

Who painted the Mona Lisa?

- A. Pablo Picasso
- B. Vincent van Gogh
- C. Leonardo da Vinci
- D. Michelangelo

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Correct Answer: C (Leonardo da Vinci)

Explanation:

The Mona Lisa, known as “La Gioconda” in Italian, was painted by Leonardo da Vinci. Da Vinci started painting the Mona Lisa in 1503 or 1504 in Florence, Italy, and it is believed he continued to work on it until shortly before he died in 1519.

Leonardo da Vinci and the Mona Lisa

The Masterpiece of Leonardo da Vinci

Leonardo da Vinci’s Mona Lisa is arguably the most famous painting in the world. It is renowned for its composition, its depiction of the sitter’s facial expression, often described as enigmatic, and its detailed representation of the landscape in the background. Its fame rests, in particular, on the elusive smile on the woman’s face, its mysterious quality perhaps due to the subtly shadowed corners of the mouth and eyes such that the exact nature of the smile cannot be determined.

Unraveling the Mystery of the Mona Lisa

Even though the Mona Lisa is acclaimed for her unique smile, the identity of the subject has also been a topic of debate. It is widely believed that the sitter is Lisa Gherardini, a woman from Florence, Italy. The title “Mona Lisa” translates to “Lady Lisa” in English, honoring the possible identity of the sitter.

- **Painting Techniques:** The Mona Lisa exhibits Leonardo’s skillful application of the sfumato technique, a fine shading meant to produce a soft

transition between colors and tones, contributing to the painting's lifelike quality.

- **Mona Lisa's Enigmatic Smile:** The subject's smile presents a fascinating optical illusion, wherein the smile appears and disappears when observed directly and peripherally, respectively.
- **The Influence of the Painting:** The Mona Lisa's influence on the art world has been significant. It has been reproduced and satirized extensively, highlighting its broad cultural impact.

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