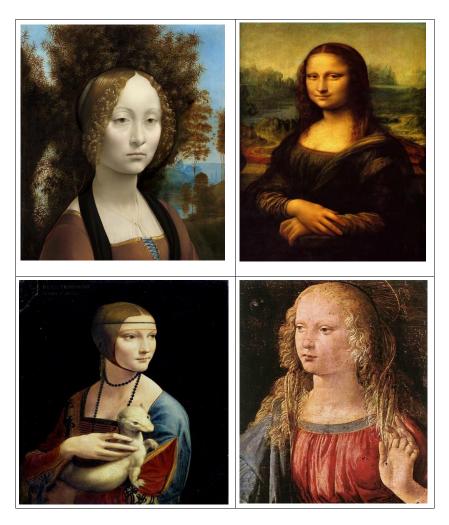# PROJECT ERASMUS PLUS KA229

I.D.E.A.L.

Innovating By Doing Experiments About Leonardo

WORKSHOP DOSSIER

LTTA From January 27th. to February 2nd.

LLEIDA
(SPAIN)

TITLE: **Art workshop: The Renaissance.**
TEACHER: Maria José Castelló

In this dossier you will find some information about Leonardo's paintings . We hope it will help you to understand some concepts that will be developed in the workshop.

THE RENAISSANCE

MEDIEVAL ERA	5th -15th Century
RENAISSANCE	14th - 16th. Century_From 1350 until 1600
BAROQUE/ROCOCO	16th -17th Century_ From 1600 until 1800
THE 19TH CENTURY	19th. Century _ From 1800 until 1900
MODERNISM	20th. Century_ From 1900 until 1970
POST-MODERNISM	20th. Century_ From 1970 until 2019

Renaissance is a French word for "rebirth".

The time period before the Renaissance was known as the Medieval times.

The Renaissance Period went from 1350 to 1600. It was a very important period after the Medieval times and it suposed a new way of thinking. This explosion of new ideas led to a great flowering of the **Arts** and improved **Science** and learning in Europe.

The Art from the Renaissance Era looks much more realistic than the Art from medieval times. Artists during this time used the new discoveries in Science and Maths to make their art look more realistic. One of the most famous artists during this time was **Leonardo da Vinci.** He also studied the anatomy of people and animals and he designed machines. All of this knowledge worked together to advance his Art and the work of artists for the rest of time.

LEONARDO DA VINCI: The artist.

Leonardo da Vinci was a great figure because he combined within himself the **sensitivity** of the artist and the deep **wisdom** of the scientist.
Painting was just one of many subjects that Leonardo was interested in. Today we only know about fifteen of his paintings. However , he left behind large quantities of drawings and notes that show how busy he was. He studied the human body

(anatomy), the earth (geololy), plants (botany) stars (astronomy) and optics.

He was fascinated by everything about the natural world, however small , and particulary by anything to do with movement: The wind in a storm, the light at dusk. As well as being a painter, he was an sculptor, and an architect, and also an engineer.

Was Leonardo famous in its time?

Yes it was because of technical innovations:

- The pyramid composition
- The perspectivism (creating the illusion of three dimensions)
- The *sfumato* technique (evaporate effect like smoke or fog)
- The idea of showing the subject in a realistic environment.
- The way the subject is linked to a landscape.
- The use of light and shade.
- Light and dark are simbols (light is the *good* and shadow is the *bad*)
- The sensation of capturing a moment.
- The feeling of calm.
- A new way of looking at the world.

THREE RENAISSANCE PORTRAITS BY LEONARDO

1.- *Ginebra de Benci*

Portrait of Ginebra de' Benci was painted by Leonardo da Vinci around 1474-1476. It is now owned by National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC and is currently the only painting by Leonardo in the Americas.

Ginebra de' Benci was a lady of the aristocratic class. She was admired for her intelligence.

Unlike Leonardo's other portraits of women, this lady looks vain and cruel.

 Her left eye seems to gaze directly at us while the right looks beyond to some invisible point. Like other Florentine women of the period Ginebra has shaved off her eyebrows (this is also obvious in the Mona Lisa). Maybe her expression indicates she was not entirely happy.

The marble appearance of her complexion is framed by the curly ringlets of her hair. This then contrasts beautifully with the halo of spikes from the bush. Leonardo veiled the background of this portrait in a thin veil of mist known as *sfumato* (literal

translation: "turned to vapour")

At some point this canvas was cut from the bottom .Their loss is a great shame as no one painted <u>hands</u> as beautifully as Leonardo.

2.- *The Mona Lisa*

Portrait of Mona Lisa, also known as La Gioconda. The painting is owned by the Government of France and is on the wall in the Louvre Museum in Paris, France. It was painted about 1503-06

This figure of a woman, <u>dressed in the Florentine fashion</u> of her day and seated in a <u>visionary, mountainous landscape</u>, is a remarkable instance of Leonardo's <u>*sfumato technique of soft.*</u> The Mona Lisa's enigmatic expression, has given the portrait universal fame.

The Mona Lisa's famous smile is like a visual representation of the idea of happiness suggested by the word "gioconda" in Italian. Leonardo made this notion of happiness the central motif of the portrait. The <u>nature of the landscape</u> also plays a role. The landscape becomes a <u>wild space of rocks and water</u> which stretches to the horizon, which Leonardo has cleverly drawn at the level of the sitter's eyes.

The painting was among the first portraits to depict the sitter before an imaginary landscape and Leonardo was one of the first painters to use <u>aerial perspective.</u> The <u>sensuous curves of the woman's hair and clothing,</u> created through *sfumato*, are echoed in the undulating imaginary valleys and rivers behind her. <u>Graceful figure, dramatic contrasts of light and dark</u>, and overall <u>feeling of calm</u> are characteristic of da Vinci's style. The sense of overall <u>harmony </u>achieved in the painting reflects the idea of a link <u>connecting humanity and nature.</u>

Leonardo kept the painting until he died. Mona Lisa never received her painting.

3.- *The Annunciation (Mary)*

Painted around 1472–1475. It is housed in the Uffizi gallery of Florence, Italy.

The painting illustrates the Archangel Gabriel on his knees with his right hand raised towards Mary in greetings in the Florentine palace garden.

Mary is depicted with her left hand gesture in response to the archangel's greeting. Mary is seated on a chair outside a room.

Mary's importance is signified in the painting. The <u>background landscape</u> depicts <u>tress and mounta</u>ins under a grey and <u>foggy sky</u>.

The painting was recognized by the experts as made by the young Leonardo da Vinci because of the unmistakeable painting style of the artwork, especially with the details of <u>draperies</u> and <u>clothing</u> and the painting approach and <u>atmosphere</u> of the background. The 'Leonardesque' effect is seen with the <u>shadows</u> and <u>lighting effects</u> of the <u>shading</u> clearly seen in the painting.

SELF ASSESSMENT (After participating in the workshop)

1.- After participating in this workshop I have learnt a bit more about:

a) Leonardo pictures.	Yes
	No
a) Renaissance Art style.	Yes
	No
c) How to develop the imagination.	Yes
	No

2.- I have showed respect for the opinions of my colleagues and for the materials.

a) Very much   b) Much   c) Not much

3.- I have participated actively, giving my opinions and helping my comrades.

a) Very much   b) Much   c) Not much

4.- I liked the activity.

a) Very much   b) Much   c) Not much

Why?   Because …..