

The Mona Lisa

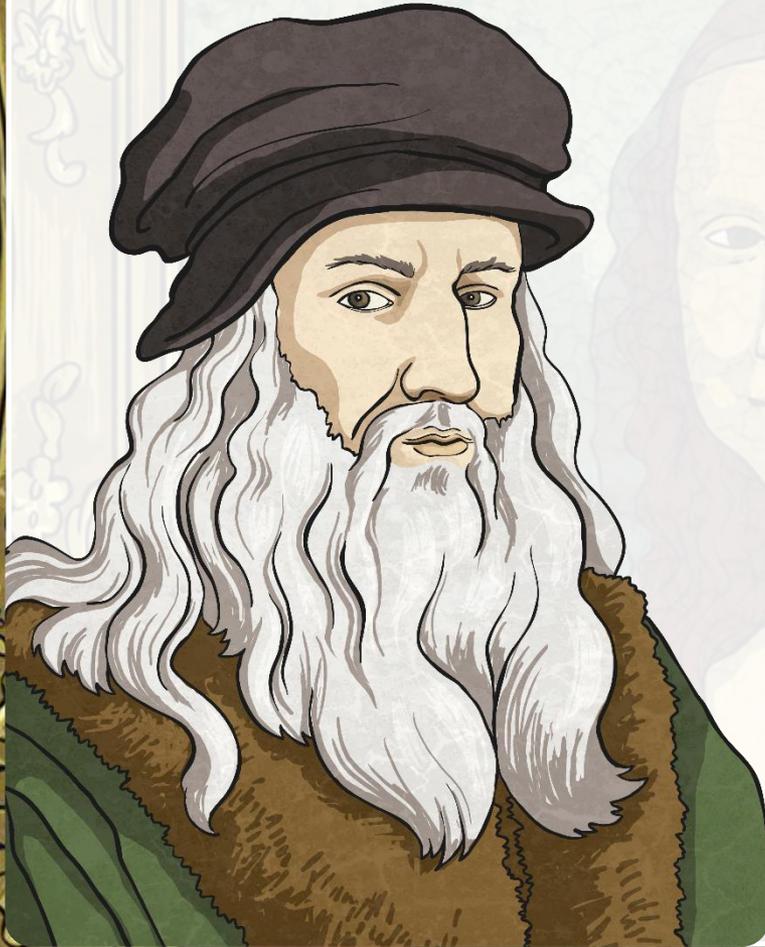


One of the Most Famous Paintings in the World

The Mona Lisa – also known as La Gioconda – is considered one of the most famous paintings in the world.

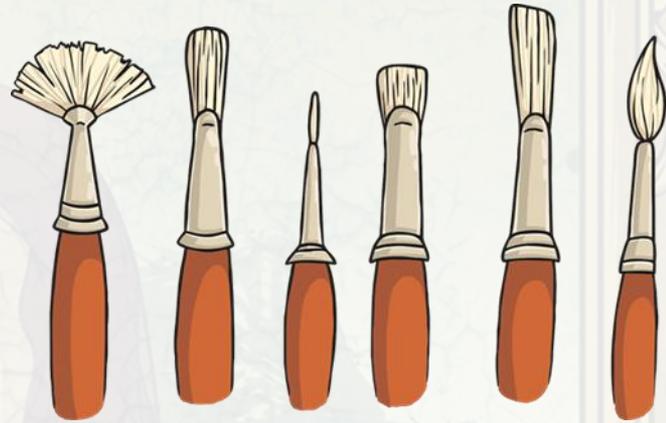
It was painted in Florence, Italy, during the Renaissance era between 1504 and 1519 by Italian artist, Leonardo da Vinci. The subject of the painting is unusual for the time as most paintings were inspired by the Bible.

The painting is on display at the Louvre Museum in Paris. It is 77cm × 53cm.



Who Is She?

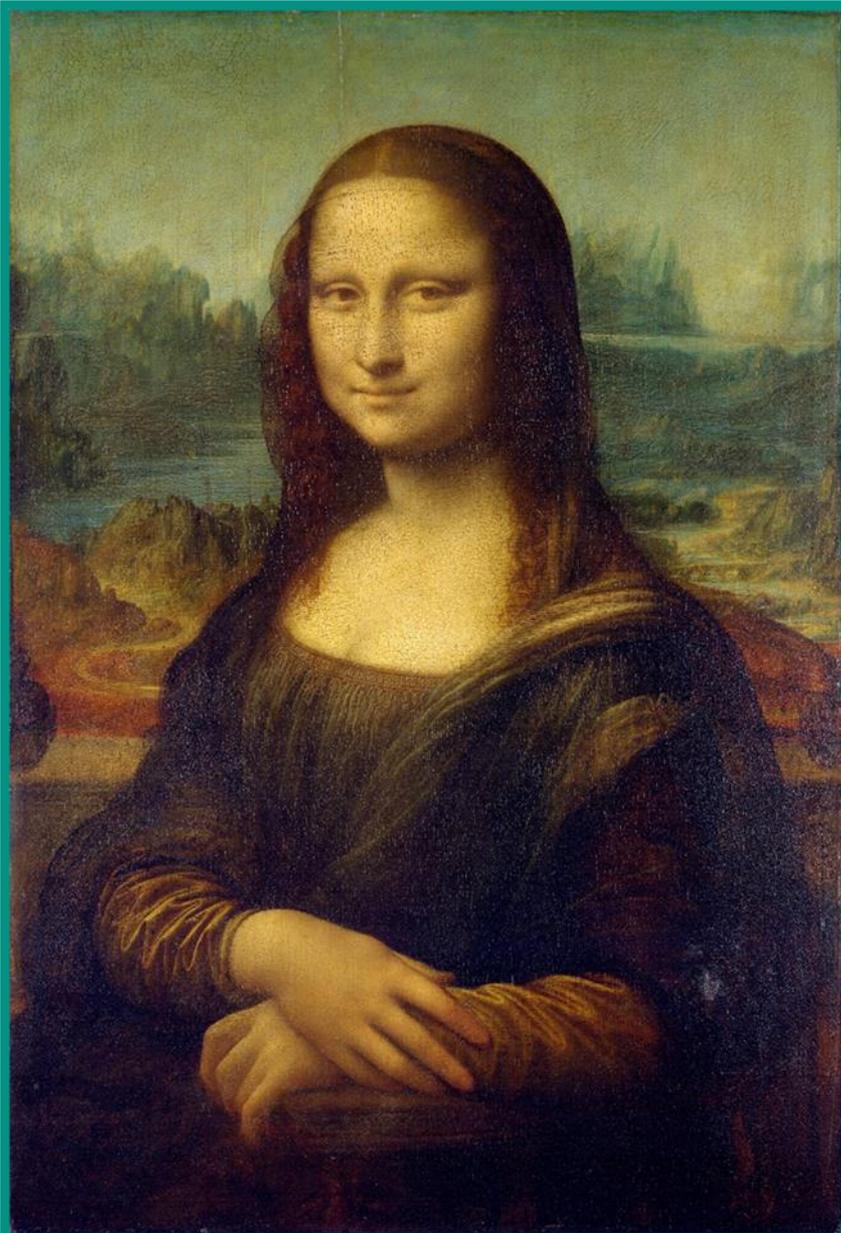
The identity of the woman with the mysterious smile was unknown for hundreds of years. It was one of da Vinci's favourite paintings and he kept it with him every day until he died.

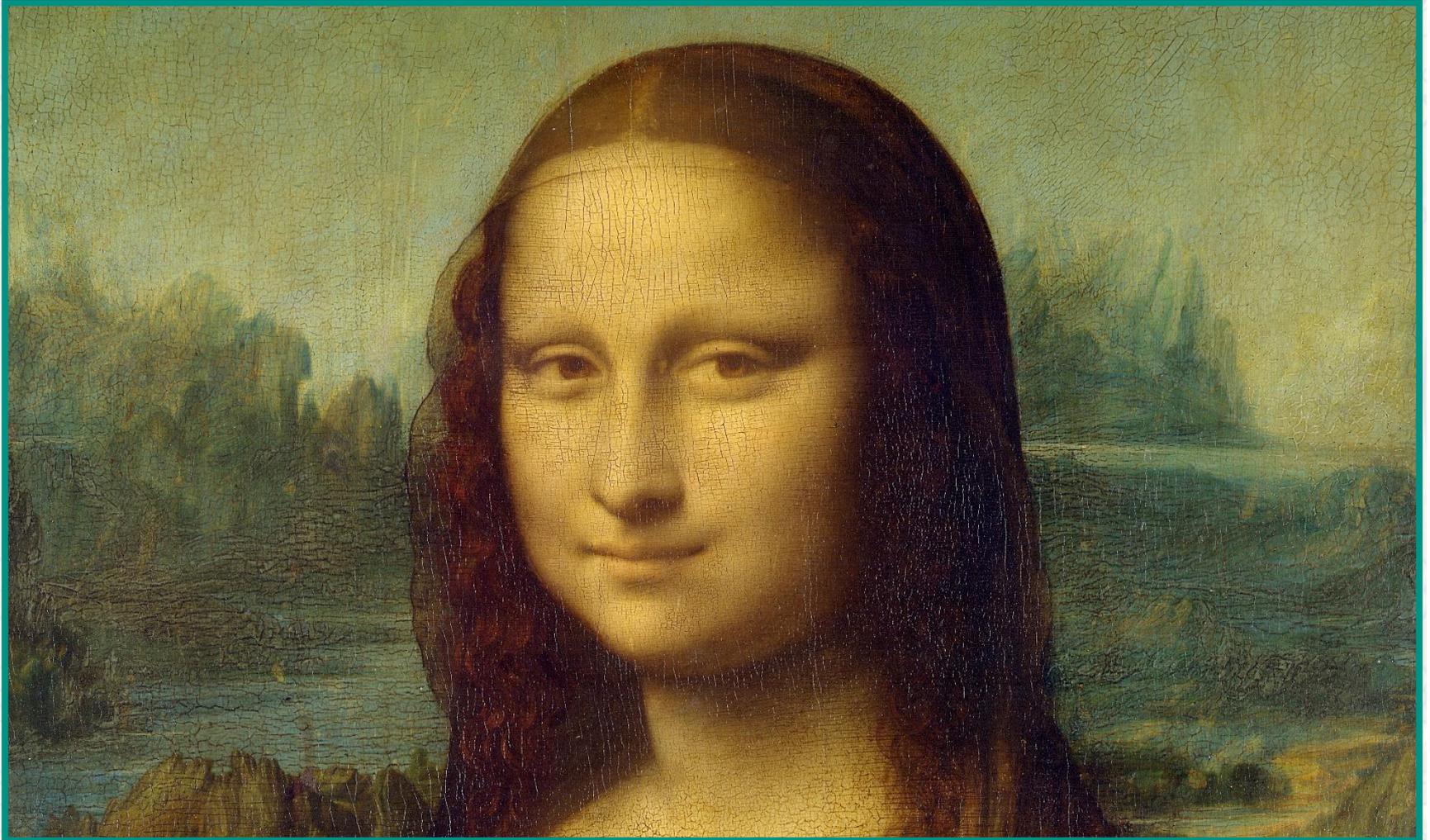


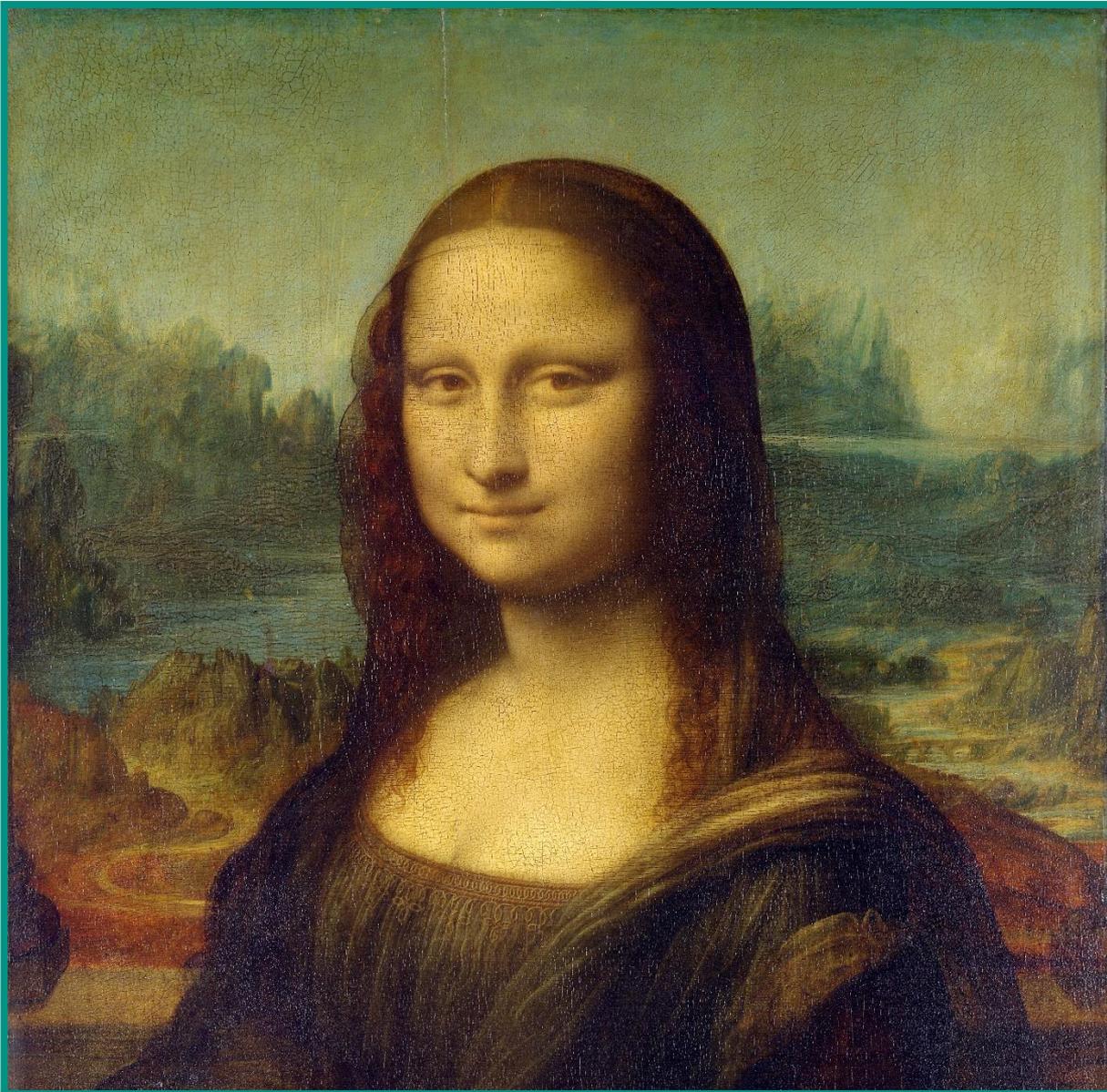
Lisa Giocondo

It is widely agreed that the woman was Lisa Giocondo. Her husband, Francesco di Bartolomeo del Giocondo, was a wealthy silk merchant. He commissioned da Vinci to paint a portrait of his wife.

Oil paintings were usually painted on canvas; however, the Mona Lisa is painted on a cottonwood panel. This means that the painting has not needed to be restored at all in six hundred years.







Theft and Vandalism

The Mona Lisa has been stolen and attacked in acts of vandalism.

In 1911, an ex-employee of the Louvre stole the painting because he believed it belonged in Italy.

He walked out with the painting under his coat.

Police detained him two years later when he tried to sell the painting to a gallery in Florence, Italy. The Mona Lisa was returned undamaged to the Louvre.

In 1956, a vandal threw acid on the lower part of the painting.

In the same year, someone threw a rock at it and a tiny chip of paint was dislodged.



Since then, the Mona Lisa has been kept behind bulletproof glass.

A Mona Mystery

The Mona Lisa continues to draw huge crowds, who are eager to witness this mysterious painting.

It is the most valuable painting in the world.



Despite this, we will never know the secret behind her smile.



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