

Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519)

Born at Vinci in the region of Florence, Italy. Leonardo has often been described as universal genius.

he was given permission to dissect human corpses at the hospital Santa Maria Nuova in Florence and later at hospitals in Milan and Rome. He collaborated in his studies with the doctor Marcantonio della Torre and together they prepared a theoretical work on anatomy for which Leonardo made more than 200 drawings.

Leonardo drew many studies of the human skeleton and its parts, as well as muscles and tendons, the heart and vascular system, the sex organs, and other internal organs. He made one of the first scientific drawings of a fetus in utero. As an artist, Leonardo closely observed and recorded the effects of age and of human emotion on the physiology, studying in particular the effects of anger. He also drew many models among those who had significant facial deformities or signs of illness.

He also studied and drew the anatomy of many other animals as well. He dissected cows, birds, monkeys, bears, and frogs, comparing in his drawings their anatomical structure with that of humans. He also made a number of studies of horses.

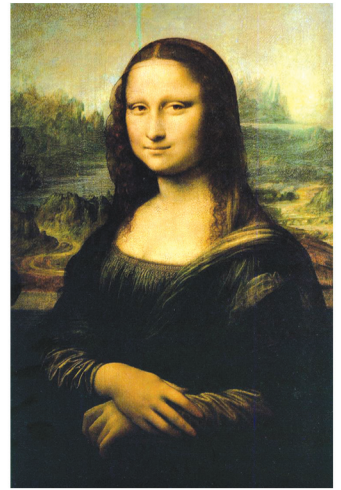


Figure (1): Mona Lisa, or La Gioconda It is the most famous portrait painted in the world and owned by the French government and hangs in the Musée du Louvre in Paris, France. It measures 77 × 53 cm in diameter.

Figure (2): The Vitruvian Man is a drawing with accompanying notes created around the year 1487. It depicts a nude male figure in two superimposed positions with his arms and legs apart and simultaneously inscribed in a circle and square. The drawing and text are sometimes called the Canon of Proportions or, less often, Proportions of Man.

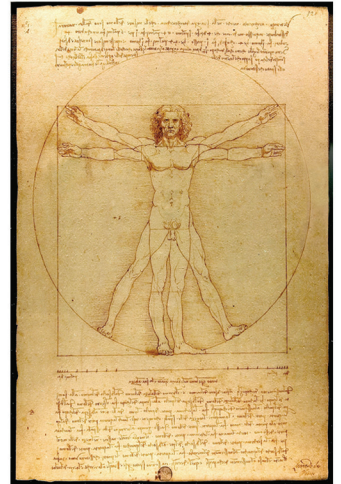


Figure (3): A foetus in the womb, a page from Leonardo's journal showing his study of a foetus in the womb (c. 1510) Royal Library.

Figure (4): The Last Supper from the final days of Jesus when he announced that one of his twelve disciples would betray him. The painting measures 460 × 880 cm and is found at Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan, Italy.

The portray specifies the reaction given by each follower when Jesus said one of them would betray him. All twelve apostles have different reactions to the news, with various degrees of anger and shock.



It is now used as a contemporary symbol of medical professionals and medical establishments. Many medical companies have adopted this artwork as their symbol of their group, company and or organization.

The medical profession and the Vitruvian Man has become somewhat synonymous with modern medical practices. The United States, Saudi Arabia, India and Germany are the countries which have widely accepted and adopted the Vitruvian Man as a symbol of medical professionalism.

The Vitruvian Man remains one of the most referenced and reproduced artistic images in the world today.

Suggested Readings:

- 1-Wikipedia the Free Encyclopedia;
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leonardo_da_Vinci#Journals
- 2-CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA: Leonardo da Vinci;
<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15440a.htm>
- 3-Medieval Sourcebook: Giorgio Vasari: Life of Leonardo da Vinci 1550;
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/vasari1.html>
- 4-Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519);
<http://www.ucmp.berkeley.edu/history/vinci.html>
- 5-BBC - Science & Nature - Leonardo - Homepage;
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/leonardo/>
- 6-Web Museum, Paris;
<http://www.ibiblio.org/wm/paint/auth/vinci/>
- 7-Leonardo da Vinci Museum;
<http://www.leonardo.net/gallery.html#start>

