



LEONARDO DA VINCI

500 YEARS OF GENIUS

MARCH 1 – AUGUST 25

LEONARDO DA VINCI: 500 YEARS OF GENIUS OPENS ON MARCH 1
Denver Museum of Nature & Science to host the
most comprehensive exhibition about Leonardo ever presented

DENVER — Inventor, artist, scientist, anatomist, engineer, architect, sculptor, philosopher. Although Leonardo da Vinci died in 1519, his influence has endured. His extraordinary legacy comes to life in the exhibition *Leonardo da Vinci: 500 Years of Genius*, opening at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science on Friday, March 1. The exhibition is presented in Denver by the Sturm Family Foundation.

The story of Leonardo is told through a variety of experiences that illustrate why the ultimate Renaissance man remains an inspiration for the ages.

Although Leonardo is one of human history's most famous people, he left behind very few tangible examples of his studies and works. Surviving artifacts are in private collections or on permanent display in a small number of renowned museums around the world. Fortunately, the creators of this experience, Grande Exhibitions, collaborated with the Museo Leonardo da Vinci in Rome and experts from Italy and France to build Leonardo's machine inventions and create beautiful reproductions of his paintings and his codices, which are books of notes and sketches that remain the primary insight to his genius.

Guests will be introduced to Leonardo through the codices, which Grande Exhibitions and their collaborators used as "instruction manuals" to build more than 70 machine inventions. These inventions show how Leonardo's fundamental scientific and technical principles are reflected in many of today's machines and devices, including the helicopter, airplane, automobile, submarine, parachute, scuba gear, and military tank.

Grande Exhibitions said the artisans "had to learn an old Florentine dialect, interpret Leonardo's shorthand and mirror writing, and analyze his intricate drawings, sometimes laboring through page upon page of drawings of the same invention as Leonardo strove for perfection. They have scoured 6,000 pages of notes to decipher the 'patents' Leonardo put in his work—deliberate mistakes, misleading information, and scattered ideas."

The results are Leonardo's machine inventions brought to life, using the materials and techniques of 15th-century Italy. Some of the inventions are scaled down, some are life-sized, and others are oversized. Some have mechanisms guests can try for themselves.

Leonardo also took a scientific approach to his artwork. He was fascinated by the mechanics of the human body as well as light, shadow, and perception. Although he was part of the Italian Renaissance and created

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The experience has been created by Grande Exhibitions and Pascal Cotte.



Presented in Denver by



about 25 paintings, much of his work is lost. Yet his painting, *Mona Lisa*, is one of the world's most legendary works of art. An exclusive feature of the exhibition is "The Secrets of Mona Lisa," an analysis of the iconic painting conducted at the Louvre by scientific engineer and photographer Pascal Cotte. The display includes super-magnified examinations, a 13-foot-high infrared print, and the only 360-degree replica ever made of *Mona Lisa*.

Guests will also see print reproductions of Leonardo's Florentine oil paintings, including *The Annunciation* and *Virgin on the Rocks*. An animation of *The Last Supper*, a fresco often misperceived as a framed painting, will reveal to guests that although the technique Leonardo used was flawed, this work of art remains the most recognizable interpretation of this iconic biblical event.

Leonardo himself would likely marvel at the high-tech, multisensory cinematic experience in the exhibition that immerses guests in his works. Grande Exhibitions' state-of-the-art SENSORY4 technology uses high-definition motion graphics and surround sound, combined with authentic photography and video footage, to saturate the space in a breathtaking display of computer-generated images of Leonardo's codices, art, and inventions.

In addition, guests can test a Leonardo-inspired catapult and create their own codex page with a self-portrait or still life. The Museum's historical enactors will also be in the gallery, presenting characters who bring a personal perspective to the story of Leonardo.

"We are thrilled to bring Colorado the most comprehensive exhibition about Leonardo da Vinci ever created," said George Sparks, President and CEO of the Museum. "Leonardo's passion for furthering human understanding of the world resonates with us and reflects our commitment to being catalysts for curiosity in our community."

"This exhibition is another great opportunity to partner with the Museum to not only share our passion for world history but also bring an enriching cultural experience about a visionary thinker to our beloved city of Denver," said Don Sturm, chairman of the Sturm Family Foundation.

Timed tickets will be required and advance reservations strongly encouraged. Tickets go on sale Monday, February 4, at dmns.org/davinci or 303.370.6000. Guests pay \$28.95 adult, \$24.95 senior (age 65+), \$20.95 junior (ages 3–18). Save \$2 by booking online. Students receive 10 percent off adult admission with their ID. All tickets include general admission. Museum members receive discounted admission. An audio guide will be available for purchase.

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