

The master's legacy also included notes and draft treatises devoted to, among others, the morphology of rocks, the flight of birds and the water cycle. Leonardo's reflections on the relationship between theory and experience formed the basis for the creation of scientific theory. All of these topics were cutting edge, decades, if not centuries, ahead of the knowledge of the time. Unfortunately, da Vinci's works did not see the light of day until much after his death, mainly due to the author's procrastination, who was unable to complete the treatises he had started.

### Private life

Leonardo was homosexual. In 1476, he was accused twice of having sexual contacts with a man. Fortunately for him, the charges were dropped as the expected penalty was death. From his notes it can be concluded that despite the threat and social condemnation for the 'sin of Sodom', he accepted his orientation, considering it to be something natural.

The master had a long-term relationship with Gian Giacomo Caprotti, who is known by the nickname given to him by Leonardo - Salai, meaning 'Little Devil.' He came to the da Vinci household as a servant and student when he was 10 years old. A few years later, the relationship between the over forty-year-old Leonardo and the teenage Salai turned into a romance.

The relationship between the two men was very explosive, and at one point eventoxic, mainly due to Salai's rowdy nature. In the last years of his life, the romance waned, but until the end of Leonardo's life, Salai was supported by him and inherited a property near Milan.



Leonardo's main heir was Francesco Melzi. In 1507, fifteen-year-old Francesco began studying with da Vinci, then became his secretary and accompanied him until the end of his life, finally becoming his adoptive son.

# EQUAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY: DA VINCI - GENIUS IN A PINK TUNIC



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### Biographical note

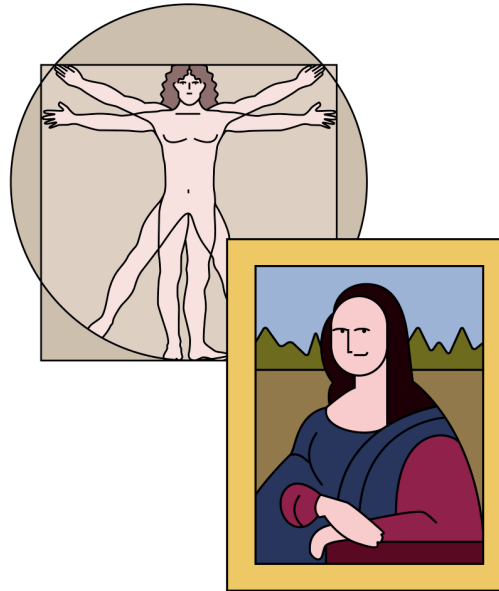
Leonardo da Vinci was born on April 15, 1452 in Vinci as the illegitimate child of Pierro da Vinci and Catarina Lippi. His father was a notary, but his son did not follow in his footsteps, instead taking up studies with the famous Florentine artist Verocchio. Leonardo became an independent artist in 1472.

He spent his adult life in the three main centers of the Italian Renaissance - Florence (in 1472-1482 and 1500-1506), Milan (in 1482-1499 and 1506-1513) and Rome (in 1513-1516). His patrons included Louis Sforza, Duke of Milan, and Pope Leo X. He spent the last years of his life in France as a court artist and engineer to King Francis I. He died on May 2, 1519 in Amboise.

### Artist

Leonardo's genius was revealed in his paintings. He improved and popularized the use of chiaroscuro, introduced the technique of sfumato, that is blurring contours, and revolutionized the use of perspective in painting. He devoted much time to studying human and animal anatomy, geology, hydrology and optics, and used the knowledge he acquired in his works. All this resulted in masterpieces of painting coming out from under his brush.

Leonardo's most famous works are the portrait of the Florentine lady Lisa Giacondo, known as the "Mona Lisa," and the fresco in the Milan Basilica of Santa Maria delle Grazie, "The Last Supper." Apart from them, da Vinci painted at least a dozen other paintings, including: "Lady with an Ermine," "Salvator Mundi," or "The Virgin and Child with Saint Anne."



The fact that only a dozen or so paintings by Leonardo were created resulted from two features of his character that largely contributed to his artistry - perfection and procrastination. Leonardo painted slowly, able to stare at a painting for several hours and make a single brushstroke, and then spend the next few weeks studying the movement of water or conducting autopsies. It often happened that he undertook projects that he did not finish and left only sketches.

### Engineer and scientist

Although Leonardo is best known as an artist, he considered himself more of an engineer and scientist. He was passionate about architecture and urban planning, and his unfulfilled dream was to become a renowned military engineer - his notes are full of designs for various types of weapons and siege machines. His works included projects as ambitious as the construction of Milan's sewage and water supply network and the diversion of the Arno River.



The need for perfection in representing the world in paintings caused Leonardo to conduct research in many different scientific disciplines. He performed dozens of autopsies, and his sketches depicted human anatomy long before proper atlases were first published. He also formulated theories in ophthalmology and cardiology that were only proven centuries later.