

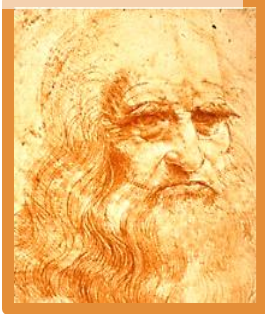


(duh VIN-chee)
Italian Painter

Leonardo Da Vinci

1452 – 1519

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Leonardo da Vinci was a painter, sculptor, architect, engineer, town planner, inventor, scientist, anatomist, mathematician, geologist, cartographer, botanist, writer and musician.

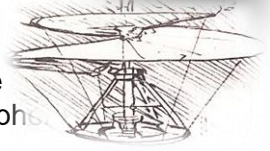
Da Vinci lived in Italy 500 years ago during a period called the Renaissance, a time of learning, new ideas and inventions. Leonardo learned everything he could about the world. He asked questions. He took things apart and drew pictures of details he

found inside. His drawings of the human body were so good that doctors used his pictures in medical books for hundreds of years.

Da Vinci was called a “Renaissance man” because he was described as a man of “unquenchable curiosity” with a “feverishly inventive imagination.” He filled notebooks with drawings of ideas and inventions that would change the world and make life easier or better in some way. Some ideas were actually built as inventions, but others remained as drawings. When Da Vinci, who was left handed wrote, often he wrote the notes backwards so the words must be read with a mirror.

He conceptualized a helicopter, concentrated solar power, a calculator, a tank, and the double hull, and he outlined a rudimentary theory of plate tectonics. Relatively few of his designs were constructed or were even feasible during his lifetime, but some of his smaller inventions, such as an automated bobbin winder and a machine for testing the tensile strength of wire, entered the world of manufacturing unheralded. He made important discoveries in anatomy, civil engineering, optics, and hydrodynamics, but he did not publish his findings and they had no direct influence on later science.

Perhaps fifteen of his paintings survive, the small number because of his constant, and frequently disastrous, experimentation with new techniques, and his chronic procrastination. He was said to have a gentle nature and his respect for life was evidenced by his vegetarianism and his habit, according to Vasari (first biographer of LdV's life), of purchasing caged birds and releasing them.



The Vitruvian Man, 1485 (33). *Botanicals*. *Self Portrait*, 1512 (60). *Mona Lisa*, 1503-1506 (51-54). *Anatomy* 1510 – 1511 (58-59). *Da Vinci Helicopter*. *St. John the Baptist*, 1514 (62). *Annunciation* 1475-1480 (23- 28) is thought to be Leonardo's earliest complete work. *The Last Supper*, 1495 – 1498 (43).

