by four men at the convent) and Suor Alessandra . Beatrice died at age 18 and was buried in the Basilica di Santa Maria Novella . Lisa developed a relationship with Sant 'Orsola , a convent held in high regard in Florence , where she was able to place Marietta in 1521 . Marietta took the name Suor Ludovica and became a respected member of the convent in a position of some responsibility .

Francesco became an official in Florence . He was elected to the Dodici Buonomini in 1499 and to the Signoria in 1512 , where he was confirmed as a Priori in 1524 . He may have had ties to Medici family political or business interests . In 1512 when the government of Florence feared the return of the Medici from exile , Francesco was imprisoned and fined 1 @, @ 000 florins . He was released in September when the Medici returned .

In June 1537 in his will among many provisions , Francesco returned Lisa 's dowry to her , gave her personal clothing and jewelry and provided for her future . Upon entrusting her care to their daughter Ludovica and , should she be incapable , his son Bartolomeo , Francesco wrote , " Given the affection and love of the testator towards Mona Lisa , his beloved wife ; in consideration of the fact that Lisa has always acted with a noble spirit and as a faithful wife ; wishing that she shall have all she needs ? " .

Lisa del Giocondo spent her final years at Florence 's Sant 'Orsola convent where she died in July 1542 at the age of 63 .

= = Mona Lisa = =

Like other Florentines of their financial means , Francesco 's family members were art lovers and patrons . His son Bartolomeo asked Antonio di Donnino Mazzieri to paint a fresco at the family 's burial site in the Basilica della Santissima Annunziata di Firenze . Andrea del Sarto painted a Madonna for another member of his family . Francesco gave commissions to Leonardo for a portrait of his wife and to Domenico Puligo for a painting of Saint Francis of Assisi . He is thought to have commissioned Lisa 's portrait to celebrate both Andrea 's birth and the purchase of the family 's home .

Mona Lisa fulfilled 15th- and early 16th century requirements for portraying a woman of virtue . Lisa is portrayed as a faithful wife through gesture ? her right hand rests over her left . Leonardo also presented Lisa as fashionable and successful , perhaps more well @-@ off than she was . Her dark garments and black veil were Spanish @-@ influenced high fashion ; they are not a depiction of mourning for her first daughter , as some scholars have proposed . The portrait is strikingly large ; its size is equal to that of commissions acquired by wealthier art patrons of the time . This extravagance has been explained as a sign of Francesco and Lisa 's social aspiration .

Leonardo had no income during the spring of 1503 , which may in part explain his interest in a private portrait . But later that year , he most likely had to delay his work on Mona Lisa when he received payment for starting The Battle of Anghiari , which was a more valuable commission and one he was contracted to complete by February 1505 . In 1506 Leonardo considered the portrait unfinished . He was not paid for the work and did not deliver it to his client . The artist 's paintings traveled with him throughout his life , and he may have completed Mona Lisa many years later in France , in one estimation by 1516 .

The painting 's title dates to 1550 . An acquaintance of at least some of Francesco 's family , Giorgio Vasari wrote , " Leonardo undertook to paint , for Francesco del Giocondo , the portrait of

Mona Lisa , his wife " (Italian : Prese Lionardo a fare per Francesco del Giocondo il ritratto di mona Lisa sua moglie .) . The portrait 's Italian name La Gioconda is the feminine form of her married name . In French it is known by the variant La Joconde . Though derived from Lisa 's married name they have the added significance that the name derives from the word for " happy " (in English , " jocund ") or " the happy one " .

Speculation assigned Lisa 's name to at least four different paintings and her identity to at least ten different people . By the end of the 20th century , the painting was a global icon that had been used in more than 300 other paintings and in 2 @, @ 000 advertisements , appearing at an average of one new advertisement each week .

In 2005 , an expert at the University Library of Heidelberg discovered a margin note in the library 's collection that established with certainty the traditional view that the sitter was Lisa . The note , written by Agostino Vespucci in 1503 , states that Leonardo was working on a portrait of Lisa del Giocondo . The Mona Lisa has been in custody of France since the 16th century , when it was acquired by King Francis I ; after the French Revolution , however , it came into the possession of the people . Today about six million people visit the painting each year at the Louvre in Paris , where it is part of a French national collection .