



## LEONARDO DA VINCI:

### Renaissance Man

By Wayne Visser

Born on a Saturday, third hour of night  
With Tuscan hills bathed in the star spangled light  
Ser Piero's great pride and Vinci's great joy  
He was Chaterina's illegitimate boy

At sixteen, he followed the Arno's swift flow  
And joined as apprentice to Verrocchio  
To learn to perfect the painter's high trade  
Of capturing light and harnessing shade

He started by painting a tranquil glade scene,  
Then the Madonnas and the pose of Benci,  
The Magi adored, the penitent Saint -  
All brought back to life on his canvass with paint

At thirty he travelled to the city Milano  
An envoy in chief for the ruler Lorenzo  
He was sent to the court of his patron il Moro  
To give him a glimpse through the veil of tomorrow

In a letter, he made his offer prodigious -  
From building of weapons to laying of bridges  
Even a lyre from a horse-skull and strings -  
In his words: "An infinite variety of things"

For seventeen years he stayed in that quarter  
Designing new ways to regulate water  
While filling his days with Paragone theses  
Of legends and myths and fantasy species

At Paradise Feast, the heavens displayed  
With magical motion effects that he made;  
And a three-tier city was part of his plan,  
As was his great wheel of Vetrivius man





He pictured the Virgin on bleak rocky shore  
And captured an artist with his music score,  
Then Cecelia posing with snow-white ermine,  
Before re-enacting the last supper scene

His equine colossus was sculpted from clay  
His Platonic drawings on published display  
His thoughts and ideas in codexes bound  
His paintings commissioned to bless holy ground

From Mantua to Venice, from Florence to Rome  
Montefeltro to Paris - all made them his home;  
From Leo the Tenth to Louis the First -  
They all were enchanted by his mental thirst

As architect, engineer, artist and sage  
Biologist, scientist ahead of his age  
Inventor of unbelievable things  
An unsurpassed genius, this legend of wings

He towers above the landscape of time  
With brilliant ideas and visions sublime  
Still no one can fathom the depths of his guile  
Or unlock the secret of Mona's half smile

And even though five hundred years have gone by  
He calls us to stretch out our mind-wings and fly  
To join in the journey that he once began  
And walk in the steps of the Renaissance Man.

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