

Leonardo

A Clever Chiel

Boarn in 1452 in Italy in a village cawed Vinci (frae which he took his name), Leonardo was yin o the brawest ertists o aw time.

He wis the illegetimate son o a lawyer so he didnae huv the best stert in life. Frae an early age he liked tae draw everythin and onythin that wis roon about him. He delvit intae monie an inventive scheme an had a belter o a brain that seeminly never stoaped fur a brek.

Leonardo wisnae only an ertist - he wis a museecian; erchitect; inventor; mathemateecian; geographer; pheesicist; anatomist and engineer. Forbye that, he wis ambidextrous - that means he could write and draw wi baith hauns...a clever chiel!

His ert teacher wis a man cawed Verrocchio. He shin funn oot that ees 13 year aul apprentice cud draw an pent better than he cud himself, so he gied up pentin tae concentrate oan sculptin fur the rest o his days. The news spread lik wildfire roon the culturt city o Florence that a new genius wean wis oan the prowl. If Britain's goat talent, then Italy hud it in spades lang ago.

O aw the pentins Leonardo ever did, the maist weel kent is 'The Mona Lisa' wha wis quite a bonnie lass in her day. Mind ye, it wis nae easy task tae pent her. She kept movin, wars broke oot, an Leonardo had tae row up the pentin an flee awa oan horseback when his hoose wis unner attack. Three lang years later he thocht it wis feenished.

The Mona Lisa noo hings in the Louvre Ert Gellery in Paris fur awbody tae see. It has been said that she has an enigmatic smile, as if butter widnae melt in her mooth. In fact she wis coverin up the state o her teeth, as dentistry wis gey puir in the 15th Century.

Wi his enquirin mind, Leonardo wis that keen tae unnerstaun human anatomy that he cut up deid boadies! A ken, it wad scunner ye, but he made important discoveries that advanced oor knowledge o the muscle, nerve, and blood systems. Withoot folk like Leonardo, we wad be awa ahin the times oan aw maitters medical.

When it came tae blandin oil paint fae licht tae daurk, Leonardo had a better technique than onybody. It was cawed 'chiaroscuro' (that's Italian fur licht tae daurk). In Ayrshire, this word *chiaroscuro* translates as 'cheery-scoorie', an that makes it soun guid-natured.

If product designers nooadays think they're smert, you should see the ideas that Leonardo come up wi. He inventit a kind o helicopter whirligig; a divin

suit; watter skis; cannons; tanks and fortifications; contraptions fur pumpin watter uphill and mony mair wunnerous things too numerous tae mention.

In the last years o his life Leonardo worked in France fur the King, an it wis here that he deed at the age o sixty seeven - a true genius o humanity.

An by the way, if ony o yis want tae phone me aboot him, mind an yaise the code...the Da Vinci Code.

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