

The History of Leonardo da Vinci

Oil painting as an art form spread widely during the period of renaissance in Italy. Oil painting techniques were invented, or more appropriately reinvented, by the Flemish artist Jan van Eyck around 1410. After which Leonardo da Vinci came along and was acclaimed the greatest among all the renaissance painters.

The Great da Vinci was born on April 15, 1452 in Tuscany, Italy. His father was a 25 year old notary, Ser Piero and his mother Caterina was a peasant girl. He went on to become one of few artists that achieved truly iconic status and legendary fame during while living. Though he was quite famous for his achievements as an artist, he was also a very qualified scientist and an inventor.

Among his long and impressive list of artistic work are the Mona Lisa and the Last Supper. Both of which are some of the most famous works of art ever created anywhere.

da Vinci became an apprentice of Andrea Del Verrochio in Florence when he was 15 years old. During this time he painted an angel in Verrochio's Baptism of Christ. His very first work is dated 1473 and was a drawing of Arno Valley. A painting called Madonna and Child which he completed in 1478, was his first solo painting. His first work that gained great significance was Adoration of the Magi was commissioned by monks of San Donato a Scopeto.

Through his paintings he is credited with having introduced the themes of drama and movement to the art form. As well as pioneering the use of Chiaroscuro, which is the procedure of defining forms through the contrast of shadow and light.

In 1482, he went to the service of Duke of Milan, Ludovico Sforza. This service lasted for 16 years and during this time he branched into other interests like anatomy and engineering. It was during this period that he completed Madonna on the Rocks and also the Last Supper paintings. These were highly regarded spiritual paintings depicting the feast Christ had which has become know as the last supper before his crucifixion. In 1499, his patron the Duke of Milan was defeated in a French invasion which led to the painting Battle of Anghiari.

It was in the year 1503 that da Vinci started his work on the eternal masterpiece Mona Lisa. It was completed in 1506. The Mona Lisa is the painted portrait of the wife of a Florentine noble who famously came and posed several days for the portrait but refused to smile. Leonardo even hired musicians to make her smile. One day Leonardo captured her fleeting smile which encapsulates a tremendous mysteriousness which is both intriguing and fascinating. That smile has made her eternal and immortalized the artist and the art. Art that is the most imitated artwork of all time.

Leonardo da Vinci was of so prolific through his productive years that the King of France bore him as a trophy of war. Giving him support in his old age and even cradled his head as he died on May 2, 1519.

About the Author

[Leonardo da Vinci](#)

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